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A Serie

# HORÆ SOLITARÆ :

OR,

## ESSAYS

UPON SOME REMARKABLE

NAMES AND TITLES

OF THE

# H O L Y S P I R I T,

OCCURRING IN

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, AND DECLARATIVE OF HIS ESSENTIAL DIVINITY  
AND GRACIOUS OFFICES IN THE SALVATION OF MEN :

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE HERESIES,

RELATIVE TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHICH HAVE  
BEEN PUBLISHED SINCE THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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*Whosoever speaketh against the HOLY GHOST \* \* \**  
\* \* \* \* \* ☞ Matth. xii. 32.

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VOL. II.

SECOND AMERICAN FROM THE THIRD LONDON EDITION.

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HARTFORD :  
PUBLISHED BY SILAS ANDRUS  
*F. & E. Hoosford, Printers, Albany*

.....  
1815



## PREFACE.

**T**HE former volume of essays, which chiefly related to the divinity of CHRIST, was composed in hours of retreat from the business of the world : the present, which treats of the divinity of the HOLY SPIRIT, has been written in full retirement from the world itself. It was therefore supposed, that the title of *Heræ Solitariae* might not be improper for both.

However trite and common the apology, it can very truly be said, that this part of the work was attempted and now appears at the instance of a learned and most valuable friend, whose wishes with the author, on the best of accounts, ought to have the force of commands, and whose worth and eminence it might seem vain to mention upon this occasion, as it would be thought superfluous (did he take the liberty to name him) upon any.

The two volumes, beyond the particular subject of each, concur in one common design to shew ; that the doctrine of a TRINITY of persons in one and the same JEHOVAH is essential to the very being of the *Christian religion* ; and, that the *practical use* or *experience* of this truth, including and combining all the other principles of the faith, is the proper constituent of the *Christian life*. If the essays tend to confirm a doctrine so important, or to induce an improvement so desirable, the author may be credited in professing to have no other purpose in their publication.

The author's distance from the press has increased the imperfections of his papers, which the candid and intelligent reader will have the goodness to correct or excuse : and he ventures humbly to solicit every reader, who is duly sensible of the consequence of divine truth, that prayer may be made for the blessing of grace, without which no human endeavours can be successful, and that all the praise, if the least good ensue, be rendered to HIM, "from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, do proceed."



## ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.\*

THE knowledge of God is the most important subject that can engage the attention of man. "This is eternal life to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent."

Every attempt to assist in searching the Scripture and of becoming better acquainted with the character and perfections of Jehovah, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, deserves the approbation and encouragement of every faithful Christian. The *HORÆ SOLITARÆ* or *Hours of Retirement*, are eminently entitled to Christian patronage.

The author, with great piety, application, and a large share of scriptural criticism, hath explained, and by sound reasoning established this fundamental article of the gospel, That Jehovah our Lord is one God, revealed to us under the distinct names and personal properties of FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT.

The doctrine of the Trinity, so essential to the faith and comfort of the Christian, and the peculiar offices and operations which distinguish the persons of the ineffable Godhead, has not received an illustration more satisfactory and purely scriptural, since the days of *Athanasius*, than what these papers contain.

The author, it is said, was a Layman, attached to the British army in the revolutionary American war. The parts were written at different times, some of them in the camp, and published at different times and places, His motives, for he sought no profit, he courted no applause, must have been pure and disinterested.

Published in detached portions, and issuing from presses, in all cases, not correct, many errors in the text, but especially in his valuable notes, abounded. The Philadelphia edition published by different printers in 1801, is liable to the same censure. It was printed from the second London edition.

This edition is printed from the third London edition, of 1804, revised and corrected by the author himself, which is allowed to be peculiarly accurate.

The proof-sheets have been revised by gentlemen who are pledges that the learned notes have suffered no injury.

THE PUBLISHER.

\* The absence of the Publisher from the Press when the first volume was printed, occasioned the omission of the Address to the Public and Recommendations of the work from being introduced in the front of that volume, the usual place allotted for them. He hopes that by prefixing them to the second volume, every object intended by them shall be accomplished without any real disadvantage.

## RECOMMENDATIONS.

TO MR. TORREY,

SIR,

I am highly pleased with your intention of offering to the Christian public an American, from the third London edition of those interesting volumes entitled *HORÆ SOLITARIÆ*. This work, from its first publication, has been highly esteemed by every real believer who has become acquainted with it. The subject itself is of great importance and sublimity; and, whilst the friend of Jesus Christ delights to trace the real divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit in the light of divine Revelation, he will here find arguments and views calculated to strengthen his faith, and draw forth the affections of his heart, towards the TRINE GOD, in holy adoration and praise.

SAMUEL BLATCHFORD, D. D.

*Pastor of the United Congregations of Lansingburgh and Waterford  
Lansingburgh, June 16, 1814.*

I concur in the above recommendation.

WILLIAM NEILL, D. D.

*Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Albany.*

*Albany, June 19, 1814.*

I also concur in the above recommendations.

JOHN M'DONALD,

*Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Chapel-street, Albany.*

SIR—Your design to re-publish the volumes entitled the "*HORÆ SOLITARIÆ*," cannot fail to gratify the friends of evangelical truth. There are few works of human composition in which the divinity of the Son of God with the infinite sufficiency of his sacrifice for the remission of sin; also, the divinity of the Holy Spirit, with his agency in the sanctification of the soul, are more clearly stated and ably defended: And what adds to the excellence of this Treatise, these great doctrines of our religion are very happily applied for solving the doubts and enlivening the hopes of those who are exercised to Godliness. I have read the work with great pleasure, and can cheerfully recommend it to all who love the truth as it is in Jesus, and would grow up to the measure of the stature of his fulness.

ALEXANDER PROUDFIT, D. D.

*Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Salem, N. Y.  
Salem, August 13th, 1814.*

SIR—I rejoice to hear that you are about to print that valuable work, termed *HORÆ SOLITARIÆ*. Its republication, at present, is peculiarly seasonable, when many are exerting themselves to subvert the Christian's faith in the doctrine of the Trinity. In this precious work, the learned and pious author proves from the sacred volume, that the Redeemer and Sanctifier of sinners, are God equal with the Father. I know of no publication emitted

from the press for a length of time, that is better calculated to confirm the wavering, strengthen the weak, and comfort the afflicted believer; and therefore recommend it to the people of my charge, as worthy of a place in their libraries.

JAMES MAIRS, A. M.

*Minister of the Associate Reformed Congregation of Galway and Charlton, Galway, 27th August, 1814.*

HAVING perused "HORÆ SOLITARÆ," I do most cordially approbate the work, as exhibiting the highest marks of ingenuity, learning, and piety; and I do most cheerfully recommend it to the careful and candid perusal of all classes of people, as eminently calculated to establish in the public mind, the Deity of the Second Person in the Trinity.

JOEL BYINGTON,

*Minister of the Gospel of Christ, Hebron, N. Y.*

SIR—Understanding that you are about to publish an edition of the HORÆ SOLITARÆ, I most cheerfully recommend it to the serious perusal of all who have a relish for evangelical truth.

R. PROUDFIT,

*Minister of the Associate Reformed Church, Broadalbin.*

*September 26th, 1814.*

THE HORÆ SOLITARÆ have been so long known as a work of superior merit, and so justly recommended by names of such respectability, that my approbation can be of little avail. A publication exhibiting so much evangelical doctrine and pious sentiment, has a powerful claim upon the patronage of the Christian public.

GILBERT M'MASTER,

*Minister of the Gospel of Christ, in Galway.*

*September 8th, 1814.*

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# NAMES, TITLES, AND ATTRIBUTES,

OF THE

## HOLY SPIRIT,

REVEALED IN THE

### TWO TESTAMENTS.

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#### LORD, OR JEHOVAH.

**T**HE import of this glorious name has been considered in the former volume, in which it was shewn, that the Almighty called himself by this title to explain, to our understandings, his necessary, independent, self-existent Being, and to impress us with the idea of his own immutability and eternity, and of the derivation of all other existence from him. This name of course cannot belong to a *creature*, is never applied to any, but is claimed distinctly from all other names and attributes by the great Author and Creator of all things.

It is the purpose of this Essay to prove, that the incommunicable name JEHOVAH belongs to the HOLY SPIRIT: And such testimonies will be brought for this end, as (it is hoped) may confirm every believer, and do something to silence the mouth of the gainsayer; because they will be testimonies from HIM *who cannot lie*—from HIM, who cannot be mistaken himself, and who is too good and gracious, in the remotest degree to deceive us. We shall see, as we go along, what a glory this sublime truth throws upon all the other doctrines of the gospel, and in what perfect agreement it proceeds with the analogy of faith revealed in the Old and New Testaments, and (it may be added) revealed in every real Christian's soul for his comfort and salvation. To those who neither *know the scriptures nor the power of God*, it is not presumed, that any evidence upon this subject, from those scriptures can be satisfactory; since, as our Lord assures us, that, rejecting these, they *would not* (or *could not*) *believe though one arose from the dead*. The SPIRIT JEHOVAH himself must af-

ford an *elenchus*, or energy, to his own testimony; or, could they cease to be declared infidels, they would only become mere speculatists, and consequently notional, not real believers. But to those whose *understandings are opened to understand the scriptures* (Luke xxiv. 45.) and from whose hearts *the stone* is in some measure removed (Ezck. xxxvi. 26); it is hoped, that the evidences of this great truth will not only be convincing and undeniable, but (what seems, to the author, of more moment) edifying and establishing in their most holy faith. Merely to inform the judgment is but half the object: The desire is, that, with a clear and sound comprehension of the truth, the heart may be warmed with the love of it, and the soul built up thereon by a happy and divine experience. The Spirit, of whom we are treating, is alone able to effect this: Reader, look up to him for his blessing, that thou mayest be led in a right way to a right end; which is, by the power of grace, to the glory of Jehovah, and thine own salvation.

Our first design is to prove, that the Holy Spirit is Jehovah; and our next, that, being Jehovah,\* He is able to accomplish all that is said of Him, and all that is necessary for *us* to life eternal.

It will be granted by all but professed Atheists, and no Christian therefore can deny it, "That there is but *ONE* Jehovah." We are slandered, consequently, when, upon our professing to believe, that the Father is Jehovah, the Son Jehovah, and the Spirit Jehovah, it is said of us that we talk of *three* Gods; for the very name Jehovah (if our adversaries would but understand it) entirely precludes that notion. A simple, infinite, perfect essence must necessarily be *indivisible*: Nor do we, in our idea, presume to make *divisions* in the Deity, but to believe only those *distinctions* of persons, hypostases, or subsistences in him, of which He himself hath been pleased to give a revelation, and by which revelation alone we can know any thing of the matter. We are not *wise above what is written*; nor would we be too proud or self-sufficient to follow the written wisdom of God. In another case, when our philosophers speak of the light, or fire, or substance of the material sun; they would deem it an insult, if they were accused of maintaining, that there were *several* suns; because of those distinctions, which they perceived in his nature. And, by

\* One cannot help wishing with Forster, that the Hebrew name Jehovah were preserved in all translations of the Bible, *quod hæc attributa* [i. e. Dominus et Deus,] *neque essentiam divinam, neque nominis propriam significationem expriment*; "because these titles of Lord and God can neither express the divine essence, nor give the proper signification of his name."

a very small share of candor, those, who charge the Christians with Tritheism, for holding the doctrine of the Trinity, might have saved themselves from committing a violent injustice ; because, though we maintain, that “ each person by himself is Jehovah,” yet we also declare, that there are not three Lords, but one Lord, according to what is written in Deut. vi. 4. Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our Alehim is *one* Jehovah.—Nor doth it strike our reason with more repugnance to assert this concerning a spiritual essence, of which we can know nothing but what is revealed, when God himself hath revealed this doctrine to us ; than it can the reason of a philosopher to conceive light and heat in a material substance, without affecting the *unity* of that substance, when he knows this only by his senses, which in some respects are acknowledged to be fallacious. In the one case, there is the testimony of God, who surely knows the mode of his own being, and who is himself pure and perfect reason ; but in the other, we have only the evidence of sense, which not only is not reason, but very often is contrary to it. Yet were we to assert the existence of three *separate* suns, because we could find as many properties in our one sun ; we should have enough to laugh at us for our notion, and especially among those who are so unfair (not to say worse) as to accuse us of believing in three separate Gods, because we assert three divine hypostases, or persons, to be in the Godhead, and this upon the authority of God himself. Who then act the most rationally ; *they*, who, confessing God to be *incomprehensible*, yet presume to *define* his *infinite* nature according to their own low and *limited* notions ; or *we*, who, acknowledging that his being *infinitely* transcends all human investigation, receive with humble submission that testimony, which he hath given us of himself? We never pretend, that God’s existence is a subject of human reason : Nor have we so little reason as to attempt the measure of all infinitude by a finite rule. The presumption of *infidelity*, which affects to believe nothing beyond its own puny comprehension, and yet blames those who cannot believe *it* upon a point confessedly *incomprehensible* ; is at once too daring to be safe, and too ignorant to be trusted, in a matter of such importance. God’s own wisdom and truth, in this respect, are only sufficient to satisfy us : But, if they were not, we certainly could not be satisfied with the cogitations of poor mortals, who know not even the *mode* of their own being, nor *how* themselves think, nor indeed the *essence* of any one material substance about them.

## THE SPIRIT IS JEHOVAH.

Jeremiah xxxi. 33, 34. *This shall be the Covenant, saith Jehovah—they shall teach no more every man his neighbour—saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me—saith Jehovah.*

John xvi. 13. *When He, the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.*

This is the accomplishment of the promise, that Jehovah the Spirit guides into all truth, and makes himself known to his people. An obvious distinction is here made between the teaching of God and of man: And as obvious a fact it appears, that the Spirit *guiding*, in one text, is Jehovah promised to be *known* in the other.

Deut. vi. 16. with Matth. iv. 7. *Thou shalt not tempt Jehovah thy Alehim.*

Acts. v. 9. *How is it that you have agreed to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?*

Ananias and Sapphira for this temptation were judicially seized by immediate death, which proved upon fact, *that they had not lied unto men, but unto God*, and that *to tempt the Spirit*, is no other than to tempt Jehovah himself, which could not be unless the Spirit were Jehovah.\*

Acts xxviii. 25. *Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the Prophet, &c.* But we read in

Luke i. 68, 70. that it was the Lord God [Jehovah Alehim] of Israel, who *spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets, which have been since the world began.* See Micah iii. 8.

It follows, then, that the Holy Ghost is the Lord God of Israel.

1 Sam. xvi. 13. *The Spirit of Jehovah came upon David from that day forward.*

But in the 18th verse, it is said expressly, that Jehovah *was with him.*

Deut. xxxii. 12. Jehovah *alone* [בְּרַדְּךָ entirely alone] *did lead him* [Jacob, a collective name for his people.] But in

Isaiah lxiii. 11, 12. We read that it was the Holy Spirit, *that led them by the right hand of Moses, with his glorious arm.*

The Holy Spirit, therefore, is Jehovah.

Isaiah vi. 9. Jehovah Sabaoth said, *go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not, &c.* But the Apostle says,

\* See an excellent Note upon this argument in Jones's *Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity*. p. 41. 3d. edit.

Acts xxviii. 25. *Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the Prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, &c. Therefore,*

The Holy Ghost is Jehovah Sabaoth.\*

Numbers xii. 6. *If there be a Prophet among you, I Jehovah will make myself known unto him in a vision, &c.*

2 Pet. i. 21. *For the prophesy come not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

The Holy Ghost, therefore, must be Jehovah.

The name Jehovah in the Old Testament is rendered by *Κυριος* in the New, and into the English by Lord, which certainly doth not convey the sense of the original word. It is, however, as well as to the Father and the Son, applied to the Holy Spirit; though not very modestly or carefully denied by the opposers of his divinity. Thus,

2 Cor. iii. 17, 18. *For the Lord is the Spirit—even as by the Lord the Spirit; for so it should have been translated; as indeed it is so translated in the margin of our larger Bibles.*

Col. ii. 9. *In him [Christ] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

Isaiah xi. 2. *And the Spirit Jehovah shall rest upon him, &c.*

Matt. xii. 18. *I will put my Spirit upon him, &c.*

The Spirit, therefore, is the *fulness of the Godhead*, not separate from (for that is impossible, the Godhead being one) the other divine persons, but in unity with them, participating the undivided essence.

Isaiah lxiii. 10. *The Israelites of old rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit. But in*

Numb. xiv. 11. *They are said to have provoked Jehovah, and in Psalm lxxviii. 56. to have tempted and provoked the most High God.*

The Holy Spirit is, therefore, Jehovah and the Most High God.

Psalms xxxiii. 6. *By the word of Jehovah were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Spirit [רוח] of his mouth. But it is said,*

Prov. xvi. 4. *Jehovah made all things for himself, &c. And that Acts xvii. 24. God made the world, and all things therein.*

\* See some valuable Notes from the fathers upon this argument, in that excellent volume of Sermons upon the Divinity of the Holy Spirit, by the late Mr. John Hurrion: printed 1734. And also an answer to some objections in Sloss's Sermons upon the Trinity: Serm. xvi. See also Witsii *Ævere* in Is vi.

The Spirit, therefore, as well as the Son, is both Jehovah and God.

Romans xv. 9. The Apostle ascribes *the mighty signs and wonders*, wrought in confirmation of the Gospel, to *the power of the spirit of God*. But the Psalmist says, in

Psalm cxxxvi. that it is Jehovah, the Alehim, the *Lord of Lords*, *who alone doeth great wonders*.

The Holy Ghost, therefore, is Jehovah, God over all, blessed forever.

Many more arguments of this kind might be drawn from the scriptures; but these, it is presumed, may suffice: at least, they may suffice, till they are proved not to support the Holy Spirit's divinity, or that the term Jehovah may belong to a creature, an emanation, or a sort of inferior God like the demi-god of the Heathen; which probably the adversaries of this truth, with all their acuteness, may not be in haste to perform. When they have done this, they have but one step farther, and that is, to prove that self-existence belongs to any thing, or nothing, just as they please.

But if God be true, and can give the best account of his own being; then, upon the authority of his holy word, we may rest satisfied, that the Spirit is Jehovah. It seems even wonderful, how any man who pretends to reason or philosophize upon the *data* of the Bible, can be absurd enough to deny a truth, so strongly marked from one end of that book to the other. For, to talk of the Spirit of Jehovah, the Spirit of the Alehim, or of God, as a separate, inferior, and dependent Being; is to assume, that God hath *parts* and *divisions*, and that, so far from having a *simplicity* of nature, he is a composition of *superiority* and *inferiority*, enduring a comparison within himself, which entirely takes away every idea of his *perfection*, *infinitude*, and *eternity*. If the Spirit be *separate* from Jehovah, or is *not* Jehovah himself; then the title *Spirit of Jehovah*, so frequently given, is a dreadful mistake into which (it seems) God himself hath led us; and the Being so called dwindles down at once into a mere Minister of Deity, an Angel, or some other creature. It follows too, that something can be *in* the Godhead, which is *not of* the Godhead, and that God's Spirit, by which he made all things, may be like our breath and vanish into thin air. To such absurdity of blasphemy do some men's opinions necessarily lead them, if they are but extended to their natural length, without a y straining or perversion.

If, likewise, the Spirit be *inferior* or *dependent*, he can neither be *infinite* nor *eternal*: or, if he be infinite and eternal, he will be

*equal* to Jehovah himself, and consequently must either be Jehovah, which we believe; or there must be *two* Jehovahs, *two* eternal and infinite Beings, which we deny, and which no man in his senses can maintain. The doctrine of two first principles\* is absurd in reason; and by religion we are told that Jehovah *our* Alehim is but One Jehovah.

God is one pure, uncompounded, infinite, and eternal essence; a mere and simple act; the spring of all power, wisdom and being. HE only is: and whatever can be predicated of him, does not *merely belong* to him, like a *quality* in the creatures; but is HIMSELF. Whatever *is* now in Him, ever *was* in Him: It is his *Ens*; it is *himself*.† If, therefore, the Spirit be of Jehovah, according to his name and the proofs already given from divine authority; then He is Jehovah essentially, infinitely, and eternally: and there is no avoiding this conclusion, but by denying him to be the *Spirit of God*; in which case, a flat contradiction will be given to every text of Scripture, which calls him by that name.

The Spirit, therefore, being Jehovah, not of *like* but of *one* and the same essence; he depends upon no other being for his being, but is necessarily *self-existent, infinite, and eternal*.

If he be not *self-existent*, &c. then he is not Jehovah, or a person in the essence Jehovah; for that name implies an *Αυτοφωη* or *self-existence*; and consequently he is only a *creature*. But if he be not a creature, but Jehovah himself; he then is whatever can be predicated of Jehovah, and possesses all the attributes which Jehovah has claimed, or which can possibly be ascribed to him. And when the wisdom of God informs us, that in *the One Jehovah* there are *Three* hypostases, or persons, or *Alehim*, æconomically styled *Father, Son, and Spirit*; we may be assured there can be no *contradiction* in this testimony. Nor is this testimony proposed to us as a matter to be *submitted* to our little reasonings and speculation, but as an *article of faith*, in the reception of which we may be led up to communion with the Godhead in three persons, agreeably to our dependence upon them in their respective offices of *Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier*. Nor yet do we “divide the substance” of Deity by this our faith; for though we

\* Marcion and Cerdon, with some other of the ancient Heretics, maintained this preposterous tenet, which common sense can easily refute.

† To this effect, Eulogius of Alexandria observes, that *Ens* (or essence of all being) is more than *to be*. Man hath a being, but he is not properly the *Ens* or essence of that being. For that properly is *Ens*, which proceeds from nothing else, and which doth not cease to be the *Ens* of all other things. *Apud Phot. Cod. ccxxx.*

say, that each of the three persons is *self-existent*, and so properly Jehovah; yet we do not maintain either or all to be *separate-existent*, or to form more than *one* Jehovah. In other things, men can distinguish where they do not *divide*, and can allow three inseparable peculiarities (as in the case of the sun, or in the mind, will, and affection of man, &c.) to constitute but one substance or being; and all this upon no better evidence than human sensation, which (as we said before) is often fallible. Surely, then, having the infallible declaration of God, with us, we may be bold to speak a truth, which cannot contradict our reason, because it is not and cannot be the subject of it. We must follow God in this high matter *implicitly*; and surely we may follow him with *safety*, where we cannot conduct ourselves. All the objects of religion do indeed rise above the poor intellect of man; and he can know nothing of another life, of immortality, or even of the grand purpose of his own existence, but by divine revelation. How then *by searching can he find out God; or how study the Almighty to perfection?* Here, as one of the Fathers says, *mens deficit, vox silet*; “the mind fails, and the tongue is dumb.” And surely it *should* be so among short sighted beings, who cannot tell *how* their own spirits act upon their bodies, or in what mode the spring of life is exerted and influenced within them.

The Christian doth not pretend to explain the *modus existendi*, or manner of existence, which the Holy Spirit has in the divine nature; because no *finite* nature, human or angelic, can form a comparative idea of what is *infinite*: And we properly know nothing from reason but by *comparison*. It is quite sufficient for the believer, that *God hath said* any proposition; and he leaves it (and it is both his wisdom and his duty to leave it) to God, either to be reserved as an inscrutable truth, or to be opened to his mind by a farther explanation. There are mysteries, which one day will be mysteries to him no more; and there are mysteries, which from their own exalted nature, must remain so for ever. As he grows in grace, though now imprisoned in a frail and corruptible body, which acts like a clog upon his spirit, he grows in the knowledge of many truths, which once he did not comprehend: And there is just cause to believe, that, in his advances *from glory to glory*, he will increase *ad infinitum* in the conceptions of heavenly things, and still be finding a glorious *infinitum* before him. *The height and depth, the length and breadth*, (as the Apostle speaks, while himself is absorbed in the vastness of the subject) of the wisdom and love of God around him, will still be unexplored; and that



infinite ocean of everlasting entity and truth must remain, to all ranks and orders of being, both unbounded and unfathomable for ever.

What then hath man to do, but to act like the Angels, who *wonder and adore*? And if man knew what Angels know, and was but as unclouded with sin as they; he would find it his supreme delight, to hold company and communion with them in this blessed employment.

Over and above all other arguments, the real believer in Jesus hath a testimony, that the *Holy Spirit is Jehovah*, which lies out of the view of the world, because it is *within* him. *Behold*, says Christ, *the kingdom of God is within you*. A throne is erected in every believing heart, from which the Spirit of God directs his rule, bringing every thought into captivity, and into sweet subjection to Christ. The promise of the Father\* is accomplished in the Christian when the *Spirit is poured out* upon him, like oil to enliven, or like water to purify, his new-born soul. He sees clearly, that none but *Jehovah* could vouchsafe the *Holy Spirit*; and he views as plainly, that this *Holy Spirit* must be *Jehovah*, to perform the wonderful works, which are ascribed to him in nature and grace, and a portion of which he feels to be wrought in him by his power. He reads his Bible and sees, that the everlasting covenant can only be performed by those divine persons who made it, and that the full completion of it, being reserved for the Spirit, could only be effectuated by Him, as He is *Jehovah*. Believing in Him, therefore, *as Jehovah*, he cannot but consider him fully able to accomplish all that is said of him in the Scriptures, and all that is necessary for his people to life eternal. And this was the next part of the subject to be considered.

Man is represented by the Scriptures, in a state of spiritual death, through the fall. This was the penalty of his transgression—*In that day, thou shalt surely die*. Gen. ii. 17. Now Adam lived, as to his body, many hundred years after his sin; and therefore the denunciation must be understood, in order to justify divine truth, to imply that death of the soul that immediately befel him, which consists in its separation from the life of God, and removal from the fruition of holiness, happiness, and Heaven. All men experience the absence of this good; but all men are not sensible of its worth: Their spirits being dead to God, and to the things of God. And the people of God themselves are by *nature* as dead in this respect, as other men. This is fully expressed in

\* Joel ii. 28. Acts ii. 39.

the xxxviii<sup>th</sup> chapter of Ezekiel, under the vision of the dry bones. These bones belonged to the house of Israel, or the people of God: And these the *Spirit* of God renewed to life. They were *dead in trespasses and sins*, till the Spirit of life brought life into their souls, and enabled them to *live by the faith of the Son of God*. This is as full a communication of life, as the creating of any thing which did not exist before; and therefore believers are said to be *born of the Spirit* (John iii.) whose life they had not *before* their new birth. They are also called *new creatures* or a *new creation*, in the very same sense; because they had no existence in heavenly things, till the Holy Spirit afforded it by his power. This is the obvious meaning likewise of the word *regeneration*, and of all those terms which denote the bestowment of a new life, the translation from darkness, and the admission to God. Hence it is that the redeemed, being *born of the Spirit*, are said to be *born of God*, and are called the *Sons*, the *Children*, and the *Heirs of God*. They claim not Heaven as an uncovenanted mercy, which too—too many unwarrantably do; but as a matter of inheritance, *promised* and therefore due from the *Father*, purchased by the *Son*, and *afforded* by the power of the *Holy Ghost*.

Now, as none but God can impart life, and especially the immortal life of grace; the *Holy Spirit*, being “the Lord and Giver of Life,” and the great Agent to maintain it in the hearts of his people must necessarily be God over all, blessed for ever. The Spirit himself *is* life, and communicates life to whom *he will*. 1 Cor. xii. 2. John iii. 8.

As the Divine Spirit gives life, so he supports it when given, by his almighty power: and none but almighty power could support the life of grace, against the united force of the spirits of darkness, the temptations of the world, and the treachery of an evil heart of unbelief, always inclining to departure from the living God. The *Spirit of God* visibly *cast out Devils*, to testify the divine mission of Christ; and he hath spiritually cast them out in all ages, and will cast them out to the end of the world, to render that mission effectual for the salvation of his people.

He teaches the redeemed, also, whatever is necessary for them to know. Could any but an *omnipresent* agent thus instruct through *every moment*, and in every age, all the individual members of Christ's scattered Church, correcting their thoughts, informing their judgments, sanctifying their wills and affections, and thereby preparing them for life eternal? And if this agent be *om-*

*v. present*, doth it not conclusively follow, that he is the infinite God?

In a word; if this *Holy Spirit* create anew in Christ Jesus; if he cause to be quickened from death into life; if he translate from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; if he be always present to help his people's infirmities, to mortify their sins, to sanctify their persons, to renew their minds, to teach their understandings, to give them access to the Father, to be in them all and to dwell in all for ever; is it possible for common sense itself to suppose, that He can be less than true and very God, the all-wise, the all-gracious, and omnipotent Jehovah? It seems less absurd to affirm, that a gnat or a fly can create a world, and preserve the series of being upon it, in its perfect, yet complicated arrangement; than to assert, that any existence could accomplish all the wonderful works above mentioned, but the author and preserver of all existence himself? Yet paradoxical as the expression seems, this sort of credulity does that person entertain, who, admitting the Bible to be a divine revelation, has infidelity enough to deny the proper divinity of the Holy Ghost.

To thee, O believer in Jesus, this article of the *Spirit's* Deity is a maxim of indisputable moment—an axiom of indubitable truth. Thou wilt not deny his word, which asserts it: thou canst not resist his *witness in thyself*, which confirms it to a demonstration. Others may deny, what they do not experience or feel; but thou knowest Him *that is true*, because thou art *in him*; and he, with all his evidences of comfort, love, and joy, *dwelleth in thee*. He first brought thee spiritual life from the death of sin: he reconciled thee to God, when thou wast an enemy by wicked works: he giveth thee a thousand tokens of his presence and support; he leadeth thy thoughts and thy heart direct to God and Heaven: preserves thee (always ready in thyself to stray) from numberless snares in thy daily walk, and at length will give thee an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom. Thou constantly feelest thyself to be a poor, dependent creature; able to think nothing, to will nothing, and to do nothing good of thy own power: and it is thy privilege and thy joy to find this gracious spirit, working in thee both to will and do of his good pleasure. Thou art never happy but in this perception. Thou art never holy but in this enjoyment. Thou art never safe but in this protection. What cares the Devil for all the resolutions and strength of man, even if man could exert them, without grace divine? He broke down the patience of the most patient Job, and made him curse the day

in which he was born, when God permitted him to exercise his power for a trial. And he would bring to nothing the highest attainments of thy soul, did the spirit of truth depart from thee for a moment. If any man bade fair to stand alone, surely it must have been the man *after God's own heart*; but he fell, as every body knows, and fell foully and horribly too. If any man could hope to recover himself from a fall; who might expect to do it sooner than he, who had vanquished repeated foes, and trampled upon the boasted strength of a giant? Yet this man, a Prince and a Prophet too, wise and powerful, lay for a long time in his transgression, and at last cried out, like an helpless infant, for the restoration and support of God's *free Spirit*. Ps. li. 12. He found the powers of darkness and sin too mighty for his feeble efforts to resist, and too subtle for his dull understanding to oppose. The wisdom of God's Spirit alone could repel the sophistry of hell; and the energy of the Almighty bring him back from the captivity of Satan.

Art thou not sensible of this gracious operation, dear Christian, from time to time within thy soul? Dost thou never feel a power which is not thine own? Never taste a joy, which animal sense cannot induce? Never rise to views, which nature cannot shew thee? Never have a communion with Heaven and the unutterable glories of the world above, which earth could not inspire?—Examine thy secret chamber, and the secret of thy heart; and say, “have I not tasted that the Lord is gracious indeed? Did I not feel his divine power at such and such times, far superior to any thing of my own? Was not my heart drawn out, in the sweetest communion of love, with God my portion, my father, and my friend?”—The records of Heaven preserve the facts: They are gone up, like Cornelius's deeds of grace, for a *memorial before God*. If a drop of water, given to another for thy master's sake, shall not be lost or poured out upon the ground; surely, the living streams of his love, which have flowed into thy soul, shall one day be recounted with joy, and all rise up again in the circuits of Heaven.

Remember, believer, for thy comfort likewise, that thy gracious guide and supporter is the self-existent Jehovah, who faileth not, neither is weary, whose gifts and callings are without repentance, and whose love is everlasting as his nature. This Holy Spirit did not bring thee into the *way* of salvation for any other purpose, but to lead thee to the *end* of it: and every testimony of his grace in thy soul is as sure an earnest for glory, as though

thou wert already in it. *We know that we have passed from death unto life* (says the Apostle;) because we have his spirit dwelling in us, working all the motions of prayer, love, hope, joy, righteousness and praise, which are his genuine fruits and the evidences of his presence. So surely therefore, as thou hast the pledge, thou wilt, in due time, possess the everlasting inheritance. The world cannot prevent thee, the Devil cannot destroy thee, thy own sinful flesh shall not prevail against thee; for the arm, counsel, and love, which are engaged in thy behalf, belong altogether to the Spirit Jehovah.

“But may not libertine professors abuse this truth?” Indeed they may: and so do libertines abuse all other truths and blessings. It is thought bad logic in the schools to reason from the perversion of a thing against its worth: and it is more dangerously erroneous in the school of Christ. There is not a single doctrine of grace, but which the folly of man, acted upon by the subtlety of the Devil, may wrest, and *wrest to destruction*; but grace is gracious still, and will lead the children of God to his glory. Dogs will eat the children’s bread; but it is not the less bread, and good bread too, though dogs devour it. This *grunntus stercorum* (as Luther termed it,) this “grunting of hogs” is very different from the gentle bleating of Christ’s sheep. We have, therefore, one short answer to give to all questions of this kind; that those persons, who, under pretence of gospel-liberty, run into any licentiousness of heart and life, and plead the privileges of grace for purposes which are not gracious, are neither more nor less than the *servants of corruption, and bond-slaves of the Devil, and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*. To which it may be added, that if they live and die in this horrible state of mind; *it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for them*.—The gospel of the blessed Redeemer, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, are so far from indulging sin, that they indispensably inculcate upon believers *to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world*. All God’s ways are holy; and so must they be, who call themselves his children, or they are not his children.

If the Christian were asked, which were his happiest moments; he would answer, those which were spent in the closest walk with Christ, and in the nearest communion with God. The enjoyment of the life of grace is founded in the death and destruction of all sin: and the believer is only unhappy, when corruptions within,

aided by corruptions without, draw him off from an entire dependence upon his Lord. He would be perfect, if he could; because in perfect holiness, he would obtain perfect happiness and a complete possession of all good; and he longs for Heaven itself, both for the full enjoyment of God's presence, and for the absolute perfection of holiness, which he cannot attain till he arrives in it. On the other hand, every true believer can witness, that departing from God, is departing from peace. A serious Christian once asked a great backslider, whether he really had found more satisfaction in the indulgence of his lusts, and the full swing of carnal pleasure, than he before had done in the profession of the gospel and in the hours he had formerly spent for God. He honestly answered; he had not; and that, so far from being happy, he was not even untormented, but when in a state of the most intoxicated dissipation. It pleased God to restore him again; but not without such bitterness of soul, as all the mad and foolish pleasures he had pursued, were but a poor compensation to him. They, who leave *the fountain of living waters, hew out unto themselves broken cisterns, that can hold no water, or water only that can destroy them.*

Turn then, beloved Christian, to thine only rest. Turn to Jehovah the Father, who hath loved thee forever: turn to Jehovah the Redeemer, who hath saved thy life from destruction: turn to Jehovah the Spirit, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies. Soon shalt thou behold him face to face, and turn from him to the world, or to sin, or to self, no more. Soon shalt thou enjoy whatever can be possessed of this great One Jehovah, and be wrapt up in the fulness of his joy through a blessed eternity. O for transporting views of this ineffable glory! O how poor, how vain, how perishing, do the world and all other things appear, held up before this unutterable brightness of the Majesty on high! what is life, what is death, what are crowns and kingdoms below, what is all that can be named, in comparison with the unsearchable riches of Christ, the communion of the Holy Ghost, and the unalienable possession of both in Heaven!—We should scarce endure to live in this wretched world, if we had much foretaste of this bliss, or if God, till his purposes are fulfilled in us below, did not permit the veil of flesh to hide the fulness of his love and brightness from our minds.

## ALEHIM, OR GOD.

IN the former volume, the import of this significant title was considered; and it was shewn, that this name, applied to the Godhead, was manifestly meant to convey an idea of what we call the *persons*,\* the Greeks *hypostases*, and the ancient Jews

\* We follow the Latins in using the word *person* for *hypostasis*, and the word *essence* for *Ουσια*, *being* or *existence*. Seneca says in his 58th Epistle, that this translation of *Ουσια* was first adopted by Cicero, and that he understood by it the universal nature and cause of all things. In this epistle he complains heavily of the Latin tongue for its incapacity to translate the sense of Greek terms, without a periphrasis. The Latin fathers seem to have followed Cicero for the same reason—the want of better terms. Indeed we are told by Gregory Nazienzen, that because the Latins could not otherwise make a proper distinction between the *essence* and the *hypostasis*, through the poverty of their language, they used the word *person* for the latter, lest it should be thought, that they held *three essences*. He well observes that “the purity of our faith doth not stand upon *names*, but upon things.” We use the *names*, not for their accuracy of expression (for no words of man can express God, or thoughts of man search him out,) but to prevent confusion, or concealment of the truth. See *Introd.* to vol. i. p. 13 *Note*. Aug. *de Trin.* l. v. Greg. Naz. *Orat. i. de Pace*, apud Gasp. Laurent. *Cath. Cons. Vet.* p. 44. Muret. *Not. in Sen. epist.*

In addition to the substance of this note, it may be here observed, that some have objected to the use of any of these terms, because they are not found in the scriptures. If this proceeded from a real regard to what the scriptures revealed, it would deserve the more attention; but when the objection is raised merely for cavillation, as, without breach of charity it may be affirmed hath often been the case, it is sufficient to say, that if men will abide only by the terms of scripture, it will be absolutely necessary for them to use the scripture only in the two languages of Hebrew and Greek, in which they are written. For if there be any force in such an argument, it lies against every translation in the world, because these alter the terms, and sometimes impose a sense upon them, which not only is contrary to the sense which other men may affix, but in some instances wide enough from the original. In such a case, there would be no allowable divinity, but what might appear in Greek and Hebrew, to the great edification (no doubt) of the common people, who happen to have souls as well as Rabbies and philosophers, and who in general are at least as desirous of their salvation. The truth is, the *terms*, used in this and other cases, would not offend; if the *things*, which the terms signify, were not disagreeable to the pride and conceit of man. We know, as well as these objectors, that the words *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Person*, *Essence*, and such like, are not to be found in the Bible; but we also know, that the *truths*, which these words relate to, are not only to be found there, but are the very sum and substance of it. If these terms convey the notion of these truths, they answer the use of all terms, which is to communicate the knowledge of things. And as to the terms themselves, they were first employed in opposition to various Heretics, by the Fathers of the Church, for a clearer or more full expression of their doctrines, and have been very properly retained to this day. Mosheim, in his Ecclesiastical History, and some others,\* affect to censure Theophilus Antiochenus for his first using the word Τριας or Trinity. He began at the wrong end; for he should first have proved, that the doctrine itself had no foundation.

\* See Dr. King's *Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church in Russia*, p. 7.

*Sephiroth*, in the divine essence. These denominations are given, not because they can express the *mode* of existence in God, for that is both inexpressible and inconceivable; but because they declare, according to the sense of the scripture, that there are more subsistences than one in Jehovah, which notwithstanding are but ONE Jehovah. We are bold to say, that there is, and can be no contradiction in this assertion; because it is a proposition, delivered to us by God himself; and that, if this doctrine be not true, the rest of the Bible will be equally false, which has no other sanction to command our submission, than that of its being a divine revelation. We do not presume to reason upon God's *es-*

Others have attempted to *confound* the terms *person* and *essence*, when they could not justly throw them aside, and have endeavoured to make the Christian assert, that there are three essences, and consequently three Gods; or, that the names of the persons were but mere names, and consequently that there is but *one* person in the Godhead. These are answered by saying, that person and essence are neither synonymous nor convertible. For though *each* person be *or* the essence; yet the *three* persons together do constitute *the* essence; and though the whole essence is inseparably connected with each of the persons, both in willing and working *ad extra*; yet it cannot be said with any propriety, that the Father is the *whole* essence, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding they are distinctly and by themselves *essentially* divine. Thus it will appear, that though *essence* and *person* differ as to the full extent of the terms, yet they perfectly *agree*, when they apply to the *reality* of the Deity.\* Each person by himself is God, but not *the* Godhead; and the Godhead is *in* each person, but is not *each* person. From this relative distinction it follows, that the *Son* and *Spirit*, being persons in Jehovah, and inseparable from the essence, are both *personally* and *essentially* Jehovah, and consequently, either in *union* or *distinction*, are the object of worship. In fact, as true believers, we do not and cannot worship any one of the divine persons *separate* or *alone*, however we may mention each by themselves; for if we invoke the *Son*, we invoke the *divine essence*, which is inseparable from the *Son*, and consequently invoke the *Father* and the *Holy Ghost*. The same may be observed, if we address the other persons. By this we may understand what our Lord implies, when he says, *He that hath seen me*, [meaning spiritually] *hath seen the Father: I and my Father are one*, &c. so the Apostle, *He that hath the Son, hath the Father also*.—If this doctrine of three persons in one essence; or of the one essence existing indivisibly, though distinctly, in the three persons, were rightly stated, there would seem but little room for the disputes, respecting the proper *object* of worship, and the *inferiority* or *subordination* of the divine persons. This supposed inferiority, applied to Godhead, is an absurdity *in termino*. It originated from the doctrines of the *generation* and *procession*, which, relating entirely to the *modus existendi*, the scripture has not endeavoured to explain, because man could not possibly conceive that *mode*, nor is it necessary for him; and therefore all disputation upon these points is impertinent, and proceeds from the affectation of being *wiser* above what is *written*.

\* We would use the word *person* in the sense of the Augsburg Confession, which says, *Nomine personæ utuntur ea significatione, quæ usi sunt in hac causa Scriptores ecclesiastici, ut significet non partem aut qualitatem essentialis, sed quod propriè subsistit*. Syntag. Conf. Fid. P. ii. 8. However, it would not be worth while to quarrel about the *term*, while the *sense* is true and self evidently understood.



*essence*; because it is impossible that such an essence should be the subject of our reason; and especially too since we know, that our reason cannot determine upon the mode of its own existence, nor specify the constitution of any one property, whether tangible or intelligible, about us. Reason would be unreasonable, if it pretended to define what it cannot reach; or rather becomes ignorance and folly, in attempting assumptions without *data*, and arguing, from what is unknown, to any positive or determinate propositions. It is impossible that God, as to the mode of his existence, should be comprehended by the idea of any of his creatures, and certainly not by so low and imperfect a creature as man; because, in that case, He must first cease to be *infinite* and *eternal*; which attributes are themselves not to be conceived by the utmost extent of human thought and imagination. We can say, what God is *not* from our reason, rather than what He *is*\* In order to comprehend God, creatures must be no longer creatures; or (with reverence be it spoken) God would be no more that height and depth, that length and breadth, which are eternally exploring, but never explored. To know God in this view, would be to possess ideas commensurate with his own; which is a presumption, perhaps, attempted by no man in profession, however in practice it is absurdly and ignorantly attempted every day. Of all philosophers, they are the most inconsistent with themselves, who, asserting that "nothing is in the intellect but what was before in the sense," preposterously fix any notion of a Being, whom no sense can possibly perceive, and whom no intellect but his own can ever explain. Nay, did God condescend to explain the extent of his nature, with all its wonders; the faculties of his creatures must be *equal* to his own attributes, before they could fully conceive that extent and those wonders; and this equality is impossible, on the first view. Reason thus can help us to discern our own ignorance; but cannot lift us up to attainments, which creatures, as creatures, can never possess. Our ideas, aided with our senses, can conceive something of the weight of a mountain, by the weight of a pound; but sense and idea fall together in forming an adequate notion of the weight of the universe of things, because its extent is beyond their perception. Yet this universe is material and tangible; and its *quantity* is sub-

\* Thus it may be safely asserted, that God is not a liar; and that he is without sin, and cannot sin; by which, (as Augustine hath observed) there is no derogation of his omnipotence, because sin and error proceed from *infirmity*; and therefore if God could sin, he would cease to be omnipotent.

ject to our senses as far as they can go. But we presently sink beneath the weight of this extent of substance, and feel ourselves with regard to *matter* about us, but almost imperceptible atoms, lost in astonishment among innumerable worlds.

Matter, however, neither is nor can be infinite, nor eternal, nor omnipotent ; and is far beneath those intelligible forms, of which we can faintly conceive the existence, such as Angels and superior Spirits, of whose vastness or multitude we have some notion, though certainly not a notion commensurate with what they are. If this be true, and we have almost a sensible demonstration that it is true, how must we sink below the *Ens Entium*, the *Being* which includes all this Being within himself, to whom the universe is but a span, and the nations of the earth as emptiness and nothing ? If the mere works transcend our investigation beyond every comparison or idea ; how must the *nature* of the Great Architect himself ascend above our thoughts, and cause us to shrink within ourselves as littleness and vanity ? “ What is *man* (says the “ admirable M. Paschal) considered in nature ?—A nothing in re- “ gard to infinity, and every thing in regard to nothing ; a me- “ dium between nothing and every thing. He is alike removed “ from the two extremes ; and his being is no less distant from “ the nothing, from which he was taken, than from the infinity in “ which he is lost. His understanding holds the same rank in “ the order of intelligible beings, as his body in the extent of na- “ ture ; and all that it can do, is to perceive some appearances in “ the middle of things, in an eternal despair of knowing either the “ beginning or the end. Who can follow these amazing progres- “ sions ?—The Author of these wonders comprehends them, “ which *only* He can do.”\*

From hence it plainly appears, that the powers of reason can have no exercise in a point of this sublime and superior kind ; but, like the powers of sense amidst the universality of matter, must stand still and own, that God’s infinitude is absolutely beyond them.

“ Has reason then no employment in this research, no office in religion ? Are we to give up all understanding and knowledge concerning the Deity, and no longer see with our eyes, or hear with our ears, or reflect with our minds ?” We have found, that it is as reasonable for reason to confess her own weakness here, even were it *perfect* reason, which our reason is not ; as it would

\* Rollin’s *Bellet Lettres*, Vol. iv. B. 5.

be for a man to own his want of strength to remove a mountain or a world. This, then, is the first exercise of true reason, to know that there are *boundaries* to her powers, and to find *where* those boundaries are. We call it *wisdom* to discover this in all other things; and why it should not be so here in the great cause of those things, it seems very difficult to explain. God's intellect alone, from the necessity of his nature, is *unbounded*. He is all centre as to himself, and all circumference to every other being. Our knowledge is a very minute circle within himself, which he has been pleased to describe around us; and if we attempt to look beyond it, we only see a stupendous immensity, which swallows up all our conceptions, and leaves imagination itself to wander in a pathless profound, till it recurs to the earth again. In this confinement of our parts, is it not reasonable and right to understand, that we are thus confined, and that if we pass beyond our line, we shall lose our powers like a machine without a rest, and in that case become truly irrational? If one wise Heathen could justly say, that the maxim *Know thyself* descended *from Heaven*; he, who was called the wisest of the Heathens, did not say amiss, when he confessed, that he *knew nothing but his own ignorance*. Right reason publishes this, because it is a *truth*; and right reason can only be employed upon truth: In any other engagement, it would degenerate into nonsense and folly. And, if it be a truth, that reason, *by searching, cannot find out God*; is it not perfectly reasonable for reason to confess that inability? Surely, it is. What, then, is its next procedure? Is it right to sit still, and go no farther; or because we cannot fly like Angels, are we not to walk as men?—If we had no other beginning or end but *self*, and no other assistance but what *self* can procure; perhaps it might be right to stop here.

But it doth not follow, that because we cannot know the *whole* of God by *ourselves*, we are therefore, unable to know *any thing* of him by all *other* communications. Nor, though none of God's creatures can possibly discover any notion of the *manner* of his existence by their own intellect, is it by any means rational to say, that they cannot be sure, that such and such a manner *doth exist*, when it is discovered to them by Him, who alone is able to inform them. Nor yet is it absurd to say, that He still exists *beyond* their comprehension, though some idea of his existence is brought *within* it; any more than it would be to affirm, that an unfathomable ocean still remains, though a man or a thousand men had received a part of it within them. God alone can make out his discoveries

proportionally to our faculties ; and, in this case he adapts the faculty to the discovery, not merely to indulge the imagination, but to communicate the grace of faith. And, therefore, though we cannot *comprehend* God, as to his incommunicable nature, we may *apprehend* him in what He himself is pleased to communicate. A *whole* may be incommunicable, while a *portion* may be easily taken : And God, as to the *infinitude* of his being, and consequently as to the precise *mode* of the existence of that infinitude, cannot properly and strictly be conceived ; but still his people are said to be, and are, *partakers* of his divine nature. Our eye cannot absorb all the rays of the sun ; and yet it may receive such an illumination from those rays, as may suffice to satisfy us in the *reality* of its existence, as well as in the *kind* of it. For this end, however, the sun must first have shone ; or we should have remained perfectly ignorant of the matter. And we must have had senses fitted for its impressions ; or we could not have known the *nature* of those impressions more than a plant or a stone. Nor should we have been less ignorant of the divine being, if He, in mercy, had not revealed himself to us, and prepared us for that revelation. His revelation alone in this respect removes our mystic darkness ; which is sufficiently proved in the example of the most acute and learned of all the Heathen world,\* who formed such wretched opinions of the *causa causarum*, or first cause, as demonstrate how closely human reason borders upon stupidity in heavenly things.

Now, this revelation being granted, it is the office of reason to *follow*, not to run *beyond* it : And a man cannot be conceived to act more rationally, than when, sensible of his natural incapacity, he implicitly submits to the declarations of Him, who is all wisdom beyond the possibility of error, all truth beyond the reach of deceit, and all goodness beyond the attachment of evil.† If Truth

\* *Vid.* Macrobius in *Somn. Scip.* l. i. c. 14. Cicero *de nat. Deor.* Lactantius *de fals. Rel.* l. i.

† A late noble and masterly writer, speaking of “ the pure and essential doctrines plainly and evidently delivered in the gospel,” has observed, that “ these being made known to us by a *revelation* supported by *proofs* that our reason *ought to admit*, and not being such things as it can *certainly know to be false*, must be received by it as *objects of faith*, though they are such as it could not have discovered by any natural means, and such as are difficult to be conceived, or satisfactorily explained by its limited powers.—Indeed, not even in Heaven itself, not in the highest state of perfection to which a finite being can ever attain, will all the counsels of Providence, all *height* and the *depth* of the infinite wisdom of God, be ever disclosed or understood. *Faith* even then will be necessary ; and there will be mysteries which cannot be penetrated by the most exalted Archangel, and *truths* which cannot be known by him otherwise than from *revelation*, or believed upon any other

itself lay down a principle, it is necessarily a *true* principle, an axiom, a demonstration. If we cannot conceive it, the truth will still be the same, and cannot change its nature; and the question then only is, whether it shall be admitted or rejected, because we have too short an understanding to comprehend it? And if we reject all that we cannot comprehend; we must begin to deny, that we ourselves exist, because we do not understand the *proxima causa*, or even the *mode* of our own existence. Reason itself, then, brings us back to a more sure guide, and says aloud, *That we cannot err in believing the declarations of the God of Truth, and that it is the highest wisdom of man to receive them.*

Here reason and revelation unite to bless the mind, by leading it from those wild mazes of ignorance and delusion, in which pride, infidelity and sin, have conspired man's destruction, and where he could only roam without certainty, without hope, and without peace at the last.

One of the fathers hath well observed, "That ignorance of God is the death of the soul:" And we *all* by nature are ignorant of God; because our souls, since the fall, are all *dead in trespasses and sins*. To recover us from this ignorance, is one great object of the divine revelation: And, to be sensible of this ignorance, is the *first* step to be made in departing from it. The *next* is, to follow our divine leader, as the blest above follow the Lamb, *whithersoever he goeth*. He (we may be assured) can neither err himself, nor lead his disciples astray.\*

We have now some ground to proceed upon, and no longer need, like the bewildered Heathens, to grope in the darkness, *if haply we might feel after God and find him*; for we have the most convincing testimony, from the highest and most infallible evidence, that HE IS, that he exists in a MANNER peculiar to himself, and that this PECULIARITY hath a description, as far as we are able to comprehend it, or, at least, as far as it is necessary for us

ground of assent, than a *submissive confidence in the divine wisdom*. What then, shall man presume that his weak and narrow understanding is sufficient to guide him *into all truth*, without any need of *revelation or truth*? Shall he complain, that *the ways of God are not like his ways, and past finding out*? True philosophy, as well as true Christianity, would teach us a *lesser* and a *modester* part. It would teach us to be content within those bounds which God has assigned to us, 2 Cor. x. 5. *casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*" Lord Lyttleton's *Obs. on the conversion of St. Paul*.

\* *Cæli mysterium doceat me Deus ipse, non homo qui seipsum ignoravit.*—Ambr Epist. 31.

to know. Of course, we are not to seek for descriptions of the Deity *out* of the limits of this testimony, beyond which we are sure only of finding nothing certain, but most entirely *within* those boundaries, where we can hear nothing but the truth. If even Pythagoras could say, "Without light nothing is to be uttered concerning God." Where then shall we find this light, but in his *word*? Till this *postulatum* be admitted, a man has nothing but his own chimerical fancy to support him, which will not only differ from the ten thousand different opinions of ten thousand different men, but also quarrel with itself times without number in the course of his life. But when *this* ground and pillar of the truth is once erected in the heart, the man does not measure *it* by his own whims and conceptions taken from other things; but he makes this the standard and rule whereby to measure *them*. And, after some experience of the justness of this measure in its exercise upon *natural* and *moral* subjects, in which it never was yet detected, by all human wit and malice, of one mistake; he has an increasing encouragement to trust it, by the grace and light of the Holy Spirit its author, in the determination of those purely *spiritual* topics, to which no rule, taken from or existing in *material* objects, can possibly be applied.

The rule, then, by which we are to be guided, in these high and momentous enquiries, is no other than the MIND, RULE, OR LAW of God, speaking and revealing itself, so far as it is right or necessary for us to know, in the *holy scriptures*. These were given by his inspiration, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, [conviction] for correction [*επιστροφῆς*, restoration to rectitude,] for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect [wanting nothing] thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Tim. iii. 16. The prophecy came not in old time, or at any time, by the will of man; for man could have foretold nothing by himself, and bad men especially, in different ages of the world, would never have combined to compose such a system of pure and pious doctrines;\* but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Pet. i. 21. We can call for no greater witness in this cause than God himself; and we owe both to it and our own souls too much, to think of calling for *less*.

God hath revealed his nature under the name of Jehovah, by

\* "If the scriptures were delivered by men; then either by good men or by bad: If by holy men, then they would speak the truth, and not lie; if by bad men, then they would never have set down such strict rules of doctrine to live by, as must condemn themselves." See Dr. Preston's Sermons on the *Divine Essence*, &c. Sermon. iii.

which he declares himself to be the sole independent essence, the necessary existence, in whom and by whom alone all other beings, corporeal or spiritual, exist and subsist. This title expresses his incommunicable, self-existent, infinite, and everlasting nature. He ever *was*, ever *is*, and ever *will be*. This is all we can comprehend of his essence, when we have added every idea of perfection and glory, which are revealed concerning this essence, and which can fill our minds. He is then beyond all idea **THE EVERLASTING SAME.**

If we were *pure* creatures, this unchangeable perfection of the Most High would be an unfailing source of joy to our souls: But, being *imperfect, fallen, and sinful* creatures, all this purity of our Creator is directly opposed to us. We have now no complacency in it, naturally; and cannot have, while we continue in our natural state; for it is repugnant to our lusts and passions, which are all corrupted by sin. God is not only opposite to the sinner; but the sinner feels a diametrical opposition to him, and all that belongs to him.

Hence, the world, in all ages, hath been averse to the revealed Will of God, and to the true disciples of God, who have spoken of that Will and walked in it. That no natural man can savor the things of God, is a proposition, which since the fall ever was true, and which will be true to the end of the world. From this opposition nothing could justly have been expected by the creature but absolute destruction and misery, a taste of which every man feels within him; had not the benignity of his Creator graciously inclined both to procure the means of deliverance, and to publish them to him. His Creator did publish these means; and they are happily in force to this day. In the discovery of so much goodness and mercy in himself for his ruined creature; he was pleased to represent himself under a *variety of names*, either characteristic of his *engagement* to save, or explanatory of the *nature* of his salvation. It was expedient for man's faith and comfort, that this publication should take place; or rather, it was *necessary*, or God would not have made it.

One unalterable attribute which God hath declared of himself, is his *Justice*. *The soul that sinneth, shall surely die. In the day, that thou eatest thereof, dying, thou shalt die. Without shedding of blood (which is spilling or destroying the life) there is no remission of sins.* How then could this justice be satisfied? Not by the sinner's perdition; for then there could be no exercise of *mercy*. Not by the sinner's mere pardon; for then God must

have been a liar, and given up that pure *justice*, which is founded upon his infinite holiness and is absolutely essential to his nature. The sinner was to be saved; and God's denunciation against sin was at the same time to be fully accomplished. Here it was, that infinite wisdom alone could not be at a loss: Here, infinite love only could not meet with despair. *Life* was to be forfeited to procure salvation. But the life of **WHOM**? What created being could step forth and say, "Take my life for the lives of millions of men; and let my perdition prove an atonement for them!" If any finite love could have uttered this tender expression; it would have been madness or presumption for any finite being to have offered the change. No *holy* creature could have been guilty of it; because the root of *presumption* is *ignorance* and *sin*. All the Angels in Heaven, blessed with holiness and wisdom, could not but see, that no finite sufferings could have made an atonement to the infinite justice of their Maker, and that the destruction of one creature could never answer the deserved destruction of millions of creatures,—a destruction to keep equal with the guilt, necessarily without intermission or end. The scripture now breaks in with light divine, and shews; that **HE** only, *whom all the Angels worship*, was to perform this astonishing task of *suffering*; and that **HE** only, who *breathed* into man his original life, would restore him, by a new and incorruptible birth, to the possession of that forfeited life again. The scripture marks these two pronouns **HE** and **HE** by various names descriptive of their *distinction* in point of *personality* or *subsistence*, as well as of their *undertaking* or *office*. From the one end of the Bible to the other, it appears to be the *office* of the *one HE* to atone for, reconcile, and restore; and of the *other*, to effectuate, apply, and complete, all that was necessary for the divine glory, and for human salvation. Thus Jehovah was to be reconciled by Jehovah: Thus Jehovah became a *Saviour*, and the *only Saviour*: And thus Jehovah is the *sanctifier* of those unholy creatures, who are the objects of his mercy and redemption.

Here, then, we see *distinct offices*, undertaken and accomplished by *distinct persons*. We read of *one person*, who is called the Father, who sent his Son into the world to save sinners; we read the prophecies concerning this Son, and their fulfilment in him and by him for the salvation of sinners; and we read of the *Holy Spirit*, sent from the Father and the Son to quicken and bless these sinners to the end.\* To these *three persons* we also find

\* These and many other doctrines of divine revelation, in the delivery of which so many holy men in all ages, unknown to each other, have concurred



ascribed all the powers, glories, perfections, and attributes of the Deity: we hear *each* saluted by that incommunicable name, *which is above every name*, and *distinctly* denominated Jehovah; and we are taught, both by precept and example, to *worship*, in consequence, *all* these persons under *this name*. Yet, after all, we find it written, as with a sun-beam, and most carefully and emphatically delivered, as an infallible and invariable truth, that Jehovah *is* but ONE Jehovah. Either, therefore, these *three* persons, *each* called Jehovah, are but ONE Jehovah; or the revelation and wisdom of God, respecting his own being, contradicts itself. But, as this is impossible, it will follow most irrefragably, that Jehovah *is one* Jehovah in *three* persons, and that the three persons have a *distinct* mode of subsistence in the one Jehovah, though their essence is not *divided*, but the *same*.\* It is absurd in this place to say, that we cannot *comprehend* this; because our reason is not the judge here, but God's own revelation of himself; and this truth cannot depend, for its existence, upon our depraved and unequal faculties. *God hath revealed it*, and *therefore* it is true; is an argument which human wit cannot repel, and which it will be found the height of human imprudence to oppose. If he hath *not* revealed it, then it falls to the ground of itself; but then also fall with it, the whole gospel of God, and the whole salvation of man. There is no alternative in the case, but humble faith or absolute scepticism and infidelity.

Now, as the word Jehovah doth not express the *trinal conjunction* of these three divine persons in the divine essence; another word hath been given us, which affords us a notion of this *plurality*, and yet is so applied as not to mislead us from the *unity*. This name is the title of our present essay. ALEHIM is plural, and intimates plurality: it is frequently used with verbs and nouns singular, and is sometimes applied to unity itself. Thus, in that important text; Jehovah *our* Alehim *is* ONE Jehovah. As a very

and concurred to one and the same end; *in humano cerebro nasci non poterunt* (says the excellent Moræus) could never have sprung from the head of man, but must have been, as appears even from their internal evidence, communicated from Him, who only could give just thoughts of his own being, and confirm the truth of these thoughts by *wonders and signs following*. See much more to this effect in that great work of Moræus. *De verit. Rel. Christ.* c. 25.

\* The Wirttemberg confession of faith states the doctrine in the following words; *Credimus & confitemur, unum solum, verum, æternum, immensum esse Deum, omnipotentem creatorem, omnium visibillum & invisibillum; et in t. e. una ac æternâ Divinitate TRES esse PER SE SUBSISTENTES proprietates seu personæ, Patrem, Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum.* Synag. Conf. Ed. P. ii. p. 142.

learned and excellent author hath observed; "the very sense of this passage leads us to seek for a *plural* interpretation; because, there is no need of a revelation to teach us, that Jehovah our Alehim is one Jehovah, which is no more than one *is* one."\* This word, then, expressing the *plurality* of the divine persons, is proved to mean the *conjunction* of those persons by the use of the singular word Jehovah with it: or the two terms would contradict each other. For if the word Jehovah mean *one* essence, and the word Alehim bear a *plural* interpretation; these divine persons are in some respect that divine essence *conjunctively*, which they are not *distinctly* respecting each other. In other words, there is a *distinction* in the *unity* of the divine essence; or an application of plural words to that essence would be an absurdity, with which no man will surely be hardy enough to charge the wisdom of God.

Since then there exists a *plurality of persons* in the divine essence, we have a full answer at once to the question; how Jehovah could be reconciled by Jehovah; how Jehovah could be an atonement for sinners to Jehovah; and how Jehovah could lead those pardoned sinners to Jehovah? Upon any other ground than that of this plurality, these doctrines, which frame the very constitution of the gospel, would be overthrown as inexplicable and absurd.

The word, in this view, necessarily implies as well as expresses a *covenant*, and, because undertaken for lost sinners, a covenant of *grace*. The Son in Jehovah must have undertaken this redemption, or he could not have been compelled. The Spirit, who promised all that was promised, voluntarily made these promises, or they could not have been forced from him. Deity cannot suffer any impressions of external power; because there is no power *out of itself*. If, therefore, the Son undertook this work, long *before* its fulfilment; and the Spirit promised for ages *before* the accomplishment of his promises; it will follow, that it was because the mind, *counsel*, and purpose of the three persons had *determined*† that it should be done, in the fulness of time. If the counsel and purpose of the three persons *determined* this, it will then follow to have been from an *agreement* or *covenant* existing among them, in the frame of which they all concurred, and in the reciprocal parts of which they all engaged to take their re-

\* Sermons upon the *Law and Gospel*, by the Rev. Mr. Romaine. p. 243.

† Acts iv. 28.

reciprocal share. And as all the ideas or purposes of Jehovah Alehim must, from the necessity of his nature, be *everlasting* and *perpetual*; this covenant could not but be, what the scripture calls it, a perpetual or *everlasting covenant*, a covenant *ordered in all things and sure*, a covenant of *faithfulness* which *never can fail*.

Here, then, we see the reason, the glory, the benignity of this wonderful name; revered by Patriarchs and Prophets, abused by ancient apostates and idolaters,\* but full of grace and truth to every believer in Jesus.

In the former volume, we proved, that the title Alehim belonged to Jesus Christ, respecting his divine nature, as the Son in the ever blessed Trinity: and it is our professed purpose in this essay to shew, that this ascription pertains and is applied to that other person in the Trinity, who is frequently called the Holy Ghost.

It should be premised, however, that as our translators have rendered this name by the word God from the Old Testament, and as it is thus rendered (from the usage of the septuagint) in the New; the indiscriminate use of the terms Alehim or God, as they occur in the two Testaments, will be allowed, if both are proved to be applied to the Holy Ghost.

### THE DIVINITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Gen. ii. 7. *Jehovah Alehim breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life*, or lives.

But in Gen. vii. 22. this breathing of Jehovah Alehim, is said to be *the breath of the Spirit of life*, or lives.

The Spirit therefore is Jehovah Alehim.

Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. *Am I the Alehim at hand, saith Jehovah, and not the Alehim afar off?—Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith Jehovah: do not I fill Heaven and earth? saith Jehovah.*

The same question is asked almost *in totidem Verbis*, concerning the Spirit. Psalm cxxxix. 1—12. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee* מִפְּנֵיךָ *from thy faces?* † And an

\* This name Alehim was very early abused by the Heathen, and applied to the powers of nature, to the heavenly bodies, and afterwards to stocks and to stones. They retained the *sound*, when they had lost the *sense*: and because it conveyed the notion of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, it was perverted by them to signify a plurality of Gods.

† This word is often used for *person* or *persons*, and their immediate presence. It occurs very remarkably in Deut. iv. 37. where Moses, speaking

answer is given, in the course of the Psalm, to this effect; "thou Jehovah Alehim, art every where;" evidently implying the co-equal Omnipresence of the *Spirit*. The question, other wise, is absurd, and the answer impertinent; which no man will dare to assert, who believes the Bible to be a divine revelation.

The Spirit, then, is Alehim and Jehovah.

Acts x. 19, 20. *The Spirit said to Peter—go—I have sent them.*

But, in verse 33, it is said, that they were *present before God to hear all things that were commanded him of God.*

The Spirit, therefore, in one text, is called God in the other.

By comparing John i. 13. with James i. 18. and Gal. iv. 6. we find that true believers are called *the children of God*, because they are *born of God*, and hence have a right to cry, *Abba, Father.*

But they are also said, necessarily and indispensably, to be *born of the Spirit*, in John iii. 5, 8.

Consequently, the Spirit must be God: or God's children have *two* spiritual births, of two *different* spiritual beings, which is equally preposterous and unscriptural.

Luke i. 68, 70. Acts iii. 18, 21. *The Lord God of Israel—spoke by the mouth of his holy Prophets, which have been since the world began.* See also Hebr. i. 1.

2 Peter i. 21. *But, holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

The Holy Ghost, therefore, is God, and the Lord God of Israel.—A multitude of other scriptures may be found to confirm the *major* and *minor* of this argument.

God's people are θεοδιδάκτοι, *taught of God.* 1 Thes. iv. 9. Hence they are called by Jehovah himself לְמִנֵּי, *my disciples*, i. e. those whom I have *taught*, Is. viii. 16.\* The whole verse confirms this point, and is literally thus: *Impress* (or *establish*) *the*

to Israel, says, that Jehovah *brought them out by his faces*, or persons: or, in other language, that the three persons in Jehovah concurred in their temporal deliverance, typifying thereby, the spiritual recovery of all his people. That God should bring Israel out *in his own sight*, according to our translation, is a very poor sense, if any sense at all. Christ is called the *Messenger* or *Angel of God's faces*, because through him his people renew their lost communion with the divine persons in Jehovah.

\* This gracious passage promises the gift of the Spirit and his *inward* testimony to all his people. Its purport may be more clearly expressed by a paraphrase, than by a literal version,—“Mark and fix indelibly as on a rock “the experimental testimony of my grace: seal my Spirit, who is the living *Law*, in the hearts of my disciples.” To this promise there seems a plain reference made by the Apostle in 2 Cor. i. 22. and, Eph. i. 13. See hereafter under the word *Law*.

*testimony ; seal the law in my disciples.* And again, Is. xlviii. 61. *I am Jehovah thy Alehim, who teacheth thee to profit.*

But the Apostle says, that the *wisdom* in the gospel is not that which man's wisdom teacheth, but that *which the Holy Ghost teacheth*.\* 1 Cor. ii. 13. That *the anointing* [i. e. the Spirit, by whom believers are anointed] *teacheth them all things.* 1 John ii. 27. Christ also says, *the Spirit of truth—will guide you into all truth—shall shew you things to come—shall take of the things of mine and shew them unto you.* John xvi. 13, &c. So Neh. ix. 20. *thou gavest thy good Spirit to instruct them, or to make them understand ; intimating plainly, that, without his instruction, they could know nothing aright.*

This combination of evidence proves, that this instructing good Spirit is and can be no other than Jehovah and Alehim, or Lord and God.

Justification of a sinner is and must be an act of Deity alone. All the perfect creatures, in the universe of being, have no more righteousness than what their faculties are fitted to obtain and exert ; and consequently the *whole* of that righteousness is due from them to their Creator, and *so due*, that they can have none to spare for any other creature. But, admitting for a moment, that they had this exuberant stock ; what becomes of their *power* to apply it ; and where do we read the promise of any such *bounty* from them ? Now, as all creatures must fail in this sort of capacity ; it is expressly said, *it is God that justifieth* : And again, that He [God] *justifieth the ungodly ; and that this God is one God, who shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.* Rom. iii. 30. iv. 5. viii. 33.

But divine truth assures us, that the Spirit also justifieth. 1 Cor. vi. 11. *Ye are justified—by the Spirit of our God.*

The Spirit, therefore, is God ; and (because he is not the whole Godhead) a *person*, necessarily, in the one God Jehovah.

Peter said to Ananias ; *why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost—thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.* Acts v. 3, 4. This Scripture contains a syllogism within itself. "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God : " because thou hast lied to the Holy Ghost, who is God. They, who take this Scripture in any other way, only puzzle themselves to make the Apostle speak nonsense. Dr. Clarke, Crellius, and others, have attempted to torture this text to confess a contradiction of itself ; namely : that

\* It has been justly observed, that the antithesis in this text of man and the Spirit is, by itself, sufficient to denote, that the Spirit is God.

Ananias, in lying to the Holy Ghost, did *not lie to God* ; but only to his messenger, an emanation, a virtue, a power, a quiddity.—An absurdity not more unphilosophical, than unscriptural and unworthy of his high titles and character ! But, if the Holy Ghost be not true and very God ; where is the particular horror and aggravation of Ananias's crime ?—A crime which, if committed only against a *creature*, is also committed against the creatures every day.

This Holy Spirit hath dominion and power in the souls of men ; and, therefore, the grace of *faith* is stiled one of his *fruits*, effects, or operations. Gal. v. 22.

But this very *faith* is, by the same Apostle, said to be *of the operation of God*. Col. ii. 12.

What, therefore, is the Spirit, but God ?

From the same possession of power, *the Spirit helpeth our infirmities ; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought*, &c. Rom. viii. 26.

But in Phil. ii. 13. the Apostle says, *it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure*.

Consequently, the Spirit is God.

Upon the same principle is this argument : Believers are *sealed by the Spirit to the day of redemption*. Eph. iv. 30.

But the same Apostle, speaking in behalf of believers, says, that God *hath sealed us*. 2 Cor. i. 22.

Therefore, the Spirit is God.

Another operation of the Spirit is his witness in the soul by his heavenly grace. Hebr. x. 15. *The Holy Ghost is a witness to us*. John v. 6. *It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth*.\*

But, in verse the 9th of the last mentioned chapter, this witness is called *the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son*.

Therefore, the witness of the Spirit, and the witness of God, are *one* ; because God and the Spirit are *one*.

God is an unsearchable being to his creatures ; because he is infinite, and they are finite altogether. There can be no *measure* without degrees of *comparison* : And the divine nature must transcend all degrees, which infer *more* and *less*, for there cannot be *more* or *less*, or any expression of *quantity*, in a being, both unlimited and incomprehensible. Hence it is said ; His *greatness* (or vastness) *is unsearchable*. Ps. cxlv. 3. And it is asked ;

\* See a further illustration of the evidence from this text in that able continuation of Mr. Lindsey's Apology, by William Burgh, Esq. p. 212. 2d Edit.

Canst thou by searching find out the Aloah? Canst thou find out  
 עַד חִלְתָּ שְׂרֵי חֲמֻצָא to perfection the Shaddai, or Almighty? That is  
 canst thou apprehend the whole of him? Job. xi. 7.

But the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things [the pro-  
 found fulness] of God. 1 Cor. ii. 10.

Can any words, therefore, more strongly argue, that the Spirit  
 is equal with God? And if equal, then necessarily God himself?\*

This Holy Spirit is promised to remain with the Church in all  
 ages of the world. There is no true ministry in it but by his or-  
 dination; and no success from that ministry but by his operation.  
 Hence the Holy Ghost is said to make ἐπισκοπους Overseers to  
 feed the flock. Acts xx. 28.

But, in 1 Cor. xii. 28. we read that it is God, who hath set in  
 the Church the various orders of ministers.

And, therefore, it obviously concludes, that the Holy Ghost is  
 God.

It is repeatedly said, that God raised Christ from the dead.  
 Acts ii. 24. et al. Very remarkably in Heb. xiii. 20, 21. The God  
 of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that  
 great Shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect in every good work,  
 working in you that which is well pleasing, &c.

But it is also said, that Christ was quickened by the Spirit.  
 1 Pet. iii. 18. And the text in Hebrews evidently relates to the  
 office-character of the Holy Ghost.

It will follow, then, that the Spirit is God and the God of peace.

The Israelites provoked Jehovah and Alehim, in the wilder-

\* The learned Gomar hath taken this argument of omniscience, and at once  
 proved the divinity of the three persons from it. As his works are not in  
 many hands, the following translation is offered, for the sake of the com-  
 mon reader. "Some particulars are ascribed to the Father alone, to the Son  
 "alone, and to the Spirit alone, which are not to be understood in reference  
 "to the other persons in the Godhead, but only in relation to the creatures.  
 "For instance; Math. xi. 27. No one [οὐδείς, nemo] knoweth the Son but the  
 "Father: i. e. he alone knoweth. But the Son must certainly know his own  
 "self; nor can the Spirit be ignorant of him, because he searcheth all things,  
 "yea [τα βάθη, profunda] the deep things of God. 1 Cor. ii. 10. And here  
 "the creatures are excluded. Again; Christ says in the above text, neither  
 "knoweth τις any one the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will re-  
 "veal him. Here, surely the Father is not excluded from the knowledge  
 "of himself, nor yet the Holy Spirit. Lastly, the things of God knoweth οὐδείς  
 "no one, but the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. ii. 11. And yet beyond all controversy,  
 "neither the Father nor the Son are excluded from that knowledge. But all  
 "these propositions—the knowledge of the Son, to the Father alone—the  
 "knowledge of the Father to the Son alone—and the knowledge of God  
 "to the Spirit alone—are to be understood, not as excluding the knowledge  
 "of one divine person from the other two, but only as excepting the creatures."  
 Illustr. Joh. i. p. 211.

ness, proved him, and saw his works. Comp. Ps. xciv. 8, 9. with Exod. xvii. 7. Numb. xiv. 22. *et al.*

But the Holy Ghost saith—your Fathers tempted me, &c. Heb. iii. 7, &c.

The Holy Ghost, therefore, is Jehovah and Alehim,\* or Lord God.

No creature can possibly be a proper object of *worship*; and therefore no creature can possibly have a *temple* for the worship of itself. The pretence would be impious, and the service idolatrous.

But believers are called in several places *the temples of the Holy Ghost*, and *the temples of God*, indiscriminately. There is not the least difference or distinction, or even the remotest hint of a difference or distinction made between them. 1 Cor. iii. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16, &c.

God and the Holy Ghost, therefore, are *essentially* one, as well as their temples; and thus, *distinctly in person*, or *conjunctively in essence*, are the proper *object of worship* and adoration.

There would be no end to the arguments, which might be brought to prove this truth of the Spirit's divinity from his own Bible. Indeed, as *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*; so the testimony of the Holy Spirit is the power and principle of all revelation, and, consequently, as such, the very life of all the scriptures. Without *Him*, they never would have existed; nor, without his continual *agency*, are they, more than any other book, a blessing in the world.

It appears, then, from revelation, that the Holy Spirit is Jehovah and Alehim, or Lord and God; that he is a *divine person*, and not a mere unconscious instrument, or created quality; and that, accordingly, he hath ascriptions which can belong only to a person in the *Godhead*, who sees, who knows, and who orders all things. In the course of these essays, the evidence of his *divine personality* will be more particularly considered; and therefore we will conclude this point of the Spirit's proper divinity by an argument of a mixed nature, founded indeed, as to its *datum*, upon *divine revelation*, like all other spiritual truth; but more combined with human reason, which some people pretend to exalt against the wisdom of God, but which "purged from its film," becomes its dutiful servant and willing advocate against the daring pretences of unreasonable men.

\* If it be asked, "How can the plural word *Alehim* be applied to *one* of the divine persons?" the reader is requested to turn to the first Volume, p. 20, for an answer.



*God alone is the Creator of all things.* This is a maxim which revelation hath fully declared, and to which the lowest degree of reason must yield a ready assent. All the men, who have ever lived upon the earth, were never able to produce a *new* thing upon it, or to give *life* where it has once been taken away. The intellect of man can only rise to a discovery, more or less, of what exists; and all his power is exercised only upon the matter and forms about him, to which he can *add* nothing of his own, nor from which *diminish* aught by a reduction to nothing. This rule must hold with all ranks of being, except the *Supreme*. But we are informed, by the unerring wisdom of the Most High, that the Spirit, of whom we are treating, hath made, hath fashioned, doth give life and being, to the *heavens*, to the *earth*, and to *men*. This Spirit, therefore is not, cannot be *made* himself: And if he be *not* made; then, consequently, he is not a passing emanation or a dependent creature. But if he be *not* a creature, he must be of the *same substance* with the Godhead of the Father, and the Son; and, being of the same substance, has a right to the title of ברא, or *Creator*, with them in the *unity* of that substance, as the whole *three persons* or Trinity have to the plural denomination of גוראים and עשים the *Creators* and *Makers*. See Eccl. xii. 1. and Is. liv. 5. *et al.* Now, as whatever is not God, must necessarily be a creature; so what a creature is not, *That God is*. If the Spirit, therefore, be not of the same substance with the Godhead, he is unavoidably a *created substance*: And if he be a created substance, then nothing ever was, or ever could be created *by him*. But the word of the living God says positively, that the *heavens* and the *earth*, and man in particular *were created* by him: And, therefore, it will follow, upon the united assent of revelation and reason, that the Holy Spirit as *Creator* is of one substance or essence with the Father and the Son, and consequently is with them, *God over all, blessed for ever*.

Could it be admitted for a moment, that the Holy Ghost is *not* very God, nor a proper object of worship; then the Christian Church *in all ages*\* hath been guilty of the most profane and abominable idolatry, and the ritual of the Church of England,† among others, is contaminated with the abomination of heathenism, by instituting divine service to a creature. The hosts of Heaven sing *Holy, Holy, Holy*, for nought; and (with horror be

\* See Lord Chancellor King *on the Creed*. ch. vi. p. 316.

† See her *Litany*; her offices of *Consecration of Priests*, &c. and the *Doxologies*.

it spoken) God himself hath failed in the performance of his promise, that his people should be *led and guided into ALL truth*, and that *against his Church the gates of Hell should never prevail*. But, if it be impossible, that God should have so left his Church, or that his faithfulness and truth should *thus* have failed; it will follow, that the Holy Spirit hath been rightly the object of their constant adoration, and that he himself hath inspired them with his grace to render to him this tribute of their praise.

The Holy Ghost then is God. But it has been before said, and it is a principle of true religion which even the wiser sort of heathens have assented to,\* that there is but *one* God. If, therefore, the scriptures inform us, that there are three distinct persons, styled Father, Son and Spirit, who have *distinct* offices and energies in the salvation of man; and that *each* of these three doth claim the power and name of the *one* Jehovah; it is obvious, that they are not *one* in the *same respect* as they are *three*, but that there is a real *distinction* in their inseparable union. ONE they must be *essentially*, for there is but *one God*: THREE they must also be *hypostatically* or *personally*; or there is neither Father, Son, nor Holy Ghost, and of course the scriptures are false. The conclusion, therefore, is plain and clear, that these *three persons* are *one Godhead*, and that the one Godhead (if it may be said) is the common *substratum* of the three persons, in which they mutually and inseparably coëxist, “without any difference or inequality.” To express this intercommunity of the divine persons, the *plural* names, ascribed to the Godhead in the Hebrew Bible, appear to have been revealed; and not *honoris causâ*, or for the sake of dignity, as some have imagined; because God can receive no honor from mere sounds, but only from what they signify; and he has given us not the least hint that he has used the plural number for any such purpose. And if the Godhead be *one only person*, with what sort of propriety is the plural number Alehim so often used, when its *own singular* Aloah would, in that case, be so much the fitter term? Besides, it is a question upon his truth, that he should call himself *WE* and *US*, instead of *I* and *ME*, as he frequently doth, if he were only one person or

\* Selden, *de Diis Syris*. Prol. c. 3. To the same purpose, Maximus Tyrius, a heathen, says eloquently: “Amidst all the controversy, discord, and differences of men, you may see one rule and opinion obtaining throughout the world, that *God is one*, the King and Father of all things, with many other Gods, his children reigning with God. This both the Greek and Barbarian maintain; this is asserted by nations both near and remote; and in thus both the wise and the ignorant are agreed.” *Vide plura apud Grœc. de ver. Rel. Christ.* l. 1. §. n. 16. 22

subsistence ; and it would be representing God as complimenting himself, at the expence of his veracity, in the hollow language of earthly courts and princes.

To render this important point still more undeniable, it may not be improper to produce some proofs from the scripture, in addition to those offered under the name Alehim in the former volume, which may evince, that what is said of the Father, is said of the Son and Holy Ghost without reserve or limitation, and that, therefore, they are one in essence though three in person.

God alone, mediately or immediately, can raise the dead.

But the *Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them* : John v. 21. So doth the Son, *whom he will* : Ibid. And the Spirit raised and quickened even Christ himself from the dead. 1 Pet. iii. 18. See also Rom viii. 11.

Therefore *each* of these three must be God.

But there is but *one* God :

And, therefore, these *three* are *one* God.

Col. ii. 2. The Apostle here speaks of *the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*. Now, if the God and the Father in this place are one and the same person ; it will follow upon the same ground, that God, and the Father, and Christ, are all one and the same person ; for the same copulatives unite the one and the other. The Apostle, likewise, could not have called that a *mystery* (to acknowledge which the Colossians were to increase in faith,) which would only imply that these three names meant one and the same thing ; for this would have been playing upon terms, which is a sort of folly not to be found in God's word. But if he meant the doctrine of a Trinity, and that the Father, and Christ as to his divinity, with another person termed God, who, from other scriptures we learn, must be God the Holy Ghost, are three persons in one Godhead ; then he might justly call it a *mystery*, because it is both a divine revelation and a matter of faith, to the acknowledgment of which it would be *the riches of the full assurance of understanding* to obtain. And these last words are as much a mystery to the carnal mind, as the doctrine of the Trinity can be to any mind ; but, however, not the less certain and true.

Haggai ii. 4, 5. *I am with you, saith Jehovah Sabaoth, with the Word which I cut off (or severed) with you in bringing you forth from Egypt, and my Spirit residing in the midst of you, that*

*ye might not fear.\** In this glorious promise are mentioned the three covenanting persons, Jehovah, the *Word* and the *Spirit*; and it doth not seem improbable, that the Apostle had his eye upon this passage, when he wrote the remarkable text of the *three witnesses in Heaven, the Father, Word, and the Holy Ghost*; 1 John v. 7. However, in that text of Haggai there are three persons, as well as in that of St. John; and in both *the three are one.*

Matth. iii. 16, 17. Here we find the Father speaking, *This is my beloved Son, &c.*—to the Son the *Heavens were opened, and upon him descended, for a visible testimony, the Spirit like a dove.*

That the Father is God is allowed by all. That the Son, for whom these words were used, is God, will appear from the second Psalm and the first chapter of Heb. And that the Spirit is God, beside the proof already given, is manifest from Isaiah xi. 2. where he is expressly called the Spirit Jehovah.

But there is but one God.

Therefore the Father, Son, and Spirit are *one* God.

John xiv. 23. The Father *dwells* in believers. Eph. iii. 17. Christ *dwells* in them. Rom. viii. 9. The Spirit also *dwells* in them.

But God *hath said, I will dwell in them, &c.* 2 Cor. vi. 16.

\* The word כרתו rendered in our version, *I have covenanted*, is strictly, *I have cut off, or severed*, and alludes to the cutting in pieces or severing of a clean beast before the Lord, as the instituted type, that Christ, the great purifier of his people, should be so *cut off and severed*, as to be applied to their respective use and benefit. And the institution of the Lord's Supper retains the same idea, that Christ is broken and distributed among his redeemed. The above text in the Prophet refers to the Paschal Lamb in Exod. xii. who was sacrificed and severed, and whose blood was sprinkled upon the houses of the Israelites, that the vengeance of God might *pass over them*, and hence this Lamb was itself called *the Passover*, and its death the *sacrifice of the Lord's Passover*; and it was to be a memorial to them, that this *first-born Lamb* (for it was a male of the first year) was typically slain for the salvation of the *first-born* among the people Israel. Thus Christ *our Passover was sacrificed for the first-born*, who are called the *Church of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven*; and was the *Word* (here mentioned by Haggai) *with whom Jehovah was* (or as the Apostle speaks, *God was in Christ*) and whom He *cut off*, as the *first-born Lamb, without spot or blemish*, to be a ransom for their deliverance from the spiritual Egypt or bondage; and in testimony of which his Spirit would reside in them, *that they might not fear* on account of their sins, but have *everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.*

It is worth remarking from Dr. Allix, that the *Targum* of Jonathan Ben Uzziel the Chaldee, hath rendered this text of Haggai; *I am with you, saith the Lord of Hosts, with the Word which covenanted with you, when ye came out of Egypt, and my Spirit which abideth in the midst of you.* See Dr. Allix's *Judgment of the Jewish Church*. p. 358. Of the *Targums, &c.* see a clear, yet concise, account in Prideaux's *Connect.* Part. ii. B. 8.

Therefore, the Father, Son and Spirit are God.

Matth. xxviii. 19. People are to be baptized in the *name* of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.\*

But there is only *one Lord*, as well as *one faith* and *one baptism*. Eph. iv. 5.

Therefore, these *three* are the *one Lord*, who is the object of this faith, and to whom his people are baptized.

The following text is an invincible argument by itself; and therefore it is not a wonder, that the adversaries of the doctrine should attempt every means to get "well rid of it."

1 John v. 7. *There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and THESE THREE ARE ONE.*†

2 Cor. xiii. 14. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, Amen.*

But it is God who *giveth grace*. 1. Pet. v. 5. *et al.* Therefore Christ is God. It is the Father who loveth and bestoweth love, and he is here called God. And the communion or *fellowship of the Holy Ghost*, must be that, by which believers have *fellowship with the Father and Son*, 1 John i. 3. and which is called *fellowship with God*, in v. 6. From whence it may be inferred, that the Spirit is God; or else the communion of the Church is *with a*

\* "This is an evident demonstration of the Spirit's Divinity; for it cannot be believed, that to *two persons, tertium quid*, a third something should be added, which might only be an *operation* or a *quality*. Nor are we baptized in the name of any operation or grace, but in the name of God. Nor do we believe, according to the creed, in a Spirit which may not be God. And if the sin against the Holy Ghost be unpardonable; against whom but God can such an offence be committed?" Molenæus *de uno Deo*, &c. apud *Theſ. Sedan.* Vol. i. p. 93. If the Holy Ghost in this text be nothing but a *quality*, there can be no reason given, why the other two names, which are coupled with it should be more: And, in that case, it was no material blunder, which those ignorant churchmen made, who, instead of using the above names in Latin, baptized *in nomine patriæ, et filia, et spiritu sancta* *Sum. Concil. per Carranzam.* p. 357.

† Let any unprejudiced person read the context, and he must perceive a flagrant chasm if this text be removed. It is so necessary to the Apostle's argument, that the argument is not complete without it: And it is abundantly more likely, that these remarkable words should be left out and obliterated in copies, made or kept by the ancient heretics, than that they should have been foisted in by the orthodox, who have authorities enough beside for the doctrine expressed in them. If the reader would see a full investigation of this matter, let him consult the excellent Witsius, in his third *Exercit. de Sermone Dei*, and the authorities cited therein. See also the *Letters* annexed to Sloss *upon the Trinity.* Mill *in loc.* To which may be added a very sensible and learned discussion in several Letters signed T., in the *Genl. Magazine*, for the year 1782.

creature ; and the Apostle would bless the Church in the *name* of a creature, which creature he hath placed upon a line with God himself.

These three persons, then, are God ; and, because the Godhead is but *one*, they are one God.

From this *unity* of essence alone, can we conceive the purpose of God in denominating the Holy Spirit by various titles, which belong to the Father and the Son, or why he is called *the Spirit of the Father* ; Eph. iii. 16. *the Spirit of the Son* or of *Christ* ; Gal. iv. 6. Phil. i. 19. *the Spirit Jehovah* or of *Jehovah* (which is just the same, unless it can be proved, that there is any Spirit *in* God, which is *not himself*) Is. xi. 2. *et al.* and the Spirit Alehim ; Gen. i. 2. Being *essentially* one with the Father and the Son, he cannot be a *different Spirit* from them, for then there would be *three Spirits* and *three essences* ; but he is essentially *one and the self-same Spirit*, dividing his gifts according to his will, and inducing faith in the souls of his people. All other people are called *sensual*, *not having the Spirit*, which is explained still further by their *having no hope* and being *without God in the world*.

One argument more, instead of a multitude which might be given, shall suffice.

Mal. ii. 10. *Hath not one God created us ?*

But in Eph. iii. 9. we find, that God (plainly meaning the *father*) *created all things* : In Col. i. 16 that *Christ created all things in Heaven, earth, &c.* And in Job xxxiii. 4. *that the Spirit of God made man, and gave him life* ; that the same *Spirit made the Host of Heaven*, in Ps. xxxiii. 6. and in Is. xl. 13—17. that to the same *Spirit* (who is called God v. 18) *all nations are as nothing*.

Either, therefore, these three *distinct* agents are but *one* God ; and so the syllogism is perfect ; or, there are *three different* Creators and *three* Gods, which proposition will contradict the *major*, and many other texts in the Bible.

Thus it seems very fairly to appear, that the Holy Spirit is Jehovah and Alehim, personally and *per se*, and consequently the object of praise and adoration ; and that in an essential conjunction of this Holy Spirit with the Father and Son, who likewise are personally and *per se* Jehovah and Alehim, there is one only true, infinite, everlasting, incomprehensible, Lord God ; by whom, in whom, and from whom are all things, to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen.

That Jehovah, therefore, exists in three persons, is a truth, which he, who only could know it, hath been pleased to reveal in

his word: but it may be an everlasting truth *in itself*, and yet no more truth *to us*, respecting our comfort from it, than it is to fallen Angels, or the ground beneath our feet. The question then occurs; "what interest has the soul of a believer in this truth of a *Trinity*, and of the *divine personality* and *self-existence* of the *Holy Ghost*?" All divine truth hath its *use*; and the more clearly it shines (and clearly it would ever shine but for the clouds of sin and corruption,) the more *comfortable* and *reviving*.

The first great advantage, which the Christian perceives to belong to him, in this doctrine of a *Trinity* is—the covenanted, certain, and unchangeable purpose of the whole Godhead, both in establishing the *means* and in securing the *end*, of his eternal salvation. He perceives, that the means are equal to the end, and that the end must be the result of the means; because the great agents, who use the means, are divine and infinite, can neither be mistaken in their views, nor be disappointed in their purposes. *Jehovah, who fainteth not, neither is weary*, is the Alehim, and is engaged, by an everlasting covenant existing in his divine personality, to create, recover, and preserve, the souls of his people. Nothing, therefore, can arise which hath not been *foreseen*; no impediment thrown in the way, which was not *foreknown*; no difficulty, but which was *designed to be overcome*. The great sin of Adam, that fountain from which innumerable streams of iniquity have overflowed the world, hath only rendered this covenant more illustrious, by proving, that where *sin did abound, grace could much more abound*, and that *nothing*, which concerned the happiness or misery of myriads of souls for everlasting ages, *is too hard for Jehovah*. It is not too hard indeed for Him; but it would be infinitely too hard for all *created* strength, whether in earth or Heaven. None but Jehovah could reconcile to Jehovah: none but himself had either will, or love, or power, to accomplish the reconciliation. This *certainty* and *perfect ordination*, then, of the everlasting covenant, is a ground of great *consolation*, to all, who, through faith, have an interest in it. It is a consolation, which they are *privileged, invited, and commanded* to take; that God may be glorified in the *felicity of his chosen*, even in the presence of this miserable world. If the *Father* hath determined to *love*; if the *Son* hath completely *redeemed*; if the *Holy Spirit* hath begun to *bless*; if thus the Alehim in Jehovah, the three persons in one essence; or Jehovah Alehim, the Unity in Trinity; are engaged for his people's happiness and salvation: what men, what

devils, what height, what depth, what other creature, or what creatures all together, can frustrate his design, extinguish his love, and resist the eternal impressions of his power! O could believers see, on what a *rock of eternity* their hope and all their eternal concerns are divinely built; they would blush for shame at those fruitless anxieties, those foolish vexations, by which they are too often engrossed, through this momentary scene, and by which they at once so frequently dishonor the cause of religion, and disgrace themselves in the sight of a watchful world! They would blush again to think, that the miserable slaves of lust and Hell should pretend to talk of more happiness, than *the children of the kingdom* who are privileged to have God's *perfect* peace in their hearts, and are born for his *eternal* peace in Heaven.

Another comfort, which the believer hath a right to draw from these truths, is, that having the *earnest* of the Spirit in his soul, first in quickening from the *death of sin*, and then working faith, hope, and love towards Christ; he is privileged to receive some degree of *assurance* from the word of God, in proportion to the evidence of this earnest from the Spirit of God, that he who hath begun the good work, will carry it on to perfection. The written word declares the divinity of this spiritual agent; and this agent brings the heart to the word, by which he gives his own divine persuasion; so that the believer can say, "I set to my seal upon God's revealed truth, and I am enabled to do it by the grace of God's enlightening Spirit; upon this united testimony in my behalf, I believe, that God's love cannot *fail*, but that I am *saved in Jehovah with an everlasting salvation.*"

Come, believer; hast thou a right to this language; and are these thy privileges; and wilt thou, then, being *the king's son go sad* all thy days? a *stranger*, indeed *intermeddleth not with the joy of God's heritage*; but *thou art no stranger any more*; thou hast an unalienable claim to the choicest delights of thy Father's house, and art more welcome to enjoy them all, than to pass by the least of them. Thou art *not straitened in Him* at any time; but only *in thine own bowels*. *In thyself* originates every cause of complaint; not in thy merciful Lord. Thou canst not exhaust an infinite ocean of everlasting good; but thou mayest, as all too often do, shut thine own mouth, and taste for a time not a drop of it. *O the depth of unbelief!* may we all cry, as well as, *O the depth of the riches of God!* If this *deceit* did not *answer* to the other, and confound it; the strongest believer in the world would not swim long upon the surface, but must be swallowed up in the



dismal abyss. And yet if the eye be but opened, and the heart graciously enlarged; here is *enough and to spare* of mercy, love, and faithfulness in God, an infinite abundance of such *durable riches* as are commensurate with the existence of God himself, and flow incessantly from his fulness. If our harps were but in constant tune; that is, if our spirits were but in purer harmony, or more exact unison with *God the Spirit*; we should feel as well as utter the Psalmist's fervent song, which that Spirit inspired; *how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up\* for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men!*—*O love Jehovah all ye his saints; Jehovah preserveth the faithful and completeth with exaltation him that doth excellency.† Be of good courage and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in Jehovah!* Psalm xxxi. 19, 23, 24.

Afflicted Christian; thou, who art tossed and exagitated either in body or in mind, and often in both: Here is comfort, rich comfort, and everlasting consolation, for thee! Thou, indeed, art *writing bitter things against thyself*: and bitter things most truly may be written of thee: Thou canst not set down a thousandth part of the evil, which exists in thy heart, and which hath polluted thee before God, through every day of thy life. If the world did not complain of thee; if thy friends did not murmur; if perhaps the very partner of thy cares, who should be as thy right hand, did not concur to annoy: The sense of thy own sinfulness, weakness, unprofitableness, and deserts, would be sufficient in the hand of the enemy, to harrass and perplex thy wearied soul. But, fear not, thou miserable worm. Take thine eyes from the earth, and look upward. Look, with the Bible in thine hand, upwards to Him, who sent it down, in pity and grace, to just such miserable worms as thou art. All thy fellow-creatures have cause for the worst of thy feelings; and, if mercy had opened their eyes, their hearts for a time would ache, and mourn, and droop, even as thine. Thou art *alive*; therefore thou canst *feel*: The dead in body have no sensation, nor have the dead in soul. Ask for a

\* מְסֻמֵּי *hidden*; i. e. from the world. Hence God's wisdom is called mystery or *hidden wisdom*, his people are termed *hidden ones*, and their life is said to be *hid* with Christ in God. *The world knoweth us not* (saith the Apostle) *because it knew him not.*

† To render this clause in a good sense, seems more agreeable to the context which is addressed to God's people, than the common and other versions which have followed the lxx. The Psalmist is proposing motives of comfort; and certainly it is a greater cause of joy to the faithful, that Jehovah will *complete* their salvation, than that he will *reward a proud doer*, which is no part of that salvation.

ray of this Spirit to illuminate thy mind, while thou readest his holy book, that his promises, his *exceeding great and precious promises*, may not be passed over unnoticed, but stand like so many Angels in the way to point thee to rest, and to thy best good hope through grace. Reading by his light, thou wilt find (and O that thou mayest find it to thy unspeakable joy!) that there is not one harsh word, not one severe denial, to the weakest, the poorest, the worst returning sinner, who *longs* for mercy because he sees his *want* of it. On the contrary, just such as thou art (behold thyself as vile as thou canst,) are welcome only to Jesus; and for these poor, halt, maimed and blind, is the rich feast of the kingdom prepared. *These* thy sovereign Lord *filleth with good things*: The *rich* alone, those who conceit themselves to be full and increased, *he sendeth empty away*. If thou seest thy need of God's mercy; it is because God hath already had mercy upon thee.— Trust in him, therefore, and implore the gracious power of his omnipotent Spirit; thou shalt then find, that his own faithfulness to his word shall keep thee from falling, and in the best time relieve thee from all thy impressions of sorrow. Live upon this promise, and soon shalt thou have it fulfilled: *If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* Ask, and receive: Seek, and thou shalt freely obtain.

The *omnipotence* of this Spirit is the Christian's unfailing ground of hope. He hath indeed *a strong Lord*, and one as *wise* as he is strong, and *present* as he is wise. Nothing, concerning his people, escapes his notice; and all *their* holy cares are his own, and *his own* to relieve or fulfil them. O what a kind Benefactor have we, who are saved by his grace! He saw us in our sins, and had mercy upon us, nay, loved us, when we were abominable and deformed: He loved us to purify us from our abominations, and to deck us with the beauty of his holiness. After all this cost and concern, shall he cease to love us, and be gracious? Shall his hand stop its bounty, or his heart refrain to love? He might cease to love us, if his motives of regard arose from our faithfulness or worth; but standing, as they do, upon his own sublime benevolence; fixed, as they are, upon the Rock of ages; and arising, as they have done through all eternity, from an irrevocable covenant of everlasting truth: The *Father* must lose his paternal affection, the *Son* all the merit of his suffering and obedience, the *Holy Spirit* his operation and effect, and the whole Godhead change or cease to be; ere we, who are brought into the bond of this

covenant and have cast our souls upon it, can be lost after all and sink into perdition. This is our privilege, to *know* that we have an *unchangeable God*, and that, *only* through him, we are kept *unchangeable* too. In this view, we are made both happy and holy at once: *Happy*, because we are safe in our God; and *holy* in him, because we are led to depend upon him, and to receive out of his fulness grace for grace. This grace is the *pledge* of our interest in the covenant, and cannot be abused. Men may pervert the *notion*, but they cannot corrupt the *thing*; for the possession of the *pledge* will always spur the diligence, holiness, and hope of those, on whom God hath been pleased to confer it.

And how it doth fill every gracious heart with wonder and joy, that God should be pleased to  *dwell thus in very deed with man !* 2 Chron. vi. 18. That he should have thoughts of love and complacency for sinners, traitors, and rebels! “Next to the love of Christ, (said a good man) in taking our nature, we may wonder at the love of the *Spirit*, in taking up his residence in such defiled souls, and turning a dungeon into a temple, a prison into a paradise, yea, an Hell into an Heaven.” And in another place, he adds, “To make so little grace so victorious over so great a mass of corruption; this requireth a Spirit more than human; this is to preserve fire as in the sea, and a part of Heaven as it were in Hell. Here we know where to have this power, and to whom to return the praise of it.”\* It is matter of wonder upon *earth* to every believer, that God should have mercy upon him; and he is ever ready to ask, “*why me, Lord, why me? Who am I, and what is my Father’s house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? I deserved nothing but Hell; and thou hast placed me in the full view of Heaven! I sought death in the error of my life; and thou hast given me hopes of life everlasting!*”—And it is a matter of wonder, and will always be a matter of wonder, in *Heaven* itself: The very *Angels* desire to *pry* into it. The love of their Maker is so deep, that, though they *pry*, they cannot see to its bottom: It is too vast and profound for even the capacious and subtle intellect of Angels. The world above is full of rapturous astonishment, and admires the love, which was stronger than death, and the pity, which encountered rebellion to save. All Heaven exults in the effusion of unbounded mercy, and welcomes the sinner, the re-

\* Dr. Sibbes in his *Bruised Reed*; one of the most comfortable books of practical Divinity, in our language, for mourning and afflicted Christians. His *Fountain Sealed* is another excellent work, and written in a stile above his time.

claimed, the pardoned, the exalted sinner, to his mansion of peace. And Heaven sees and owns, that the whole is everlasting grace, and that its lowest tribute is everlasting glory. Let us join, beloved souls, let us join this delighted, this majestic throng, in pouring forth the richest praise of our souls for benignity and blessings of grace showered down, not upon them, but upon us. Shall they therefore triumph with transport for us? And shall not *we* join with them to acclaim aloud for *ourselves*? Shall human hearts be dull; when for these very hearts all Heaven is full of joy!—O forbid it mercy, truth, and love divine!—Come, thou gracious Spirit, for *thou* only canst inspire thankfulness and praise; come and inspire them into every believing soul! O fill us with the sense of that faithfulness and truth, which stooped so low from Heaven, only for the purpose of leading us thither; nor let us dishonor such unmerited bounty, either by living *without* its power, or *beneath* its dignity and our own! Thou hast *exalted* us by grace; suffer us not to *debase* and *degrade* ourselves by sin: But complete, O complete, in thy glory, all thy promises concerning us, and our everlasting relation unto thee! Then, with unabating ardor, shall we join the innumerable hosts above, and shout, as they shout for ever; *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who wast, and art, and art to come:—Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created!* Even so: Amen.



## ADONAI.

THE sense of this title hath been explained in the former volume, in which it was observed, that our translators have usually rendered it by the word *Lord*, and printed it in common or small characters, to distinguish it from the word JEHOVAH, which also they have rendered LORD, but have placed it in Roman capitals. But though this rendering has been adopted by them in imitation of other translators; the sense of the two words *Jehovah* and *Adonai* is much more remote from each other than their *sound*.

As this title is applied to Christ in almost every page of the Bible, because he is the *ruler and disposer*, the *basis and support* of his redeemed; so is it addressed to God the Holy Ghost, for

the very same reason. If Christ and the Spirit were not persons in the Godhead; this title would be used, to convey the idea of their respective offices and power in redemption and regeneration, improperly and falsely; and, consequently, the book of God would not be the record of truth. But as this is impossible, it will follow, that the application of this name, in its spiritual intention, is an argument or proof of the divinity of the second and third persons in the Trinity; and, therefore, all that will remain under this head, is to prove, that this application hath been made, and made by God himself. That Christ is so denominated, we have already proved; and that the Spirit claims the same title, it is the further purpose of this essay to shew.

It is the office of the Spirit to *reveal* the mind, the will, and the things of God. This the Apostle fully declares in 1 Cor. xii. and asserts that whatever *gifts, ministrations, or operations*, are enjoyed by or wrought in the people of God, whether wisdom, knowledge, faith, the power of healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, possession and interpretation of tongues; *they are all worked by one and the self-same Spirit, who divideth to every man severally as he will.* For this reason, among other names, the same Apostle styles him the *Spirit of Revelation* (Eph. i. 17.) because, without him, was no revelation given to man: And, when he says, in another place, that to God's people are *revealed* the things which *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, but which God hath prepared for them that love him*; he immediately adds, that *God hath revealed* these things to them *by his Spirit*; for the Spirit (and only the Spirit) *searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* 1 Cor. ii. 9, &c. To this purpose speaks another Apostle: *The prophecy came not in old time, or at any time, by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* 2 Pet. i. 21. All this taken together proves, that the Spirit is the immediate agent of all *prophecy and revelation*; that he dictated the written word; and that the mind of Jehovah hath at all times been manifested and known by his inspiration alone. This proposition of itself might suffice to prove his *divinity*: The following scriptures, by way of assumption, do fully confirm it.

Isaiah xxii. 14. *It was revealed in mine ears by Jehovah Sabaoth; Surely, &c. saith Adonai Jehovah Sabaoth.* Amos iii. 7, 8. *Surely Adonai Jehovah will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the Prophets. The lion hath roared, who can but fear? Adonai Jehovah hath spoken, who can but prophesy?*

iv. 18. He—that declareth unto man what is his thought,—Jehovah the God of Hosts is his name.

The Spirit, therefore, who *revealeth* according to these words, is the God of Hosts, Jehovah Sabaoth, and Adonai Jehovah Sabaoth:—The great characters, and peculiar titles of the Most High.

The following text is an argument, for this truth, of itself.

Ezek. viii. 1. *The hand (or power) of Adonai Jehovah fell there upon me.* In the third verse he explains who this was, for he says, that *the Spirit lift me up, &c. and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem.* In the conclusion of this, and in the succeeding chapters, we shall find, that the same Spirit attends the Prophet throughout the vision; and that, in chap. ix. 8. the Prophet falls down upon his face, and invokes him by the title of Adonai Jehovah, which title is repeated to him, with other titles of the highest import, in the continuation of the prophecy. The Spirit, therefore, is Adonai Jehovah.

One argument more shall serve; for as the word Adonai, in connexion with the name Jehovah, is not and cannot be applied to any creature; so if it be but *once* found in that connection and thus applied to the Spirit, it will sufficiently prove his right both to *that*, and to all other essential titles of the Deity.

Isaiah lxi. 1. *The Spirit of Adonai Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me, &c.* Now if the Spirit of Adonai Jehovah, or the Spirit of God be *different* from Jehovah himself; there is something in the nature of God, which is *not* God. It is of no importance *what* that *something* be: for if it be not truly and essentially God, it must necessarily be a *creature*: And then it will follow, that God had *no* Spirit of his own, or that there was no Spirit of God, till it was *created*. Take it in another view. If there be something in God, which is *not* God, in truth and essence; then the Deity is not a pure, simple, uncompounded Being, but composed of *parts*; which parts are, from a necessity of nature, *limited, finite and various*, because nothing but a *whole* or *unity* can be infinite, unbounded, and eternal. This notion, therefore, is not only repugnant to the Bible, but even to the first principles of common sense. Take it in a third form. If there be any being in God, or of God, which is not truly God, or (what amounts to the same) is inferior in any respect to any person in the Godhead; then it is impossible to avoid the inference, that there are either *more* Gods than *one*, or that there is an existence in God, which is not coessential with his nature, and con-

sequently not of it. The first branch of this dilemma contradicts one of the most express truths in the Bible, and is evident Polytheism. Deut. vi. 4. The other (as was before observed) militates against the *simplicity* of the divine nature, which, being *one* and therefore uncompounded, admits of nothing heterogeneous or additional.—As all these interpretations of this and such like texts, then, are obviously erroneous and absurd, both contrary to the revealed word, and contradictory to every idea which man hath been taught therein to form of the nature of divine things; it is both wise and safe to reject them, and to follow only the declarations of Him, who can neither deceive nor be deceived in this matter. If the Father and the Son are *one* (as Christ himself declares) and if there be but *one Spirit*, who likewise with the Father and the Son is *one Godhead*; as the scriptures expressly determine, from *his own* divine authority; we may be as sure of this, as of any other revealed truth, that Jehovah and the Spirit of Jehovah can be *ONE* only in *one undivided essence*, however they may be distinguished in respect of *person*. Nor would it have been any force upon the original, if it had been translated, as some learned men do translate it, the Spirit Adonai Jehovah, without the particle *of*; because whatever can be predicated of God, *is* God himself. To this may be added, that, when we say the *Spirit of a man*, nobody understands by the phrase any thing in a man *different* from his being, but rather what is entirely essential to it, and without which he doth not exist at all. And in like manner (for it is an Apostle, who draws this very comparison, 1 Cor. ii. 11.), when the scriptures mention the *Spirit of God*, they certainly mean *God the Spirit* who only *knoweth*, according to the truth or mode of their existence, *the things of God*; because he only *searcheth all things, yea, the deep things* (or the profound) of God. When God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the *Holy Ghost and with power* (which is the Apostle Peter's exposition of the text from Isaiah;) he means evidently what St Paul expresses by, *God was in Christ* (2 Cor. v. 19.), that is, *God the Spirit*, who formed and endued his human nature in the virgin's womb, and to whom only all power can belong: And that it doth mean this, is further evident by what St. Peter immediately adds, in the above text of Acts x. 38.—*he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the Devil; FOR GOD was with him*. Thus, *God being with him*, according to the Apostle, is tantamount to the Spirit Adonai Jehovah being *upon him* (or *with him*, as the particle *by* might have been rendered.)

according to the Prophet: And so the prediction *is* completed, but in no other sense *can* be completed. See also Luke iv. 18. where our Lord claims the accomplishment of this prophecy *in* himself.

It seems then fairly and clearly proved from the scriptures, which alone are competent to give evidence in this cause, that the *Spirit* of Adonai Jehovah is neither more nor less than Adonai Jehovah himself, and is consequently possessed of every divine attribute and perfection in conjunction with the Father and the Son, who, according to their *essence* and as *persons* in the essence, have called themselves by this very name. The name indeed does not express *how* they exist in that essence, for no words can express or thoughts conceive an *infinite* nature; but it conveys a notice to his people, that the Trinity in Unity is the Adonai, not for their speculation, but for their faith and salvation.

What then, may we ask, is the *mind of the Spirit*, in taking this name upon himself? For God doth not take *names* and use *words* in an arbitrary manner, without any connection with some doctrine or sense, as men too often do; but speaks, as well as acts, with truth and precision. It is right, therefore, to inquire, what *doctrine* the Holy Ghost would convey to our understandings by this denomination, and what *practical use* is to be made of it by the grace of faith in our souls. His doctrines cannot be mere notions or opinions, but must have an important relation to the welfare and happiness of his people.

As he is the divine agent of the *new creation*, the "Lord and giver of life," the teacher and preserver of the redeemed; this blessed Spirit becomes their gracious Adonai, the *hinge* on which they move, the *basis* on which they stand. If He were not true and very God; He could not *be* what He calls himself to them; nor *do* what he promised to do for them: Nay, it would be rank and abominable idolatry in them, to expect in that case, any such blessings of him. They ought not, they dare not, depend for life, peace, and salvation, upon a creature: And they would not, if they might; because they are *privileged* to rest upon the *everlasting arms*, and to *stay themselves upon their God*. They could not endure such insufferable nonsense and blasphemy, as would direct them to a *finite* or *dependent* being, for the *creation* of their spiritual and eternal life, and for the *bestowment* and *maintenance* of that life to them in a world, where every being, but the divine, receives all it has for itself from the merest grace and bounty. Nor will they, while they follow God's word, build upon any foun-



dation, but what he himself hath laid. On the contrary, they are both taught by this Holy Spirit, (according to the promise that *they shall all be taught of God,*) and are directed by his holy and infallible word to look unto Jehovah alone, not only for *salvation* at large, but for *every branch* of salvation.—Are they *dead in sin*? He is *the Spirit, that quickeneth*. Do they want strength? Their *strength is in Jehovah Sabaoth, their Alchim*, (Zech. xii. 5.) yea, they have *everlasting strength in him, who strengthened them with might* indeed, *by his Spirit, in the inner man*. Do they need grace? He is the *Spirit of grace* to bestow grace, and even the *Spirit of supplication* enabling them to ask for the bestowal. Seek they for comfort and peace in their souls? He is the *God of all comfort*, and that blessed Jehovah, who *ordains, decrees, or determines, peace for them, and works all their works in them*. Is. xxvi. 12. Are they sensible of their blindness and ignorance, and do they wish to be *led into all truth*? He is the very *spirit of wisdom*, not only to give, but to *seal instruction*. His word, enlightened by his power, clears away the mental darkness of our nature, and affords the convinced sinner *an understanding that is true—even a right understanding in all things*. Do they hope for victory over death? He is the *spirit of life* itself, who bears up his people's hearts beyond that last great enemy of man; and he so *swallows him up in victory*, that death is no more death to them, but the blessed harbinger of life eternal. Look they for glory? This *Spirit Adonai* is also the *Spirit of Glory*: nor will he leave one of his people, till he hath brought them to the full possession of *glory, honor, and immortality*. And then not one of them can leave him: For they shall be in God, and God will be ever in them: They shall be one with Christ in the communion of this Spirit, and shall bless the favor, love and mercy of a triune Jehovah, world without end.

From all this, fully supported as it is by the divine testimony of the written word, let the Christian, let any man judge, if so high and gracious an agent, capable of performing such sublime, such omnipotent, infinite, eternal, and omnipresent acts in and for the redeemed, can possibly be *inferior* to Jehovah himself, or *any other* than Jehovah. They, who can suppose such an inferiority, either know not or consider not the nature of these operations, and so consequently, *not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God*, ascribe those things to created might, which are inconsistent with such a might, and of which God in his word hath taken a peculiar care, that they shall not be ascribed to it. Hence, besides

a thousand passages of scripture which directly secure to himself all the efficacy and glory in the work of salvation, his very *names*, which he hath revealed himself by, and this name Adonai among the rest, are so many demonstrations of his own necessary activity in this great cause, and of the inability of all creatures to devise, to carry on, and to accomplish it. On the other hand, the names of his Church and people, are all names of a *passive* or *helpless* sense, and are evidently calculated to impress them with a conviction of their entire dependance upon Jehovah, in his persons and offices of grace, and of their utter incapacity to quicken, restore, support, and to perfect any thing for themselves. Critics take great care to explain the terms in the classical writers, which relate only to the poor affairs of this world, in order to obtain a right understanding of those authors, though the terms themselves are often vague and arbitrary sounds, with very little information or meaning: And if the same attention were paid to the language of God's holy book, filled as it is with the most important matter for man's present and eternal happiness; it seems almost impossible, that such absurd mistakes, such bold positions, as have been uttered and avowed, in direct opposition to the very *words, phrases* and *scope* of the whole scripture, could ever have been foisted in to the world. In public affairs, and the concerns of time, one has often reason to regret the *industry* of evil, which in men is abundantly more quick and active than their good intentions; but here the evil arises, as it might seem, from *indolence*, or *inattention*, itself. For, though nothing but divine grace can affect the faculties of the soul and give them an experimental perception of divine things; yet common sense can easily see, that Creator and created, Agent and patient, Redeemer and redeemed, or the like, are relative terms, and cannot subsist in the same object. Man, therefore, can be but one part of these: And it seems easy enough for a child to say, which part that must be. These and many other *terms*, are not nicknames, imposed without sense according to fancy, but are formed to convey the notices of the most necessary doctrines; and further, when those doctrines are expressed more at large and run into *phrases*, these terms harmonize with great force and exactness to compose, strengthen, and enliven the phrases. As these phrases, likewise, relate to *one subject*, for which both in themselves and in their component terms they are admirably fitted; so, in their great compilation, they universally agree, and make altogether one book of one great truth, which (rightly understood) is bright and beautiful as well in

its parts, as in that glorious whole, into which those parts are resolved. It resembles one vast and noble arch; every stone of which is *fitly framed*, has a just contact with, and affords its proportion of strength to all the rest. To some minds indeed, the parts may appear to be loose stones, without connection; but the true believer sees the union, and is enabled to view the beauty, order, and grandeur of the whole. If Voltaire, and other unhappy infidels, had understood these terms, and perceived how exactly they were squared for their subject and purpose; much of their ignorance and blasphemous wit would have been silenced by a wisdom, which wiser men than themselves were never *able to gainsay or resist*, and which sooner or later will make it appear, (according to the Apostle) that they have only been *sporting with their own deceivings*.

The sense of this term Adonai, perfectly agrees with the office and agency of the Holy Spirit, in effecting and completing his people's salvation. He is the arranger, the disposer, the perfecter, of the whole. He judges, what is best for them: And his judgment, not depending, like our judgment, upon the comparison of ideas or things which are complex and various, but existing in himself as the essence and ground of all truth; is a *simple determination* and *decree* of grace or providence, for the welfare of his chosen. Thus he judges from himself, and like himself: as the true and very God. And being the great mover, He is necessarily the great foundation, of all salvation. It cannot subsist, or be carried on, without him.—All these truths may we learn from this blessed name, which he has graciously assumed to convey our instruction in them; and, in consequence of his tuition, ought we to cast all our hopes, cares, and confidence upon Him, as upon that Almighty agent, who is engaged to work for us, and in us; and as upon that eternal foundation, which can never sink, or cease to support us.

If a wise Heathen, Thales, could believe, that "*Providence* [which contains much of the sense of the name Adonai] extends to the lowest of all beings, and that nothing is hid from it, no not even that which is most minute;"\* how ought the real Christian to be persuaded of the constant, immediate, and invariable attentions of this Spirit Jehovah, who *is* Providence indeed with a higher name, but who carries on Providence for a higher end, than the valuable Heathen could conceive? What confidence may he not

\* From Philoponus in his comment upon Arist. *de An.* in Harris's *Pleæce, Arrang.* p. 435.

place in Him, *who knoweth his down-sitting, and his up-rising, and who understandeth his very thoughts afar off?* To whom nothing in nature is hidden or unexplored; and how much less the concerns of his people? *Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered,* says Christ; those affairs of our bodies, which we have not numbered ourselves, or make any account of, and which we lose without care or pain. He watches over *each* of his people, as though he had but that one; and he watches over the *whole*, as though they were one single frame. O could they but *trust in him at all times* as they are privileged, nay, authorized by his word to trust in Him; what a different face would the Christian world present to us! What holier and what happier lives should we see! What triumphs over the follies and pursuits of the world; what victories over the flesh and its lusts; what resistance to the Devil and his works; would appear to honor and adorn the Christian's *high vocation!* Instead of a cold, languid, or at best a lukewarm conversation about spiritual things; what melting fervor, what holy and strong affection, would possess the souls of men; if they lived more according to the word, and more upon the Spirit for his application of it to them! It would be a little Heaven within their hearts, if this gracious Adonai were more depended upon by professors: And they would see, that it is all but poor and wretched stuff indeed, mere lumber and waste, which often occupies his proper room, and clogs, and clogs, and wears them out—for no other end, *but* their weariness. Nor would there be any longer such a *wide chasm* between their faith and their lives. If religion, indeed, consisted in *disputing*; the present, as well as some former ages, is religious enough. "There has always been a vast multitude of disputers about Christianity, and always (in the comparison) but very few Christians."\* But to *talk* of divine things, and to *enjoy* them, are as different as substance and shadow: And to dispute about Christ, without the Spirit of Christ, is only *beating the air* and crowning a man's labor with his pains.

"Let me then (may the Christian say) have this *unction from the Holy One*, that I may not only *know* the things of God, but know them *aright*—know them to be *his*—know them to be *mine* in him! May I ever be afraid of naked, barren speculations; as children are of spectres! May it be my aim, through the help of this Spirit Adonai, to seek not only for *substance* in divine things,

\* Regaltius in Commoelian. apud Cave. *Hist. Lit.*

out for their *enduring substance!* Let me grow *rich in faith*, rather than in *notions*, that I may be humbled in myself where I ought to be humble, and lifted up in the Lord, where only in fact I can be exalted! Amidst a world of opinions, may I see it my privilege and my duty to rest upon him, who can never change, and upon his excellent word, which can never be broken! Let me never be taken with any fine-spun speculations of salvation; but be ever pressing that the life and power of it may be established within me!"—This is the cry of the believer's heart; and it is blessed with a joy, *with which a stranger to God and this cry intermeddleth not.*

"Keep within the revealed word (said an excellent man) and, in the patience and comfort of the scriptures, live by hope. No flesh can see God and live. Poor man would be wise, and see the upshot of all things; but the vessel of his understanding cannot hold it."\* When men would be wise *above* what is written, they are never wise *in* what is written. *They cannot govern themselves, who will not obey God.*

Happy is the believer, who knows, by gracious experience, that the Holy Spirit is his constant Adonai, who moves him when he is moved for God, and who supports him all the way to the presence of God. In trusting to this divine power, he obtains the evidence of that power, as, by believing the divine record, he receives the witness of its truth. Could he trust at *all times*; he would at all times, find cause to rejoice. When he doubts, he fails; as Peter began to sink in the sea, when he began to fear its threatening waves. The Psalmist nobly sings; *what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word; in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.* And thou, O Christian, wilt bear a part in this holy song; whenever thy faith, like the Psalmist's rests firmly on the same foundation. This Adonai cannot fail himself; nor will he suffer thee to perish. *The foundation of God standeth sure: sure also is his word; and sure is his covenant, according to which that word was framed. He bears up the pillars of Heaven and earth; and is he not sufficient then to sustain thee!*

"I do not doubt his sufficiency (says the doubting soul,) nor any other of his attributes: my only fear is, that his *will* is not inclined to save and preserve *me*. I feel in myself, what my mouth would not and cannot utter, but what is so abhorrent from every

\* See Dorney's divinely experimental *Discourse of Salvation*. p. 151. 3d. ed.

thing good, that, were I one of his, it surely could not be *thus with me.*"—And is this thy *grief*, that so much ill appears, and so little good? Is it thy *sorrow* indeed, that there is any thing sinful, depraved, and unclean within thee? Dost thou feel *real compunction* of spirit at thy departure, or thy distance, from God?—Then be comforted; not in thy distance, or in any evil; but in the *discovery* of all this within thee. If God had not loved thee, he would not have acquainted thee with this corruption; nor wouldest thou have been grieved at these depravities of thy nature. The sins of the *heart* would never have been an affliction, if the spirit of grace had not renewed the heart. The sins of the *life* are scandalous; and the pride of character, and the caution of the hypocrite, will often keep a man from these: but nothing except a principle of gracious life will disturb *the den of thieves within*, and aim to drive them out of the temple. *Whatever manifests is light*: and God hath enlightened thee to take this view of thy heart, that, seeing no *hope* in thyself, thou mayest fly to Christ for pardon and righteousness, and, finding no *help* in thyself, thou mayest rely wholly upon the Spirit Adonai. God shews thee to thyself, to frighten thee from thyself: and thou couldest not be without this view for a thousand worlds; as thou wilt find to thy joy hereafter. Only let this discovery humble thy proud nature, and bring thee, with most absolute dependence, to Christ and the Spirit, for mercy, and grace: and all shall be well at the last.

How WELL it shall be *at the last*; the thoughts of men cannot conceive, nor the tongues of Angels declare. That it shall be infinitely and eternally *well*, we may be very certain; for God hath said it. Let this be thy repose, O believer; here do thou dwell and have thy constant delight. Soon the shadows of earth and of time shall fly away; soon shall each dreary and drooping scene be removed; and the whole vision and fruition of thy God for ever arise. *The night is far spent*; the *day*, the everlasting day is *at hand*. Our longest life below is but a moment of that night: and the puny divisions of time are lost in the eternity of day before thee. As a good man observed; if before the flood, when men lived for centuries, they reckoned their continuance on earth by *days*; surely, it becomes us, whose length of life cannot even be mentioned with theirs, to reckon up our ages by *hours*. By *hours*! And *who* thinks of an hour? Who calculates its worth; or lives according to the calculation?—None but he, who values it for Christ and who passes it with him and for him. He only saves the hour: he alone *redeems the time*. All other time is lost but this, and sinks into

oblivion, or, rather, into worse than oblivion. O what are men employed in! What paltry occupations engross, as well as engage their hearts, their hands, and their lives! Could they feel the worth of time by knowing the worth of grace in time; is it possible, that not only their busy, but their vacant hours should slide away, without any concern upon their minds, *how* they slide, or *for what* they have been spent? Look back and reckon, believer, if all cut of Christ *has* not been *vanity* or *vexation of spirit*: look forward, and count if any thing on earth, can promise thee *more*. But O that joy and peace, which will exceed the calculation of time, and which is not reckoned by the world at all! This, and this only, like purified gold in the fire, remains to enrich thee. This, like its author, can never be lost. This, and the gospel, through which it is given, shall brighten to eternity. With respect to the busy, blustering, and the fleeting world, thou mayest sing with a writer of old:\*

Peaceful let me live below,  
Though my life I pass unknown:  
Careless, whether others know,  
If my name the Lord will own.

'Thou art indeed *unknown, yet well known*—unknown by *man*—well known of *God*. And soon shalt thou *know, even as also thou art known*.—Here language fails; and imagination is absorbed. Thou canst only add, with the Apostle; and mayest thou add with the same transporting views; *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*



## MOST HIGH.

ALL sorts of people do allow, that this illustrious title is peculiar to the everlasting God. It is not so much a *name*, which generally implies the definition of a person or thing, as an *ascription*, which asserts, that God, in respect to definition, cannot properly be named; for let us conceive of him as far as we can, and let us apply to him all the names we are able, he will yet be infinitely above every name, and eternally transcend all our concep-

\* Synesius, apud Wits. *Misc. Sacr.* Vol. i. p. 637.

tions. This seems to be the sense of this title *πρωτος*, or *Most High*. It tends to express, that Jehovah is both *inexpressible*, and, from the unbounded sublimity of his nature, by us and all the creatures *inconceivable* too. This ascription, therefore, is admirably characteristic of Deity, is used for that purpose in the holy scriptures, and sets him forth, both as unknowable and unknown, unless according to the *mode* and *extent* of his own revelation. Our old translation of the Psalms has ventured to employ a grammatical solecism to shew, that this title is above all rule of language, and above all idea of man. The term *Most Highest*, is no more a blunder, in this view, than another title given to him in the scriptures, namely, *Higher than the Highest*, Eccl. v. 8. *Neither* name pretends to explain, *how high* Jehovah is; but *both* concur in asserting, that over all names put together, over all descriptions whether of Angels or men, over all conceptions and ideas that the most exalted intellects of creatures can frame; Jehovah is still *higher* than the *highest*, and that they do not and cannot, by infinite degrees, reach up towards him. The considerate Heathens could reason upon this truth, that God must necessarily be inconceivable. They could trace out his wisdom and power by his works; they could be convinced, that the vast frame of things, which is obvious to human sense, could be the effect only of an all-perfect and immortal being; they could be assured, that all activity, motion, or life, must proceed from a cause of infinite energy, or rather from some existence who is all energy, fulness, and truth: but, with all this, they were obliged to own, that to conceive any thing of so pure and abstracted a nature in the mind, was immensely difficult, and consequently, to express that nature (if it were even right to attempt it) absolutely impossible.\* Some of these Heathens procured, by one means or other, this title of God from the true worshippers, in the first ages after the flood, and gradually debased it, as they did all other traditions of the kind, to the purposes of the vilest idolatry. And indeed, in all ages, when men follow any rule, but God's own revelation, concerning his nature and existence, and set up their wretched "reasoning faculty," perverted and clouded as it is by sin; they are sure to wander into doubt or absurdity at best and generally, by stating their own chimeras as true representations of the Deity, become as mere idolaters in reality, as the very worst of the Heathens.

\* Stobæus. Serm. lxxxviii. Thus Xenophon, Plato, and his commentators Platonus, with many other of the ancient Heathens, owned, *Deum nec pervestigare possibile, nec fas investigare*. See much more, to this effect, in Normans, *de verit. Rel. Christ.* c. iv.



Yet, it is remarkable enough ; all these will be so positive and dogmatical respecting their particular hypothesis ; that one should think, the *Most High* must be as much an object of their senses as a stick or a straw ; and they will tell us, that *God is* such and such a Being, nay, and *must* be so too ; though, at the same time, they have not the goodness to inform us of the *manner of existence* even in a stick or straw, nor yet the particular *mode of being*, by which *they* exist themselves. What is further remarkable likewise ; all these over-intelligent heads shall differ amazingly upon this topic from each other : and yet there is not one of them, but will affirm, that all his ideas *are* not only founded upon his “ reasoning faculty,” but *ought* to be founded upon it, as the highest standard and criterion of truth. The ancient dogmatists differed in the same way. Some said, that *fire* was God ; others, *water* ; others, *air* ; others, that God was the *soul of the world* ; some one thing ; and some another ; and the wisest of them all honestly confessed him to be *unknown*. Take Spinoza’s God, Hobbes’s, Whiston’s, Collins’s, Toland’s, Chubb’s, Tindal’s, the God of the Arians, the God of the Socinians, the God of one kind of Deists, and the God of another kind ;\* and place them together : and a man, viewing all

\* Spinoza’s God was, *All-visible Being*, the particulars of which were only modifications of the Deity ; so that men, dogs, mice, insects, are parts of himself, there being only *one existence or nature*.

Hobbes’s God was not very different, for he made him *corporeal*, and asserted, that “ what is not *body*, is nothing at all ; and that all religion originated in *fear* and *superstition* ; in which he was of the same mind with Lucretius and the Epicureans.

Whiston’s God was a being *entirely different* from the *Son* and *Holy Ghost*, who, in his opinion, were mere creatures, and by no means the object of our worship.

Collins went farther, and made his God still more remote from every idea suggested of him by Christianity, insomuch that he did not scruple to renounce Christianity altogether.

Toland was a glaringly vain and conceited man, even in Locke’s judgment, and favored Spinoza’s pantheistic scheme, but without Spinoza’s morals. His God was every thing, or (as it might be better said) a nothing, in the world.

Chubb’s God was framed at Salisbury according to his own “ reasoning faculty ;” but was a Deity of that odd make, as to render it unnecessary to *pray* to him ; for this Chubb disallowed, as well as the ideas of particular providence, a future judgment and existence, or any thing else which we have of that kind by Revelation. Possibly, by not praying to his God, Chubb thought he should at least avoid idolatry.

Tindal quaintly called himself a *Christian Deist* : and therefore his God must be *sui generis*, and not classed with the others. Those, however, who took pains to develope him and his principles, reduce him to the form of the common Deists, as to his own proper place. With them, he indeed discards all Revelation, and implicitly follows, what he calls, and perhaps believed to be, *reason*.

The Arians make their God of a most extraordinary composition. They assert, that the *Father* is the one great God, and that the *Son* and *Holy Spirit*

these Gods as the result of the "reasoning faculty," would be almost tempted (if there were no better rule in the case) rather to adopt Vanini's notion, and roundly assert at once, that there is *no God at all*. *Multitudo numinum, nullitas est numinum*. All these and many other opinions of him cannot possibly be right: all *but* one (if even *that one* could be excepted,) must necessarily be *wrong*. And the question then is, which is *the one*? The *rest* are unavoidably *idols*, or (at best) illusive unreal phantoms: and if even *this one* stand upon the "reasoning faculty," which is the assumed ground of all the rest; there is no sort of certainty, but that *this* may be a phantom too. Here, then, comes the issue of all pretended "rational religion," which begins with the rejection of God's revelation, and usually ends in little better than scepticism and infidelity. It floats perhaps awhile in the brain, but hath not weight enough to sink into the heart, nor force enough to influence the life. It can carry a man no farther, than it did the Heathens—to a *semblance* of virtue and outward decency; but will never so affect the soul, as to crucify it to the world, renew it in itself, and lift it up to the enjoyment of God. Possibly, it doth not pretend to this. Then, *cui bono*? Doth it not leave a man just as it found him? In which case, what is he the better for this ideal affair, which begins, proceeds, and ends, with nothing? Nor is this religion (if it can deserves the name) even so *rational* as it pretends; for it rests upon *human* ideas to determine a matter

*it*, are mere *emanations*, issuing from him and resolved into Him again. Thus they, in fact, confound the *simplicity* of the divine nature, and reject its *unity*.

The Socinians advance a degree or two beyond the Arians, and affirm roundly, that *Christ* and the *Holy Spirit* are not even emanations of Deity, but real *creatures*, that there is truly no such thing as redemption or satisfaction for sin, and no inward operation of what is called grace upon the soul. Of course, their God differs, in fact, but very little from the next class (to omit several others) which we shall mention.

The Deists form their God after the model of the Heathen Philosophers, receiving, however, a few of his embellishments from the Christian Revelation, which some of them affect to despise. They *differ*, notwithstanding, as their Heathen masters did, concerning his precise nature and attributes; and a few of them have even pretended to pay a sort of specious respect to Christianity itself upon the score of its morality; forgetting, perhaps, that if the system be not wholly true, it is the most impious and blasphemous imposture, that ever was foisted upon mankind. Their kiss, like Judas's, is to be dreaded, lest it be only a signal to betray both Christ and his gospel.

For a solid and dispassionate confutation of most of these opinions, the reader may be referred to the writings of the late Dr. Leland, and particularly to his *View of the Deistical Writers*, and his *Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation*; in which works his reasoning opponents are fairly and thoroughly beaten with their own weapons.

which is infinitely above them : add to this, these very ideas are, at the same time, *fluctuating* and *unsteady* in themselves, *extremely different* in different persons, and often exceedingly *various*, *perplexed*, and *obscured* in the same individual person at different times. A pretty foundation this to rest upon, in preference to that *rock of ages*, which can never be moved, and to his holy word, which hath at all times been proved, and proved again, and never been known to fail ! Reason *intruding* here into things *which she hath not seen*, becomes, *Atheism* in a fair disguise ; and thus by misleading, while she herself is misled, plunges her (in fact) irrational votaries into every pernicious consequence. That man can never be a *truly reasonable* being, who leaves the *author of all right reason*, for the clouded cogitations of his own mind, or for the no less clouded and wavering and uncertain opinions of others. Nor, on the other hand, can *he* be *irrational*, who, consenting with the wisest of men as well as with the word of God, applies for information to Him, who only can give it upon this subject, and then relies upon that information given, as upon an invincible truth, proceeding from a Being, who is both too wise, and too holy, to be mistaken himself or to utter a lie to others. There is either *no* revelation at all ; in which case, all religion is a cheat, and there is nothing certain in the world, respecting the *end* of our being, as well as the *cause* of it : or, if there *be* a revelation, it is madness and impudence at once in any man, who, admitting its existence, doth not abide by its declarations, but ventures to controvert or determine without them. There is but this alternative in the matter.—Thus much for the little gods of human brains : let us now turn our attention to the revelation of God Most High.

From revelation we learn, that this Most High is Jehovah, the incommunicable, self-existent, essence ; or (what is exactly the same) that Jehovah only is the Most High. *Thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth* ; or as others render it) *Thou, whose name is Jehovah, art alone the Most High over all the earth.* Ps. lxxxiii. 18. He is called Jehovah Most High, in Ps. vii. 18. and in other places : And, in Ps. xcii. 8. *Jehovah, the Most High\* for evermore.* There can be no doubt,

\* מְרוֹם, whence the *Rimmon* of the Gentiles ; as from עֲלֵיוֹן, their *Eliou* or *Eliouan*. See vol. I. p. 127. The Lord seems to have taken the title מְרוֹם to denote the *elevated situation* of his dwelling, and the title עֲלֵיוֹן to signify himself as the only means of *ascension* to it. So the words are used in Ps. lxxviii. 18. עֲלִיתָ לְמְרוֹם, *Thou hast ascended to the height.* See the Hebrew in that remarkable text, Jer. xvii. 12.

therefore, that this term can only be applied to God, and be reciprocated as a name of his infinite and exalted nature. If, then, it can be applied, and is applied, to the Holy Spirit; it will prove most demonstrably, and ought to prove beyond all controversy, that he is truly God or Jehovah, or a *person* in the self-existent essence so named.

Psalm lxxviii. 17—23. *The Israelites provoked the Most High in the wilderness, and they tempted Al in their heart by asking meat for their lust; yea, they spake against the Alehim, &c.—Therefore, Jehovah heard this, and was wroth, &c.—because they believed not in the Alehim, &c.* It appears as self-evident as any first proposition, that these several titles of *Jehovah, Al, Alehim, and Most High*, belong to one and the same being, whom we call *God*: Or, otherwise, there is a plurality of *Gods*, which the Scriptures oppose and Christians deny. Whoever, therefore, has *one* of these appellations strictly ascribed to him, has an indefeasible right to *all* the rest.

Now, the Prophet Isaiah declares, that this provocation of the *Israelites* was against the Holy Spirit: *They rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.* Is. lxiii. 10. The martyr Stephen says, *that they resisted the Holy Ghost.* Acts vii. 51. And the Apostle to the *Hebrews* confirms both, by declaring, that it is *the Holy Ghost, who saith, your fathers tempted me, proved me; and saw my works forty years.* Hebr. iii. 7, 9.

The Holy Spirit, therefore, in these last texts, is the Most High, Jehovah, Al, and Alehim, stated by the Psalmist in the preceding text, and, consequently, the true, infinite, self-existent, and everlasting God.

It may be noted, by the way, that the above passage in the *Hebrews*, were there no other in the Bible to assert the essential divinity of the *Holy Spirit*, is sufficient of itself for that purpose; for it asserts, that all the *works* which were done in the wilderness, before or in behalf of the *Israelites*, were the glorious operations of the Holy Ghost. We have seen, in the former volume, that they are also ascribed to *Christ* as one of the persons in the essence; and nobody will deny, who believes in revelation at all, that God, or the Father, was undoubtedly present: It follows, then, that all was performed by the *Trinity* in *Unity*, and that the whole was carried on by the *power* and according to the *will* of the *three* divine persons in the *one* undivided essence. Take it in any other view; and there will be *different agents* of *different natures* in this work of salvation, and consequently *more Gods*

than *one*; because to these different agents are the names of God ascribed; or, there will be only *one agent*, under *different names*, and so, consequently, *Christ* and the *Holy Ghost* with the *Father* are but *one person*, who suffered and bled, who *departed* yet came again as *another Comforter*, yet *not another* but the same; and thus the Scriptures will be an heap of *contradictions* as well as *blasphemies* against the divine nature. The adversaries, therefore, of the Christian doctrine of the *Trinity*, who profess to receive the Bible, have only this refuge *as* adversaries; either to adopt *Polytheism* and so become idolators, or to plunge into the sink of *Sabellianism*, and so admit that the *Father* was crucified and suffered, putting a lie into *Christ's* mouth, when he declared, *my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*. A man must in fact reject the Scriptures altogether, as a divine revelation, if he deny the doctrine of a *Trinity*, upon which, as upon one great and necessary foundation, they entirely stand.

Luke i. 35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow\* thee: therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* In the 32d verse, this *Son of God* is called the *Son of the Highest*, and, therefore, *Christ*, as to his human nature, is the *Son of the Holy Ghost*, by whose operation that human nature was formed in the *Virgin's* womb. Hence it appears, that *God, Highest*, and *Holy Ghost*, are terms of reciprocation, which could not be the case, unless the *Holy Ghost* were *God Most High*. But being *God Most High*, there is no blasphemy (as otherwise there certainly would be) in ascribing to him all the peculiar titles of the *Godhead*: Let those take care of *blasphemy against him* (Matth. xii. 31.) who are bold enough to ascribe any other.

It seems almost a work of supererogation to add a word to proofs like these; but such is the hardness of the human heart, that *God useth line upon line, and precept upon precept*, like successive sun-beams, to melt it down; and such is the stubbornness of the human will in maintaining *its own* preconceived opinions, that argument upon argument, though not to be refuted, can make no *due* impression, without the concurrence of omnipotent aid. It is right, however, to endeavor to silence those, who refuse to be convinced: or, at least, if they will not be silent, to

\* *Ἐπισκιάσει*. This word seems to bear a similar idea with *מרחפת* in Gen. i. 2. which might prefigure what the Spirit would do, in the fulness of time, with relation to the human nature of *Christ*, and the new life he would impart, at all times, to the people of *God*.

leave them nothing, in fairness, to say. It may be right also to establish those, who are weak in the truth, that they may not be shaken by the unscriptural sophisms\* of the adversaries.

John iii. 5. *Except a man (says Christ) be born of water† and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

Luke vi. 35. But the same Christ tells his disciples, that *they shall be children of the Highest*, and (in Luke xx. 36.) *the children of God.*

The Spirit, therefore, is the Highest and God.

Upon the proof of this important point, there is an end of that controversy, which has employed so many tongues and pens, respecting the *proper object of worship*. An Arian, who dreams of the *inferiority* of Deity, and all the endless absurdities which arise from that principle, may indeed be perplexed himself, and may perplex others, upon this point; but the orthodox Christian knows, that there is *one*, and *but one* object of worship, and that it is abominable idolatry to pay adoration to more. He also professes, that, as the three divine persons are one only essence, he cannot worship them as *separate* or *different* from that essence, and, consequently, that whether he address himself to *each* of the three persons, or to the *three* persons together, his prayer or praise ascends to the whole essence, which is an *undivided One*, and his worship is of “this Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, in all things,” and at all times. He is, therefore, a worshipper of *one* God, and indeed can worship no more, for there is but one. A learned and ingenious writer hath illustrated this matter by a very pertinent instance. “The disciples of Christ (says he) were commanded to *baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son: and of the Holy Ghost*: and, without doubt, the baptism they administered, was in all cases agreeable to the prescribed form. Nevertheless, we are told of some who were commanded to be *baptized in the name of the Lord* (Acts x. 48.), and particularly, in *the name of the Lord Jesus* (Acts viii. 16.): so that there was a strange defect either in the baptism itself, or in the account we have of it; or the *mention of one person* in the Trinity must *imply* the presence, name, and authority of *them all*;

\* *Hereticus, ad vulgi vitia, et sæculi ingenia, confert.* Tert.

† *Water* is the *Spirit's* emblem; for as water pervades the whole matter of the universe, is animated into the fabric of all bodily things, and both vivifies and purifies agreeably to its nature; so the Holy Spirit cleanses the souls of his people, enters into their whole spiritual constitution, and enlivens the whole by his penetrating agency. See farther in the Essay below, entitled, *Water of Life*.

as the passage understood by Irenæus—in *Christi nomine subauditur, qui unxit, et qui unctus est, & ipsa unctio in qua unctus est.* l. iii. c. 20.\* i. e. By baptism in the name of Christ, is to be understood, he, who anointed, he, who was anointed, and the anointing itself by which he was anointed: In other words, Father, Son, and Spirit.

To those, who consider this point, in an *experimental* view, the proofs increase from the word of God, with still more abundant force and clearness. Such, and such only, know truly what the Apostle means, where he introduces the love and grace of the whole Trinity in two lines, and says, that through Him [Christ] *we both* [Jew and Gentile] *have an access* [or introduction] *by one Spirit unto the Father.* Eph. ii. 18. This Spirit leads to Christ, and through Christ carries up the soul into communion with the Father; so that, by this agency, the believer hath fellowship with the Father and the Son in and by the Spirit. Here is the very substance and reality of the Christian religion, without which all the rest is but name or notion. Upon this ground, the true believer sees the importance of this doctrine, finds its establishment evidenced by the word and carried into himself, and that, but for this doctrine experimentally known and considered, there could not be, in fact, any such thing as the Christian religion at all. He holds communion by the grace of faith, which the divine Spirit has planted in his soul, with all the three persons at once in their names, covenant-engagements, and characters, feels all these gracious engagements realized and realizing *within him* (Luke xvii. 21.), and rejoices that, as the *one essence* is Jehovah Almighty, *each person* in this one essence hath the undivided power, love and truth of the whole, and consequently is Almighty to perform every promise and requirement for his salvation. This is the foundation of all his *joy in God*. He is assured, that he trusts the Rock of Ages, and not the various will and dependant power of any creatures. Upon the divine immutability he builds his own immutability, and is persuaded, that, till God himself change, he himself shall be for ever unchangeable. By this Holy Spirit, all his services and sacrifices, of prayer and praise, of heart and of life, are carried up to the throne in Heaven, and rendered acceptable to the Father through Christ Jesus. Thus the three persons are glorified in him and by him; and thus, by communion with each, he enjoys a necessary and perpetual communion with all.

\* Jones's *Catholic Doctrine*, p. 57 3d Edit.

This truth is as old as the regeneration of the first believer in the world. Cain and Abel were both taught the knowledge of the true God, and were told, that their worship was due to him. But the one came with a carnal unrenewed heart, and (like the Pharisee in the temple) offered up the fruits of his own doings, which being utterly imperfect and defiled with sin in themselves and offered up also without faith, the Lord had no respect to him or to his offering. On the contrary, the other approached *in faith* (Hebr. xi. 4.) and *brought*, not the product of his own labour, but *נֶגְמָתוֹ* *even himself before or with the First-born of his flock, and before or with the fat thereof*, in testimony of his reliance upon the sacrifice of the *great first-born*, who should appear in the fulness of time for the remission of sins. *Himself*, therefore, *and his offering were respected\** by the Lord. His sacrifice was accepted in this view, and the smoke of it ascended as a *sweet smelling savour* (speaking according to the sense of men) before God.—When Noah came forth from the ark, in which he had been saved *by figure* or similitude; the first thing he did, was to commemorate the *means* of his typified spiritual salvation. *He built an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl* *וַיִּזְבֹּחַ* *and caused an holocaust, a sacrifice ascending by fire, to ascend, upon the altar.* This he did, like Abel, *in faith* of that great sacrifice Christ, who, *through the eternal Spirit*, was to offer up *himself* unto God. The sacrifice was typical of the Redeemer; and the ascent by fire represented the operation of the Divine Spirit, who alone carries up the *intention* and *effect* before the throne. The next verse proves this, where it is immediately added, *The Lord smelled a savour of rest*, according to our *marginal* translation; but there is a force and precision in the original, which the translation, either in the text or margin, doth not reach. The Lord *יָרַח אֶת אֲחֻזַּתוֹ* *inhaled*, spiritually received, or received by the Spirit, *the breathing*, the aspiration *of rest*, or of his own Spirit, which ascended up in that emblematic sacrifice before him. The sacrifice was slain; and so Christ was killed.—It might be slain under the law by strangers, but offered only by the priest; and so Christ was crucified by Gentiles, but he offered up his own life as the great High-Priest.—It was to ascend by fire, by which only the particles of air or any other

\* Theodotion renders the word *נֶגְמָתוֹ* by *ενεπυριστο*, *inflamed*, answered by *fire from Heaven*, in token of acceptance. To which the Apostle has been thought to allude in Hebr. xi. 4. *God testifying of his gifts.* Spanh. *Hist. Christ.* sec. ii. p. 651. See also 2 Chron. vii. 1 and Estius in Gen iv 4.



substance can ascend from the earth; and so the *merit* of the sacrifice and the *faith* of the believer in it, as so much *spirit and life*, are made to ascend before the throne of Heaven by that *Eternal Spirit*, whose subtle and invincible energy, under the similitude of *fire*, is engaged for that purpose. The Apostle gives the effect of this emblem in plain words; *He that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit; because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God*, or according to God. Rom. viii. 27. The same mystical rite was continued under the Jewish dispensation, which was only a clearer illumination of the *patriarchal* services. It was not a *new* religion, but a fuller and further manifestation of the *old*. The Jews were to sacrifice these *holocausts, burnt-offerings*, or sacrifices ascending by fire, *in all the places* (says the Lord) *which I make the memorial of my name* (Exod. xx. 24.); and there he would come unto them and *bless* them. They were to carry on the doctrine, that as the ascent of the sacrifice could only be made by fire in the *emblem*, so their faith in the great sacrifice could only be raised by the Spirit in the *truth* of the emblem.— Their *heave-offerings*\* expressed this great truth in another form, and shewed that their *bread*, of which this kind of offering was made, came from the Lord, should be devoted to his glory, and that they should lift up their hands and hearts unto Him.—In the Christian dispensation, the emblem indeed is taken away, because the sacrifice intended by it, is accomplished; but the idea and doctrine are the same.† Christ is the great *Holocaust* of his Church, that sacrifice slain, burned, and ascending by fire unto the Lord. He *offered up himself without spot*; yet not alone, but (as the great commentator upon the Jewish Ritual explains it) *through the Eternal Spirit*, of whom the fire was an instituted

\* The *heave-offerings* and the *wave-offerings*, under the law, had their respective doctrines, and preached to the ancient believers the necessity of their acknowledging God to be author of all their *powers* and *blessings*. The *shoulder* in the sacrifices was appointed for the *חֵטְא* or *heave-offering*, and the *breast* for the *חֵטְא* or *wave-offering*; and both were the portion of the Priests, as God's agents or representatives. The Priests were to *heave* or hold up the one towards heaven, in testimony, that all service, and power to render service, expressed by the shoulder, as the instrument of action or labor, came from and should be devoted to God; and they were to *wave* the other backward and forward to the four parts of the world, in token that the purposes and affections, signified by the *breast*, are given by him to his people, respecting salvation, and should therefore be spread out before him and laid out for him.

† To this effect Gregory excellently says; *Una est ecclesia electorum, precedentium et sequentium. Antiqui Patres non divisi à S. Ecclesi fuerunt; quia mente, opere, prædicatione, ista jam fidei sacramenta tenuerunt, &c.* Apud Span'. Hist. Christ. sæc vi. col. 1065.

emblem. God receives by this Spirit the propitiation of Christ the sacrifice ; and his people become thereby, with all their services, (according to the language of the Old Testament, which the Apostle uses, and, by using, explains) *a sweet savour of Christ unto God.* Compare 2 Cor. ii. 15. with Eph. v. 2.

Here, then, we are come to the proper office-character of this Most High and Holy Spirit, and may perceive, that as *one* of the divine persons must be God Most High, to *atone* and *merit* for the redeemed ; so it is needful, that *another* of the divine persons should *carry up* the memorial of this before the throne, and *apply* the benefit of it to their souls. Here too we may learn, what our Lord means, when he says, *No man hath ascended up to Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in Heaven.* John iii. 13. No man but the God-man, could ascend as a propitiation before the throne, even He who *came down from Heaven* for that purpose, and who, respecting his divine nature, *is ever in Heaven.* We may also learn hence another most important, yet often forgotten, truth ; that no service of our's can ascend up to God, but *in Christ Jesus*, and *by* the power of the Holy Spirit. We have no recommendation, and can have none, which will be accepted, but Christ : We have no strength or grace, and can have none, but by the operation of the Holy Ghost. Thus *one* person in the Most High must lead us, through *another*, up to the *third* ; in which act we have communion with the *whole*, and, hereafter, when we have parted with sin and corruption, shall have an uninterrupted and perfect enjoyment of the whole to all eternity. This is the true reception of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity ; and, without it, all the rest is but as idle a subject of dispute, as the *quidlibets* and *quodlibets* of the schools.

This *Spirit Most High* raises his people to the *high* and *holy* place, which his own word hath set before them. There is no possession of grace, nor progression in grace, but by Him. He instils heavenly thoughts ; he imparts heavenly frames ; he carries on the heavenly work in the soul, which is to prepare it for an eternal Heaven and for God. This is called, and justly called, ascending to Heaven in the mind, and the raising up of the affections to things above. All this is performed by the power of the *Spirit Most High.* Believers, under the Old Testament, were privileged to *wait upon the Lord for a renewal of their strength, and to mount up with wings as eagles.* Is. xl. 31. They could not rise upwards of themselves, in their souls, more than in their bodies ; but the Spirit, who is described here under the well-known

emblem of the *wings* of the *eagle*, would bear them aloft to his holy habitation. It is his office to do this. When Ezekiel was *lifted up*, it was by the Spirit ; and, by the Spirit was Philip carried through the air from the Eunuch to Azotus : And what He did for *their* bodies, he doth for *all* his people's souls. He beareth them on high. From this sinful and perishing world he lifts them up to Heaven, and never fails to bless them all the way thither. In this consists the health of the soul ; and it is remarkable, that the word *רפא*, which signifies *medicine*, or *actual healing*, or *health* procured by *medicine*, is derived from the same root. Man's nature, in falling from God, became sick and diseased both in body and soul. The Holy Spirit works this healing in the soul, purges out its corrupt and sinful affections, and establishes it finally in the perfection of life. There is neither health, nor increase of health, without him. What a blow doth this truth give to all the pride, and power, and presumption of man ! It slays unrighteousness, and self-righteousness at once. It shews that there is no life, nor health, nor strength, nor activity, nor will, nor any other principle of grace and truth, in any creature, but by his immediate inspiration and " continual help." When the soul is brought to an experimental acquaintance with this doctrine (and all God's people, more or less, do experience it : there is an end of all strife in the conscience, respecting free-will, free-agency, inherent power, and those other absurd opinions, which the foolish and ignorant pride of fallen man hath prepared (like so many empty bladders upon the sea) to swim by into eternity. The believer sees, that though, like blown bladders, they seem large, and round, and full ; they are only empty fancies, or doctrines swelled out of measure with air. They are *winds of doctrine*, and doctrines of wind. They have neither life, nor truth, nor power : And this is evident in those who espouse them. They, for the most part, are strenuous contenders for these matters ; but do nothing but *talk* in honor of them. The established Church is become heterodox, in the opinion of thousands of its members, and it would be happy if it were not so in the esteem of many of its ministers too ; especially where she declares, that " the condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such, that *he cannot* : " *turn and prepare himself* by his own natural strength and good " *works to faith, and calling upon God : Wherefore we have no* " *power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, with-* " *out the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have* " *a good will, and working with us when (*dum* while) we have*

“that good will.” Art. x. Alas! how many subscribe to this sound formulary *è contra*, instead of *ex Animo*, and have the effrontery to justify it too! What a wretched *salvo* do they also make, who divide the articles into two contrary senses, and cause them to appear, deceitful and monstrous like the Devil, with a *cloven foot*; who set the Church at variance with itself, and force it to blow hot and cold, to vent error and truth, in the same breath! —*Pudet hæc offrobraria nobis.*

By this *Highest* of all, the *spirits of the just* are finally *made perfect*. They are fitted for their mansions, and their mansions for them, by his agency. What these mansions are we know not, and in this state of *sense* we cannot know; because they are *spiritual receptacles* for the residence of saved spirits to the judgment day; and we do not understand the *nature* of a spiritual existence. But, hereafter, *we shall know, even as also we are known*. In the mean time, however, we may be sure, that, as nothing defiled can enter into Heaven, our spirits shall be purified by that *Spirit of Burning*, through whom our forerunner and sacrifice offered up himself without spot unto God, and in whom we shall be *unblameable and unreprouceable* in his sight. Thus the Most High raiseth his people, from death to life, from sin to grace, from grace to glory, and then *from glory to glory*, world without end. What *manner of love* is this! Can sinners know! Can Angels tell!

Angels cannot *tell the manner*; but recovered sinners *know the love*. They have *tasted that the Lord is gracious*; and they know that taste, though they cannot fully explain it. And *this* thou canst testify, O believer, for thyself, and for others. *Thine hands have handled of the word of life*: Thy spiritual sense has been exercised with its perception: Thou hast been led to communion with the Highest, by the fellowship of the *Spirit Most High*. 1 John i. 1—3. This hath taught thee to make a right estimate of thyself, and of all sublunary things: so that thou art no longer a slave to the opinions and customs of the world, which exalts low and trifling matters, and turns away from the most momentous and important concerns—from concerns, which, with all its madness and folly, it will allow to be important and momentous. The acquisition of temporal things, what is it after all, but an argument of poverty and want? Men court honours, titles, dignities: And what are these?—The empty admiration of the proud! And then, what becomes of that admiration, when the

cloud is no more?\*" All these things, as they begin, do quickly end in a sound. But the possession of grace is not only happiness, so far as it is used, but the pledge of *an enduring substance, of joys unspeakable and full of glory*. In thy right frame, fellow-christian, thou hast set this present world in view of the world to come, and compared them well together. The balance of the account is, millions against nothing, in favour of eternity. Hence, thou canst account it to be but a poor business to be wise, and rich, and reputable, only for a season and in man's deceived esteem; and, then, to be found foolish, and poor, and base, throughout the never-ending ages. An Heathen could justly say, respecting this world; "He most enjoys riches, who wants them least:"† But this cannot be said of the world to come; for the riches of eternity are indispensable, and the soul must be miserable in the extreme, which doth not possess them. He, who doth not obtain the inheritance of the Most High, must be thrust down to the lowest Hell. Thus thine estimate is formed, according to the *extent and perpetuity* of the object, and not according to the *world's advertisement*, which is ever fallacious. Even the *pledge* of thy future portion is not to be exchanged for all, that the world contains; and much less for what any one poor worm can possess upon it. And if *this* pledge cannot be bartered without loss; where is the gain, if, for any thing, or for all things, a man throw away the eternal felicity of his soul?

How often doth thy *heart* O believer, *burn within thee*, upon the prospect of the glory, which shall soon be revealed! The *Spirit Most High* will cause thee to *ascend* both to the *holiest* and to the highest of all; and even now often bears thee up, above the world and all dying things, in the contemplation of these transcendent blessings. When thy frame is quick and lively, much with God, or much employed for him; what a man out of the world dost thou feel thyself? Thou seemest to be living in another element, upon a different bottom, and upon a higher principle, at such moments, than animal nature can know, or animal sense inspire. Thy enjoyment is pure and exalted, like the complacency of Heaven. Then all thy heavenly graces flow. "Faith says, all these wonders belong to believers; hope cries, they then are preserved for me; and love adds, I run to enjoy them."‡ Blessed

\* *Acquisito hujus sæculi, quid, nisi inopiæ et paupertatis argumentum? Affectamus etiam honores, titulos, dignitates: hæc quid? nisi vana admiratio vulgi: et qualis ista, si desit vulgus?* Morn. de ver. rel. chr. c. 18.

† *Is maximè divitiis fruïtur, qui minimè divitiis indiget.* Seneca. Eph. 14.

‡ Bernard. in Ps. xc.

be God! Thou shalt enjoy them. God never gave a gracious desire, but to fulfil it with grace, and to crown it with glory. *He is faithful, who hath promised*: And Heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than *one tittle* of his word can fail. Thou hast an unchangeable God, *whose gifts and callings are without repentance*, who never gave grace to be lost, and never quickened for Heaven to furnish for Hell. What consolation, what strong consolation arises from this glorious immutability of thy Covenant-Lord! Sensible of thy own weakness and blindness, this is the very elenchus, the force, the life, and the marrow, of the gospel to thee. Take away this; and O what a gloom! What a melancholy horror appears! All is *dark*, because all is *doubtful*. All would be distressing, if the success of any part depended upon thee. The sense of thy incapacity, the power of thine enemies, and the very weight of glory itself, would sink thee down to despair. Thou hast an argument for the *Spirit's* divinity, which the careless and the carnal professor cannot know, and *feeblest* in thy soul (not merely *fanciest* in thy head) that nothing but the invincible strength of the *Most High* is able to quell such a wide combination of evil, and to preserve, amidst all, to the full introduction and establishment of eternal good. Nothing revives thee more, than the *demonstration* afforded by his word without thee, and his grace within thee, that this invincible and immutable God is engaged to bless, keep, and multiply his mercies upon thee, without alteration, without remission, and without end. O how delightful is it to be assured, agreeably to those excellent lines of Dr. Watts, that

The sacred word of grace is strong,  
 As that which built the skies:  
 The voice, which rolls the stars along,  
 Spake all the promises.

Engraved as in eternal brass,  
 The mighty promise shines;  
 Nor can the powers of darkness raze  
 Those everlasting lines.

“I may be faint and weary (says the believer) but my God cannot. I may alter and fluctuate, as to my frames; but my Redeemer is unchangeably the same. I might utterly fail and come to nothing, if left to myself; but I cannot be so left to myself, for the Spirit of truth hath said, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*. He will renew my strength, either by changing *my* weakness in-

to strength, or by enduing me with *his own* power. He is wise to foresee and to provide for all my dangers: He is rich to relieve and to succor me in all my wants: He is gracious to hear and to answer all my prayers: He is omnipotent to deliver and defend me from all my enemies: He is faithful to perfect and perform all his own promises: He is eternal and immortal to bless my poor depending soul, with eternal blessedness and immortality. O what a great and glorious Saviour for such a mean and worthless sinner! O what a bountiful and graciously indulgent friend for such a base and insignificant rebel! What, what am I, when I compare myself, and all I am of myself, with what I can conceive of my God, and of what he hath kindly promised even to me! What a mystery am I, to myself, to Angels, to men! A worm of earth to be like a star of Heaven; a corruptible sinner to be an incorruptible saint; a rebel to be made a child; an outlaw to become an heir; a deserter of Hell to be an inheritor of Heaven; a strong hold of the Devil to be changed into a temple of God; an enemy and a beggar to be exalted to a throne, to be in friendship with God, one with Christ, a possessor of his Spirit, and of all this honor, happiness, and glory, for evermore; and all without any right to any one thing on my part, but the miseries of the lowest Hell! O what *manner*, and what *matter*, of love is this! Lord, take my heart, my soul, my all! I can render thee no more; and I would render thee no less. 'Tis indeed a poor return. My body and soul are but *two mites*; and yet (glory be to thee!) Thou who didst esteem *those* of the poor widow, wilt not despise *these of mine*. Lord, they are thine own too: And I can only give thee what is thine! I melt with gratitude; and even this gratitude is thy gift. O take it, and accept both it and me; blessing me in thyself, which is all my salvation and all my desire, for ever and ever!

May this be the language of thy heart, reader, with increasing fervor, till thou art translated from this sickening, dying scene, to the life immortal, to the joys ineffable, and, above all, to the King eternal, who having loved his own with an everlasting love, will love them to the end on earth, and world without end in Heaven!

## HOLY SPIRIT, OR SPIRIT OF HOLINESS.

THAT *God is a Spirit*, is agreed on by every one who believes there is a God at all. Even those, who have maintained the grossest opinions of his nature, have allowed, that he must at least be the *Anima Mundi*, the Soul or Spirit of the Universe, which pervades the whole material system, and unites, invigorates, and moves all corpuscular being. What Spinoza and the whole tribe of Atheists term *nature*, is, when they explain themselves, visible substance enlivened and energized by an invisible one, which they allow is too subtle for sense, and therefore is called by the name of *Spirit*. The Heathens were full as knowing as our modern philosophers about this sublime subject; and the most ignorant are just as wise as both of them, without a light superior to reason. The memorable words of Virgil (however he obtained the idea) are as expressive as any Heathens of later times, and, because fewer, much less impertinent. He says of the whole creation, that

*Spiritus intus alit; totamque infusa per artus  
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.\**

Æn. vi. 726.

Here *Mind* and *Spirit* are synonymous, which he represents as pervading and actuating all things: And in another place, he calls this Agent *God*.†

As we can know nothing by ourselves but through the medium of *sense*, which likewise can perceive nothing but what has relation to *matter*; we have no real comprehension of pure abstracted *spirit*, further than we can conceive any substance or being to be *void* of matter. We therefore understand rather what it is *not*, than what it *is*. But if we could form a notion of what it is, we must yet be more puzzled about the *modus existendi*, or *how* it is, than we are already upon the existence of material objects. Our senses discern these, as to their being and reality; and yet neither our senses nor intellect can investigate their mode and composition. Thus ignorant is man concerning the plainest subjects before his eyes; and with the wisest of the heathens, he

\* See Macrobius's Comment upon these words, in *Somn. Scip.* lib. 1. c. 14. where he collects the sentiments of the ancient philosophers on this matter.

† ——— Deum namque ire per omnes  
Terras, Tractusque Mundi, Cælumque profundum



may truly in this strictness of consideration, confess, *that he knows nothing*. The philosopher was wise enough to know that; some later heathens have thought, on the contrary; that they could soar much higher; and some have aimed so high as even to *define* God himself, not considering that he is necessarily *indefinable*. Socrates owned his ignorance; but these men *prove* their's; for, while they tell us God is an *infinite* being, they *limit* him by their conceptions, and, out of their own heads, expressly lay down, *what* he is, and *how* he is; nay, what and how he must be. O the folly of man, whose whole being is but an atom, and his life a moment, and who yet pretends to comprehend incomprehensibility itself, and to set bounds to the Most High! Whereas God cannot be defined, because to define is to limit; and to limit infinitude is an absurdity. Names are ascribed to him indeed, and attributes, not as they fully express his nature, which is inexpressible, but as they convey some faint notices of his exalted perfections, sufficient to preserve the mind from vain imaginations or gross conceptions of his being.

The word or revelation of God turns upon a very different principle. It lays down as a fixed and absolute truth that man knows nothing of God, nothing of spiritual being, and (what is more humbling yet) nothing of himself, without God's instruction. Upon this ground, among others, we apprehend the necessity of a divine revelation, and can perceive, that if our notions of God, of the universe, and of ourselves, are not taken from this his own communication; they at best must be *uncertain*, and are most probably *false*. To say, that God hath given us *reason* to discern the *true* from the *erroneous*, and that all our ideas must be squared by that rule, is only saying at the most, that we have obtained a *capacity* to *receive* ideas upon the subject, not to *originate* them, and a *power* to *reject* what our intellectual sense does not approve or delight in. But if, upon proof, this capacity of ours, this boasted reason, be a mutilated energy and a perverted principle; it can be trusted no farther, than itself is squared by some more perfect rule; for, otherwise, in the disquisition of things, and especially of those which transcend all animal sensation it can afford us no certain and infallible conclusions; and if not *such* conclusions, then only can it lead us into inextricable doubt. Of this we have a demonstrable proof in the endless *variety* of opinions, which men form upon all subjects; yet they will all profess that their respective notions are founded in *reason*. This proves the error of that boasted faculty, and the impossibility of its being a

*rule*, especially in things which are above human nature, or which relate to the divine. Reason here becomes irrational, if it presume to steer without chart or compass, and even condemns its own advocates in rejecting Him and his declarations, who as the great author of reason, cannot be supposed to act without it.\* We may not see the *whole* of his reason, because our participation of it would be finite, if it were not corrupt; but we may be assured, that it must be *right*, and *infinitely* right, because God is infinite, and can utter no wrong.

In condescension to our capacities, God hath revealed himself under names and notices, which may best strike our senses, the channel of all our reasonings, and the medium by which we know. He calls himself by the word *Spirit*, which refers to *air* or *breath*, or that *subtle fluid*, by the respiration of which all things live; because it is a substance of the most subtle and refined exility of nature, which our sense can discern. Analogous to this air or breath in the animal life is the Almighty Spirit, by which all spiritual beings exist and proceed. What the air in motion is to the material world; that (as we learn from his own revelation) is the divine Spirit to the whole spiritual world. We can ascend no higher than this notion of his existence, and the communication of it. Our senses are confined to matter, and, at present, prevent us. Only when we are disembodied, *can we know even as we are known*. This will be truly seeing the face of God, and enjoying his presence. We shall have another manner of being, and, of course, a different comprehension of all things. In this world it is not necessary for us to know more than God hath been pleased to reveal. And, upon the ground of his revelation, we cannot be mistaken, because he cannot deceive.

God, then, is a Spirit; and consequently, the three hypostases; or persons, in which he exists, must be, distinctly and conjunctly, Spirit too. God, otherwise, would not be that pure and uncom-

\* Lord Bacon excellently says; *Prærogativa Dei totum hominem complectitur: nec minus ad rationem quam ad voluntatem humanam extenditur. Quare, sicut legi divine obedire tenemur, licet reluctetur voluntas; ita et verbo Dei fidem habere, licet reluctetur ratio. Etenim si ea damnavit cedamus que sunt rationi nostre consentanea, rebus adsentimur, non auctoria: quod etiam suspectæ fidei testibus præstare solemus. Quanto igitur mysterium aliquod divinam fuerit magis absorum et incredibile, tanto plus in credendo exhibetur honoris Deo, et fit victoria fidei nobilitas.—Quin etiam, si attentè rem persequamur, dignius quiddam est credere quàm scire, qualiter scimus. In scientia enim mens humana petitur à sensu, qui à rebus materialis resilit: in fide autem anima patitur ab anima, que est agens nobilis. De Augm. Sec. em. Lib. x. De his plura ajse l. Walsura in Exercit. de usa et abusu rationis. §. 28; 29.*

pounded Being, which he hath revealed himself to be. He is pure Spirit, because pure act. Each person in the divine nature, being essential in it, must likewise be this pure spirit, or pure act : “ without quality good, great without quantity, everlasting without time, present every where without place, containing all things without extent.”\*

The Deity is revealed under the name of Spirit, in order to declare, that all existences, both corporeal and incorporeal, derive their spirit, or life and being from him. He is Spirit in the fountain : the creatures are only so as streams proceeding from him. The will and power of the Godhead gave them their entity. Hence, Aratus, the Heathen poet, quoted by St. Paul, could justly sing of himself and of others, *we are his offspring*.

But though Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are one God and Spirit, as to the immateriality and transcendent sublimity of the divine nature ; yet *one* of the three persons is œconomically and emphatically distinguished by the names of *Holy Spirit, Spirit of Jehovah, Spirit of Alehim, and the Spirit* ; because it is his office, in the covenant of grace, to put that spirit and life into his fallen people, which they lost in their progenitor by sin. They become *spiritual* by his agency. Not that the Father and Son do not concur in it, for the energy of the Godhead *ad extra* is one ; but it is the Holy Spirit’s express appointment to carry on that energy to effect salvation. He works in unity with the Father ; and therefore he is called the Spirit of the Father, Eph. iii. 16. He works likewise in unity with the Son ; and therefore he is styled the Spirit of the Son. Gal. iv. 6. And he works of *himself* in perfect conjunction with the Father and the Son. Thus he divideth his gifts *as he will*. 1 Cor. xii. 11. and is therefore by himself a sovereign agent ; and yet the *communion* of believers, who are *his workmanship*, is with the Father, 1 John i. 3. with the Son, 1 Cor. i. 9. and with the Spirit, Phil. ii. 1. because they are *one undivided essence*. And as Spirit is only another name for active energy (and in this sense our Lord calls his words *spirit and life*,) the third person in the Trinity is peculiarly styled *the Spirit*, because the impulse of the Godhead is exerted by him. The *ary bones* (Ezek. xxxvii. 14.) or the dead sinners of Israel, (as all God’s people are) lived by the spirit : and thus God is said to have created all things by the spirit. Throughout the scripture, the spirit is declared to be the *acting agent* of natural and spiritual life.

\* Bishop Hall. *Decad. iv. Epist. 7. Mornæus De Verit. Rel. xi. c. 4.*

From hence we may perceive, with what suitableness to his office and our understandings, the third person in the Godhead is called *the Spirit*: we will now enquire, wherefore he is called *the Holy Spirit*, or *Spirit of Holiness*, and upon that ground treat of his divinity.

Holiness, according to God's revelation by which alone we know any thing of the matter, means a *perfect separation* from all sin and evil. Holiness in *effect* is this; and consequently holiness in its *cause* must certainly be so. It is, therefore, an essential attribute of the Most High. Nothing *created* can claim this as an *attribute* to itself; for be it ever so holy, it is not so *ex se*, from itself, but from its *cause*. That is not, cannot be, *essential* holiness, which is *derived*. Holiness in essence must be God himself, who exists from himself, and communicates the rays of his perfections to his creatures. All the holiness of all the creatures therefore is from God. He always laid claim to this attribute among his people; and, that they might remember it the more constantly, he commanded it to be worn upon the forehead of his High Priest. Exod. xxviii. 36. For this end he is represented as *sitting upon the throne of his holiness*, Ps. xlvii. 8. intimating, that there is no authority or power to effect holiness but in him. And so essential is this attribute in God, that he is revealed to have *sworn by his holiness*, i. e. to have sworn *by Himself*, because *he can swear by no greater*, and consequently by no other. His holiness and his nature are one and the same. God *is* his attributes; and his attributes *are* himself. We cannot look on the divine blaze of glory at one view; and therefore the rays of it are selected and distinguished by the medium of revelation, which, like a *glass darkened*, suits itself rather to the weakness of our sight than to the fulness of the object. God not only *lives*, but is *life*; not only *knows*, but is *understanding*; not only *hath* power, but is *power*; not only is *holy*, but is *holiness itself*.

The spring, then, of all holiness, or holiness in essence, is God: and to him alone, therefore, can we address the words of that pathetic hymn, composed by Athenogenes the martyr\* (used in the primitive Church, and retained in the communion service of the Church of England) "Thou *only* art holy, Thou *only* art the Lord." The universal chorus in Heaven echoes the sound, and fills the realms of bliss with the adoring theme—*Thou only*

\* S. Basil *de Sp. S.* apud Cave *Hist. Lit.* in Nom

*art holy, Lord God Almighty; Thou King of Saints!* Rev. xv. 3. 4.

If then true holiness be God, and God be holiness itself; what can the *Spirit of Holiness* be? Can *that* be less than *holiness*, which is the very *essence* and *spirit* of it? Can he therefore be *less* than God, who claims, who possesses, and who is distinguished by, his most essential attributes?

But the Spirit of God is called *the Holy Spirit*, because he is God himself. He claims the epithet *Holy*, both from his *nature* and his *office*. If he were not *holy* in his nature, or rather holiness itself, he could not perform that office in the covenant of grace, which begins, is carried on, and is completed, in the exercise and communion of holiness to the redeemed. He could not impart, what is not his own. No stream of holiness could proceed from him, were he not the fountain of it.

He is not (as the Arians dream) an inferior or created God, or the creature of a creature, made by the Son, who himself was made of the Father; because he could not, in that case, be **THE** Spirit of God, but only **A** Spirit **FROM** God. Nay, by their account, he could not be so much: He could only be the Spirit of a creature, who is (according to them) the Son. And so, in this strange notion, we have the representation of a creature, who is himself the creator of another creature, which other creature quickens or gives life to his own creator (for Christ was quickened by the Spirit, 1 Pet. iii. 8.) and becomes the power, by which this last creator performs his work of mediation. This is at once absurdity, Polytheism, and idolatry. Deism itself doth not furnish so wretched, contradictory, and disgraceful an opinion of the Godhead.

Nor is the Holy Ghost an *emanation* only, or a *ray* from the Godhead, as the Socinians, and others have dared to affirm. Can an *emanation* be the giver of itself? Can this emanation divide various gifts, according to his own knowledge, and *severally as he will*? If the Spirit be only an emanation from the Son, and the Son another emanation from the Father (as the Arians speak); is not the Spirit, in that case, the emanation of an emanation, and will there not be emanations without end? Can an emanation *will* any thing, *search* any thing, *explain* any thing, *abide* and *depart* at his (or rather its) own pleasure?—"But it is an *emanation, a virtue, from God.*" Still more absurd! Can an emanation from God act *without* God, who himself is a pure act? And, if not *without* him, is not God *the affecting agent*? And is not then the

emanation or virtue (if it must be so called) *God himself*? Or, can God be divided from his own attributes?—This word *emanation*, applied to God, is indeed a whimsical term, without any real meaning or idea; or, if it hath one, it divides God from himself, or represents, by what can only be used to signify a *quality*, a conscious independent effective agent. In this view, therefore, it quarrels with the attributes of God, the work of God, and the word of God, and it is but a sorry name employed to obscure the *personality* and divinity of the Holy Ghost. Nor doth it impart an idea, which can square with scripture or with common sense. For (to mention but one instance among many) if the Holy Ghost be only a *quality*, the condition of a being and not a being himself; it must be extremely absurd to baptize a person in the name of a *thing*, which has no existence but *per accidens*, no essentiality of its own. They, who can justify or make even reason of this (to say nothing of the Bible), may be very fit apologists for the Romans, who dedicated temples to *fear*, *hope*, *paleness*, and twenty other *qualities* besides, and at the same time be much *safer* employed than in venting *blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*.

Against these unscriptural dogmas, we will oppose a few scriptural proofs of the *personality* and *divinity* of the Holy Spirit.

That the Holy Ghost is a *person*, and not an *emanation*, a *virtue*, or a something from God which is not God, will appear from the following, among many other, texts of scripture.—He *creates* and *gives life*. Job. xxxiii. 4. is seen descending *in a bodily shape*. Luke iii. 22. commands Apostles, Acts viii. 29. and xi. 12. lifts up an Apostle through the air by his own power, v. 39. sends messengers. Acts 19. appoints ministers in the Church. Acts xx. 28. calls Apostles. Acts xiii. 2. bestows gifts. Heb. ii. 4. speaketh to the Churches. Rev. ii. 7. spake by the Prophets. Acts xxviii. 15. 2 Pet. i. 21. speaketh *expressly*. 1 Tim. iv. 1. renews his people. Titus iii. 5. helpeth infirmities. Rom. viii. 26. maketh intercession. *ibid.* reveals mysteries. Eph. iii. 5. searcheth all things. 1 Cor. ii. 10. teacheth all things. John xiv. 26. guideth into all truth. John xvi. 13. beareth witness in earth and Heaven. Rom. viii. 16. 1 John v. 6. pronounceth words of blessing. Rev. xiv. 13. testifies of Christ. John xv. 26. glorifies Christ. John xvi. 14. is *ANOTHER comforter*, distinct from Christ. John xiv. 16. hath a *mind* of his own. Rom. viii. 27. hath a *will* of his own. 1 Cor. xii. 11. hath a *power* of his own. Rom. xv. 13. hath worship performed in his name, together with the Father and

Son. Matth. xxviii. 19. hath a temple for his worship. 1 Cor. vi. 15. abides with his people for ever. John xiv. 16. And, by no people is blasphemed, but upon the peril of damnation. Matth. xii. 31.

Each of these scriptures, (and much more all together,) is sufficient to demolish that unscriptural and absurd opinion of the *Socinians* and others, which treats the Holy Spirit of God as an effusion separate from God, consequently as something created by God, and therefore something not of his nature or in it. It was the saying of a good man, that "the Devil may pervert scripture, but he cannot answer it." But the above texts, to which many more may be added, are so positive and direct in proof of the Spirit's *personality*, that, able as the Devil is in sophistry, they seem to defy his wiles upon this point, and are as convincing to faith, as any mathematical demonstrations can possibly be to sense. Two and two making four, does not appear more clear and conclusive, than that the Holy Spirit is a living divine agent, working with *consciousness, will and power*. If people will not be persuaded by these testimonies from God, *neither would they be persuaded, though one rose again from the dead.*

That the Holy Ghost is not a *creature*, nor a little God, nor God inferior to the Father and the Son, but possesses true and perfect *divinity* equal to and united with the other divine persons, let the scriptures, and scriptural arguments only, prove and determine.

His claim to the highest *titles* and *ascriptions* of the Deity hath been considered in some other of these essays; and therefore, in this place, it will be sufficient to prove him to be God from the nature of his *work* and *office*, as the Holy Ghost.

Christ hath declared, that the work of the *Comforter* consisted of two parts; the one was to anoint, to testify of Christ, and to glorify him in his work of mediation; and the other, to teach, to lead, to dwell in, and to abide with his redeemed for ever.

The *anointing* of the man Jesus was both his commission and capacity to perform redemption. As a *mere* man, had he been ever so pure and holy, he could have done nothing, he could have merited nothing, to salvation, but for himself. But as God-man, as a person composed of two natures, *divine* and *human*; he could accomplish all that was necessary by the one, and suffer all that was due in the other. Being, therefore, in this exalted form; who could commission, who could delegate, who could anoint, the blessed Redeemer for the exercise of his function? Could the creatures? Could the highest Angels in Heaven? Could he,

who was the great Creator Jehovah in our nature receive any thing of design, instruction, authority or power, from his own works?—But Christ was anointed with the Holy Ghost for his mediatorial office. The Holy Ghost, therefore, must be *equal* with God, and consequently God himself; or he added nothing to the Redeemer, and was therefore of no use; which to assert, is blasphemy against the wisdom of God. Christ was baptized with water and the Holy Spirit and declared or anointed by him, at the same time, by the voice of the Father to be the Son of God with power and authority, that he might be received and acknowledged for the great Redeemer.

The Holy Spirit was to *testify* of Christ. In so important a matter, for which Christ was to suffer, and concerning which his people were to be saved, it became necessary for him and them, that there should appear the highest evidence and testimony. And the highest hath been given to both. God hath borne witness and testified of his Son; 1 John v. 9. and hath also borne witness and testified of him to his people. Heb. ii. 4. But we shall find, that it was the Holy Ghost, who testified of Jesus, John xv. 26. And that it is the same Holy Ghost, who is a witness to the redeemed. Heb. x. 15. A human testimony might deceive, and, if it did not deceive, must soon fail; but God hath appointed a witness for Jesus in the people, which continues from generation to generation and can never decay.

The Holy Spirit was to *glorify* Christ. But neither earth nor Heaven could add glory to the *Lord of life and glory*. He could only be glorified with his own nature: And therefore he says to the Father, *glorify me with thine own self*. But the Holy Spirit, being *the Spirit of glory*, could glorify the Redeemer with the glory which he had before the world was, and with a glory among his people, which should remain throughout all ages.

The Holy Ghost was also to *teach* the redeemed, and to *guide them into all truth*. And who teacheth like him? Men may apply words to the ear; but God alone can fix instruction upon the heart. He only, who is truth itself, can give the demonstration and power of it to the soul. The senses may have a certainty with respect to mathematical quantity and the proportion of matter; but who can afford the Spirit of man an elenchus concerning spiritual and invisible things, but He, who is *the Father of Spirits*, and who can clothe all words and ideas with conviction and efficacy? It is *Jehovah Alehim, who teacheth to profit, and leadeth his people by the way they should go*. Is. xlvi. 17.



The Holy Ghost was also to *dwell in* and *abide with* his people for ever. Christ, when he departed to his glory, sent the *Comforter* for this very purpose, as a proof for the completion of his own mediatorial *office*.—But we read in the Psalms, that, when *he ascended on high, and led captivity captive*, it was expressly for this end that Jah Alehim *might dwell* among his people, and be unto them that *Shechinah*, which implies every idea of God's gracious comfort and presence. Ps. lxxviii. 18. The Holy Ghost, therefore, is Jehovah Alehim, or (as it is rendered) *the Lord God*. Again. *God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them*. 2 Cor. vi. 16. But it is the Holy Spirit which, Christ promises, shall dwell with them, and be in them. John xiv. 17. The Holy Spirit, consequently, is God.

That the Holy Ghost, though personally and œconomically distinguished from the Father and the Son, is essentially conjoined with the other divine persons, as to the *Unity* of the Godhead; will appear from a variety of Scriptures, some of which have been already considered in the former essays. His peculiar office, which is to enlighten and comfort the redeemed, proves it also most fully and directly. By him they have a communication and communion with the Godhead. They have access unto this grace indeed through Christ, and in virtue of his redemption: Rom. v. 2. But it is by one Spirit, who worketh all in the children of God, that through Christ they thus approach the Father. Eph. ii. 18. By Christ they receive the *title*, by the Holy Spirit they obtain the *enjoyment*, of their inheritance. And, therefore, when communion with God is described in the Scriptures, it is usually in the names of the three divine persons, by whose love, mercy and power, distinctly and severally, the faithful are brought in the participation of it. Thus their fellowship is with the *Father* and the *Son*, 1 John i. 3. with the *Son* particularly, 1 Cor. i. 9, with the *Spirit* expressly, Phil. ii. 1. and the *three persons* together, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. It follows, then, that as there is but one God, this God exists in three persons, who, because of their perfect equality and union, are sometimes mentioned *together*, to express the Unity, and sometimes *apart* to explain their offices, but always in reference to their glory and divinity, or in reference to man's particular dependence upon them, according to their peculiar characters in the covenant of grace. And, in order to shew more particularly the entire union and equality of the divine persons, there is sometimes mentioned an interchanging of office among them; which proves, that all and every part of salvation is the joint ef-

fect of *one* will, *one* power, *one* grace, in the Deity. Sanctification, for instance, whether it be considered in its strict sense of *separation*, or in the sense of *consecration*, or of the communication of *holiness*, is the proper work of the Spirit: But the Spirit is not divided from the Father and Son in this gracious office; for we find, that God the *Father* sanctifieth, Jude 1. and that the *Son* sanctifieth, Heb. xiii. 12. The Apostle Peter marks *how* this is accomplished, in a very particular manner. Believers are *elect* [this is one part of sanctifying] *according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience* [this is another], *and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus* [this is a third] 1 Pet. i. 2. Who doth not see an entire union and communion of the divine persons in this passage? Who hath credulity enough to suppose, that any of these important offices can possibly be performed by *creatures*? These all relate to works of eternal salvation, and can be accomplished by no finite being; for God hath said, with a most remarkable emphasis; *I, even I, am Jehovah, and beside me there is no Saviour*. Is. xliii. 11.

Happy the man, who, to all this testimony from the word of God, can add *that* of his own experience! He *knows* whom he *hath believed*. The confidence and hopes of his soul are not placed upon an *unknown* God, nor upon a speculative and uncertain foundation. *He that believeth, hath the witness in himself*, says the Apostle: And Christ hath declared, that *if any man will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God*. To the authority of the word, God adds the evidence of his Spirit in the believing soul. By this Spirit, he first believes; and, by the same Spirit, he knows that he believes. As an animal is perceived to live, by that inspiration of air which is called breathing; so a Christian is understood to enjoy the Spirit of life, by the spiritual breathings of prayer and praise. *We know that we have passed from death unto life*, by the effects of that life. A man cannot live, and perform the functions of life, without a consciousness of life; nor move, without some sense of motion; nor see, without the perception of sight. 'Tis true; like an infant, he may not exercise these faculties with advantage or comfort at first; but he doth not always remain in this state, and, while he doth, he cannot long secrete some evidences of his spiritual life from others. He is *born of the Spirit*; and being born of Him, who is all life, all energy, he will not, he cannot, remain in the sluggishness and death of the flesh. He hath a *new Spirit* put into his old frame; and he must and will *walk in newness of*

*life.* There is no unnatural constraint in the case (as some have dreamed, who know not the Scriptures nor the power of God;) but this new Spirit and new life bring with them their own proper acts and faculties, and, among the rest, a new will, new affections, new hopes, new fears, new joys, a new understanding; so that the man is become the *new creature* of a *new creation*. Constraint implies resistance; but the believer's new nature doth not resist, but thinks with the Spirit and wills with the Spirit, and therefore is not constrained. The eye *must* see, and the sense *must* feel; but there is no violence upon either faculty in the case, for it is its nature and delight. It is much the same with the real believer. He is not *forced* to love and serve God; and yet he cannot but love and serve him. It is his desire and delight; and without this engagement he has no more complacency, than the eye can have without its sight, or any other faculty without the use of its peculiar discernment. This wonderful work is altogether the agency of God's free Spirit. It is his honor and his office: And it is called by various names in Scripture, which bear reference to our outward senses, that we may perceive the more clearly what a work and what a change it is. Sometimes it is called, a removal from *darkness to light*; and this applies to the difference in the *understanding* between the former state and the present: Sometimes an exchange of *bondage*, for *liberty*; and this affects the *will*, and its thralldom to sin and corruption: Sometimes, a translation from the power of *Satan* into the kingdom of God; and this relates to the exercise of our *powers* and *service*: Sometimes, the alteration of condition from being *children of wrath* to being *children of grace*; and this applies to the *enjoyment* of this life and the *happiness* resulting from it: And sometimes, a passing from *death* unto *life*; and this, including all the rest, refers to the absolute change which is made within the soul in the act of conversion to God. This operation hath been, and ever will be, an incomprehensible business to those, who have not known it in themselves. Like Nicodemus and other *masters in Israel*, they will reason and re-reason, till they puzzle and perplex themselves by *darkening counsel without knowledge*; and, when they cannot make out the matter, will give the strongest proof of all that they do know nothing of it, by fretting, and raving, and calling hard names, and saying, in short, that there is no such thing. Thus will they strive to content themselves by *sporting with their own deceivings*: And, if they can find out some melancholy examples of hypocrites and pretenders (as, God knows.

they may soon find too many) they will quote these, as so many proofs upon fact for the truth of their opinion; and so, where they do not reason, they will not fail to abuse. Yet reason itself *might* teach them, that from the abuse to the use of a principle no consequence holds: And the Scripture *docs* teach them, that *a man must be born from above* ere he can ascend thither; and that this is one part of that work concerning which God says, *I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.* Acts xiii. 41.

Blessed be God, the truths of his grace do not at all depend upon the feeble and fluctuating opinions of fallible men. Though we are all Popes by nature, and every man is prone to claim to himself an infallible chair, to the decisions of which if others oppose themselves he is ready to thunder out angry bulls and *bitter words*; yet the Spirit of God pulls this Papal spirit down within his children, and teaches them not to domineer, but to sit meekly at the master's feet, or to walk humbly in the sense of their own weakness and dependence upon him.

All this work of grace in the soul, is to the believer an *internal* proof of the Holy Spirit's divinity, who is the agent. 'Tis no proof indeed to the world at large, nor is it offered as such; being a part of that *hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory*, and a portion of that *hidden manna*, which the world knows nothing of. It is that *white stone, and new name written on it, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.* The Holy Ghost is a *witness* for himself in the spirits of his people; and his people rejoice in his testimony. As they know by *sense*, that the sun shines at mid-day, and are assured of it by its own illumination; so they know by the grace of *faith* (which *seeth him that is invisible*,) that *the spirit of God is in them of a truth*, and are convinced of it by his own light and demonstration. The world, on the other hand, laugh at what they know not, with just as much wisdom as a simple clown, who should jeer at the earth's motion and other astronomical truths, merely because he cannot conceive them. Nor let the world call this *conceit* or *pride* in the Christian; because he will own, that he must have remained in the same blindness of heart with them, but for the free and unmerited mercy of his God. Unto him, *it was given to believe: of himself* (with the Apostle) *he knows nothing.* "Sceptics may wrangle (says an ingenious author) and mockers may blaspheme; but the pious man knows by evidence too sublime for their comprehension, that his affections are not misplaced.

and that his hopes shall not be disappointed ; by evidence, which, to every sound mind, is fully satisfactory ; but which to the humble and tender-hearted, is *altogether everlasting, irresistible, and divine.*" Beattie on *Truth*. Part I. c. ii. 5. See also, to the same effect, Stillington's *Origines Sacræ*. Book ii. c. 9.

The Spirit proves himself to be God, by the spiritual wonders which he hath wrought : and he takes upon him the name of the *Spirit of Holiness*, both because he is the essence of it, and because he wonderfully condescends to impart it to sinners among men. *As without holiness no man shall see the Lord ;* so, without the Lord, no man shall enjoy holiness. It is a principle which cannot arise from so foul a soil as a sinful soul. It is life eternal both in substance and consequence ; and surely *this* must be a life, which no weak and wicked wretch, as man is by nature, can either create or claim. He has no title to it, but from God's bounty ; no power to exercise it but by God's strength ; no confidence of its perpetuity, but through that faithfulness and mercy which endure forever.

The Lord, the Spirit, bestows holiness upon his people, as the means of their happiness, nay, as their happiness itself. They fly not from sin, merely lest they should be damned for it (though it is certain as God is true, that they who live and die in sin, whoever they be, shall be damned ;) but they avoid it, as the path of misery itself, in which they are sure never to find that presence which is better than life, nor that communion of the Spirit which is one main-spring of all their joys. Some there are (and O that it were not too undeniable a truth !) who talk of keeping up this communion and enjoying this presence, even *where Satan's seat is*, and among the lying vanities and amusements of the world. The condemnation of such men is just. Rom. iii. 8. To do evil that good may come, to mix with sin to enjoy holiness, and to confederate with the Devil to serve God ; are some of those horrible problems, which make real Christians tremble, excite wonder in Heaven at the divine patience, and raise a malignant smile in Hell over the amazing impudence and apostacy of man.\* Such unhappy souls (for they never knew the *happines*s of the Spirit of Holiness) have *neither part nor lot in the matter ;* but, like Simon Magus the founder of such like heresies, are *in the gall of*

\* " This is the double policy of the spiritual enemy, either by counterfeit holiness of life to establish and authorize errors ; or by corruption of manners to discredit truth, and the things that are lawful." Lord Bacon. *Peace of the Church*.

*bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.* They may talk of the gospel, but do not enjoy it; they may criticise upon doctrines, but do not know their power; and they may split hairs perhaps upon theological theses, but be all the while within a hair's breadth of Hell. The *Spirit of Holiness* will not be blasphemed, but at their cost, by those who profess to know him, *while in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.* Tit. i. 16—This is plain language; but the times require it. The real Christian will not be offended at the truth, for he loves to be sincerely dealt with: and as to hypocritical pretenders, they *ought* to be offended, that either they may be humbled for their sins, or be allowed no title to a profession which they disgrace. For this, we have the example of the primitive Church: and it would be happy for the Church in all ages and countries, if she could follow it.

And now, O believer, in whom this divine Spirit hath breathed his heavenly life, and whom he hath anointed with his holy unction; what says thy heart to this title of thy God? Is he not a *spirit* indeed to thee, quickening thy soul and renewing thy strength? Is he not the *Holy Spirit, or Spirit of Holiness*, willing in thee all holy inclinations, stirring in thee all holy desires, prompting to thee all holy words, effecting in thee all holy works? Hast thou a thought, a wish, an affection, a work, holy in the least degree without him? Thy spirit will witness for him in all this matter—will witness his kindness, and mercy, and power, and Godhead everlasting. His own word *proclaims* his divinity; thy heart *feels* it. If *others* doubt this glorious truth, *thou* canst not. Thou art taught by himself, as well as by his word, that none but almighty power could have raised thee from the death of trespasses and sins, and none but invincible grace have protected thee when raised. And thou hast seen in manifold instances (and thy memory can furnish both the times and occasions,) how readily he has come in to thine aid; when, but for his aid thou must have sunk under thy various temptations, and fallen into the snare of the Devil. He furnishes thy mind with *knowledge*, not notional or speculative knowledge only, but with such full intelligence of necessary truth, as enables thy spirit to receive it as something belonging to thee, and to relish and enjoy it. He sanctifies thy *affections*, and prevents their intanglement with things beneath him and below thyself. He gives thee sweet *complacency of heart*, and many a happy hour, which no eye but *his* beholds, and no mind but a Christian's can conceive. How kindly doth he

bend down the old man of sin, and conquer those harsh and rugged dispositions, which no created strength could subdue! What meek resignation, what placid contentment, what abstraction from the world and from self, doth it introduce into a heart, which, before, was like *an untamed heifer, unaccustomed to the yoke*, and which only sought *self*, and *sin* for self, in all it thought or did! How powerfully, yet how graciously, doth he sustain thy spirit in every trying hour; and, though he suffer thee to slip perhaps, that thou mightest remember where thy strength lies; with what increase of fervor and holiness doth he raise thee up again, and with what sense of his unmerited mercy and love! \* O what a debtor, what a daily debtor, art thou to this Holy Spirit's wisdom, power, and grace! 'Tis indeed, a salvation, which thou canst not number; a rich salvation, which all Heaven cannot count. Thou wilt be counting it to eternity, and all the while be perceiving, more and more clearly, that thou art and must be an everlasting debtor. 'Tis a blessed debt, and thou wilt forever be welcome to increase it. O come, let us add something to it even here! We have a bad world indeed; but still grace is to be obtained in it; and we can augment our stock in this valley of Achor for our heavenly Canaan. Soon, soon shall the hour come, when the shadows shall disappear, when the day of Christ shall dawn, and the full effulgence of the divine glory shall irradiate, and fill and make unalterably happy, our redeemed souls. Soon shall we see *Jesus as he is*, and, by the love of the Father, and power of the Spirit, *be forever like unto him*.

Wonderfully saved art thou, O Christian! Wonderfully redeemed from the earth! All things here are full of wonders, when we survey the visible creation as we ought: but how surpassing in wonder, how unutterably amazing, must the redemption of thy soul appear, when thou shalt be able more perfectly to trace it out, as it began in Heaven, was carried on upon earth, and completed in glory!—when the wonders of God shall burst forth upon thy ravished soul in those realms of bliss, *where mortality is swallowed up of life!* There, even there perhaps, in the perfect illumination of Spirit and life, without one cloud to obscure; thou mayest justly take up the Apostle's words to proclaim the ineffable theme; *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and know-*

\* Bernard elegantly says of these *fruits of the Spirit*, that they are *Specquædam seminaria, charitatis incentiva, occultæ prædestinationis indicia, futuræ felicitatis presagia*; "Nourishments of hope, motives of love, discoveries of God's secret predestination, and sure prognostics of everlasting felicity. *De Grat. & Lib. Arb.* Wits. Irenic. c. xiv. §. 15.

*lege of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to Him be glory forever. Amen.*



## ETERNAL SPIRIT.

ETERNITY!—how *short* a word for an *infinite* meaning!—'Tis a name for an existence, of which the creatures can only apprehend the succession of parts, and which its author and cause alone can comprehend, without succession, as a whole. It depends upon the existence of God; and *it necessarily exists*, because *He necessarily exists*. As it is impossible that there should be no being, no place, no duration; so, on the contrary, there must be that Being, by whom and in whom all being, place, and duration subsist. For it is absurd to say, that a *nonentity endures*, or that the *cause of duration doth not endure*. And as duration must have been eternal *a parte ante*, or *before* the present *now*; so it must be eternal *a parte post*, or *after any given moment* of time. Consequently, the author of duration, in both these respects, is *from everlasting to everlasting* also.

This idea is included in the peculiar name of God, יהוה *Jehovah*, which says in its original four letters, what perhaps no four words of any language beside the Hebrew can express, that *the ESSENCE necessarily existing IS, and WAS, and IS TO COME, without beginning of days or end of life*. He, who can fully conceive this, may likewise fully comprehend the sense of the word *Eternity*, which bears the same relation to God, as *time* doth to the creatures. But, as no created being can thus dilate itself to infinitude [*nullum minus continet in se majus* ;] so none *by searching can find out God*, or explore the *height and depth* which is unbounded.

Now, though we are unable to fathom what is necessarily unfathomable to us, it is however expedient, that we should know it to be so, and in consequence not presume to launch out into an immense ocean, without chart or compass. Man, in every sense of the term, is placed upon an *island*, to which there is an appointed shore; and he can see but a very little space beyond it—far enough, however, to know, that there is, beyond his small circle of perception and conception, a wide circumference of time, place, power, and wisdom; which, like circles, including



others *ad infinitum*, grow in immensity and compass, the wider they are extended from him.

As man can go but a very little way towards the knowledge and apprehension of God; it hath pleased the divine goodness to bring into his narrow reach such notices of what lies beyond it, as may serve to fill him with a due understanding of his own minuteness and dependence, and to make him humble, teachable, and submissive in those things, which are only to be known by divine communication, though absolutely necessary for his being and well-being.

Much of these notices concerning God and his revealed truths, is to be found in the *titles* and *terms*, by which they are conveyed. 'Tis a poor attempt to extend theology, even as a science, by any methods which can be found, *out of* the language and sense of the Bible. God is to be known only by God: And he has directed to his *law* and *testimony* for the means of this knowledge. His word contains all the true divinity, which ever appeared in the world. They are, therefore, to be pitied for their pride and presumption, who talk of the "Improvements which later ages are making in theological knowledge;" which improvements, if they are enquired into, are mean and unsatisfactory compilations of metaphysical, ethical, and philosophic opinions, collected from ancient heathens, modern infidels, and other human authorities; having no real connection with God's own *revelation*, or the *fallen state* of man, but, in most respects, entirely inconsistent with both. This mode of pursuing religious knowledge has been the occasion of all the heresies and absurdities, which ever appeared in the world, and possibly of most of the infidel and sceptic futilities of the present time. If Origen had not studied Plato, instead of St. Paul; it is probable, that the world had not heard of Arius, nor of the various tribes which have descended from him. Men of easy principles, or who do not trouble themselves to search into the *right well*, where alone *truth* lies at the bottom, and from whence only it can be drawn; seeing such flimsy and dry discourses upon subjects, which Cicero, Seneca, and other heathens, have treated, at least, as *rationally* as most latter authors; are tempted to believe, that Christianity and heathenism are nearly of kin, that their morality is much alike, and that the works of the philosophers are very enlightened commentaries upon the Bible. Others, from such hints, have gone further, and treated the Bible itself as one of those old and obscure books, which are hard to be understood, and not worth the labor of un-

derstanding. From this mode of treating religious subjects is Protestant countries, and from the mummery and ridiculous varnish with which they are disfigured in Popish ; Deism has gained its principal ground, and in most companies can now be professed and maintained with an open front. They, who know the state of religion in France, easily tell us, that its first ecclesiastics are almost universally Deists ; and that those, who are not lax at least in religious principles, are smiled upon as bigots or fools. And, with respect to England, it is quite enough to say, that neither oaths nor subscriptions can restrain men from disputing against the *established articles*, founded as they are upon the firmest basis of the scriptures ; nor yet from maintaining, even within the Church itself, opinions which the Church abhors. Than such Christians, it must be owned, that fair and open Deists are at least honest and more laudable men.

As these people neither lead themselves nor others to the knowledge of God, because they either forsake or use not his own revelation ; we must beg to leave them, and inquire, what God hath said of, and what he calls himself. His names, communicated to us, are various ; because the doctrines, which those names teach us, have a relation to our various wants, infirmities, and dependencies upon him. One name would serve as well as ten thousand ; if we had but one relation to, or but one idea of God. For instance ; could we, being perfect creatures as angels, only depend upon him as our great *Creator* ; that name would have been sufficient for us to declare him : But, being *sinful* creatures, yet creatures to be *redeemed*, our Creator stood immediately in many relations to us, according to our several conditions of *sinfulness, recovery, redemption, and salvation*, which it was necessary for us to know, that we might apply to him under those relations and receive every benefit and blessing we need. He hath, therefore, suited himself (as it were) to us in the revelation of his *names*, that, by the doctrines they contain, we might apprehend or be brought into those relations to him, which those *names* were intended to signify. And as he hath been pleased to inform us, that he exists in himself as Jehovah, or one everlasting and almighty essence, and as the *Alchim*, or three persons in that essence, which his word styles *Father, Son, and Spirit* ; so he hath shewn us, *how* this Son became our Redeemer as well as Creator, and *how* this Spirit is our Sanctifier, as well as our Maker. These *two* divine persons in the essence being the declared agents of our salvation ; they have taken ma-

ny titles upon them to shew us, in what sense they are those agents, and how they become the fulfillers of that salvation. By them we are led to communion with the *first* person, or Father; who is not called *first* from any *priority* of person or existence, but only by way of *distinction*; for we find the Son placed *first*, and also the Spirit, and the Father *last*, in the same texts, on purpose to shew (as it seems) that “in this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another, but that the whole three persons are coëternal together, and coëqual.” We have considered many of the divine names, with respect to the agency of the divine persons; and the present denomination before us is held out to our minds, that we may hold communion with the person of the Spirit, and receive that comfort which it proposes to our souls; even *everlasting consolation*, because *He is everlasting*.

That God is a *Spirit*, Christ declares; that the Spirit is a *Spirit*, his name signifies; and that he is the *Eternal Spirit*, the word of God expressly proclaims. Hebr. ix. 14. If the *Holy Spirit*, then, be the *Eternal*; it will follow, that he is true and very God; because God only is properly eternal,—and none of the creatures are called by that name. No creature *could* be so; for there was a *time*, when, whatever creature can be named, *was not*; and therefore *he* could not exist *from eternity*: And, consequently, he cannot be called an *eternal* being. There is also a *place*, in which any one creature *is not*; for a limited nature can only occupy *one point* of space in the *eternity* of being about him: And therefore, in this view, he is not *eternal*; but comprehended by Him, whose Fulness *filleth all in all*. But the Holy Spirit is the *Eternal Spirit*, whoever existed beyond all (points of *time*, and does exist beyond all) bounds of *place*; and therefore He is the *eternal God*, who is *from everlasting to everlasting* with respect to duration, and whom *the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain* with regard to his dwelling. He is in all ages *present*, and in all limits *unlimited*, and possesses that *eternity* which (as Boethius terms it) *is at once a whole and perfect possession of an endless or boundless life*.\*

\* Thomas Aquinas, in the first part of his *Summa Theologiæ*, Quæst. x. Art. i. has discussed this passage of Boethius with his usual metaphysical subtlety; but proves, how poorly the intellect of man can conceive, or the pen of man express, what is infinite and unbounded. The French hermit, who spent his whole life in pondering (as he said) upon *eternity*, might have spent a thousand lives, and then be beginning only to think upon it.—There is a sensible Essay upon this topic of *eternity* in the Spectator. No. 590. And for a more metaphysical and philosophical Disquisition, see Gale's *Court of the Gentiles*. Part iv. p. 276—288.

This title of *eternal* is proper to God; and, therefore, God hath revealed himself by that name, and by others which include or imply it. So Abraham called on the name of Jehovah, *the everlasting God*. Gen. xxi. 33. So the promise was made to Israel, concerning *the eternal God* and *the everlasting arms*. Deut. xxxiii. 27. So Jehovah is called in Isaiah, the *Alehim of ages*, or *everlasting God*. Is. xl. 28. And so the Apostle, who calls the Spirit *eternal*, uses the same word in another place, as a high and grand title peculiar to God *alone*. Rom. vi. 26.

And as God only is eternal, in the strict sense of the term, and the cause of eternity; so all eternal things, or things which shall remain to eternity, are ascribed to Him as the agent, and derived from Him as the source. Thus, his kingdom is an *everlasting kingdom*; his power, an *eternal power*; his righteousness, an *everlasting righteousness*; his glory, an *eternal glory*. In like manner, what is derived from Him, partakes of his duration: And, therefore, his redeemed receive an *everlasting consolation*, a crown of glory *which fadeth not*, a *life eternal*, and do *reign with him for ever and ever*. In a word all that shall endure to eternity, must and doth proceed from Him, who only can possess, in their proper sense and relation to each other, those glorious titles of *Jehovah Alehim the Truth, the very Alehim of Lives* (or of all life,) *the King of Eternity*. Jer. x. 10.

From hence it appears, that scarce any, and perhaps no word, could more positively assert the truth of the Deity, than this one word *Eternal*; and, accordingly, we find it ascribed to no being whatever, but to that *high and lofty one, who inhabiteth\* eternity*. All the multitude of the blest, all the Angels of God, are *immortal*, and in God, shall participate a *future eternity*: But not one of them can say, that he existed from all *past* eternity, since, in that case, he must deny himself to be a creature: because all creation, with respect to the Being which created, is a *beginning to be*. None of these therefore ARE *eternal*: none of these possess eternity in their own nature, or from themselves; but

\* The word implies not only to *occupy* or *fill* by inhabiting, but to *rest* as in an habitation. To *occupy*, therefore, eternity as a whole, and to *rest* in that whole, is a most sublime expression of the power of the Divine Majesty. Human authors have attempted this sense in their expressions of his eternity, particularly some of the ancient philosophers. Boethius, the Christian philosopher, addresses God very nearly in this idea;

—*Stabilisque manens das cuncta moveri.*

The Rabbins are said to call God עוֹלָם Place, with the same notion of his *resting* or *standing* in all that *exists*. By this word, they would express his *Omnipresence*; as, by אֵין סוֹף [literally, *without end*] they mean his *eternity*, or *infinitude*.

are limited in the *quantity* and *quality* of their existence, and are dependent for the *continuance* of it. Now, then, as the Holy Spirit is expressly styled *the eternal Spirit*, without any expression of his dependence or derivation, but the contrary; it is a plain and precise declaration, from the word of truth, that *He is the Eternal God, who was in Christ reconciling the world of his elect to himself, and through whom Christ offered up himself without spot to God, i. e. the Father.*

If, after so positive a testimony, any one can doubt of the Divinity of the Holy Spirit, it may be worth while to recur to the xxxii. chapter of Deuteronomy, in which we have a definition of all false Gods, with their abomination in the sight of Jehovah. The striking circumstance, laid down in their character, is, that they are *new, newly come up, of a late original; strange, of a nature remote from the divine, and different from it.* The idolaters, therefore, were cursed *for their Gods, or rather Devils who so imposed themselves upon them, and with their Gods.* This *service* to these *new and finite* beings is called, by Isaiah, *rebelling and vexing the Holy Spirit*; and the *punishment* was, that this Holy Spirit was *turned to be their enemy, and fought against them.* Is. lxiii. 10. But, wherefore? Because they left the service of Him, who is the only *true and everlasting* God, and turned to idols, who are *false and finite*, and therefore are termed *vanities, emptinesses, nothings.* In opposition to all these vanities and errors, Jehovah speaks so often of his *everlasting name*, and of the *eternal duration* of his nature and attributes.\*

In this view, what a blasphemy must it be to ascribe the epithet *Eternal* to any being but the great One; to Him, who fills eternity with his presence, and who is himself the very life and spring of eternity? And, on the other hand, how direct a testimony is this ascription to the Holy Ghost, that He is the eternal Jehovah, whose *kingdom is an everlasting kingdom*, and whose *dominion endureth throughout all ages?*

Need we more proof of the divinity of this gracious Spirit from the *eternity* of his nature?—Blessed be God for his word, we have (if required) proof upon proof, as well as *line upon line.* What think we of the following scriptures.

\* There is a grand idea of the superiority of the divine nature to all the descriptions and conceptions of *time* in those words, which Moses hath used in the xc Psal. *A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, when it is past, &c. i. e. As the day past, which being now no more, is less to us than the present existing moment; so are a thousand years almost a nothing in the eternity of God.*

Gal. vi. 8. *He that soweth to the Spirit, shall, εκ τῆς Πνευματικῆς, of or from the Spirit [i. e. by the Spirit's gift and power:] reap life everlasting.* From hence it may be argued, that

*He, who bestoweth life everlasting, must be the author and possessor of it :*

But *eternal life* (says the Apostle, in Rom. vi. 23.) *is the gift of God :*

Therefore, the Spirit, from whom it is reaped, or derived, and by whom consequently it is bestowed, is necessarily God.

To the real Christian, this title of *Eternal Spirit* affords a *hope full of immortality.* He is led to perceive, from the *eternity* of his nature, that he is capable of performing all the great and glorious operations ascribed to Him in the scriptures, and that those operations, upon this account, are *permanent* and *perpetual.* Only because He is *the Eternal,* could He be a party in the *everlasting covenant* made before all worlds, of which so frequent mention is made : Only because He is *God,* could He stipulate to bestow those blessings of grace and of glory, which spring from Jehovah, and are at his sole disposal. His purpose is an *eternal purpose,* because, both in essence and person, he himself is eternal.

Hence the believer sees, that this counsel is also *immutable,* (for nothing can be *eternal* or *perfect,* which is subject to *mutability*) not exposed to diminution or change, but *ordered in all things and sure ;* that all these things were known to him from eternity, not because, they *might* exist, but because, in his purpose which could not alter, they *must* exist ; and that He beholds the whole series of things, not as they arise to *our* view in *parts* or *degrees,* but as one great whole, of which He himself is the one great cause. When a man stands upon a mountain (to use a simile of the schoolmen,) he can see an whole army in march from the beginning to the end at one view ; while another, who walks in the valley and is a part of the train, can see but very few, and those only who are close about him. So God (if one may compare immensity by minuteness) views at once all infinitude ; and all things revolve in the order, in which He hath placed them. This order consequently, is *immutable* and *not to be broken.*

Hence, likewise, the Christian is led to consider the *omnipresence* of the Divine Spirit, who only can be so, as He is *eternal.* It has been observed before, that a *creature* must be confined to *place,* and must begin with *time.* But this Almighty Spirit, as He is never *nowhere,* so He always *exists :* He is present with the blest in Heaven, and never absent from the redeemed on earth.

In every moment of time, He diffuses his *everlasting consolation* through all the mansions, the innumerable mansions of glory, and sheds his sacred influences upon all, even the meanest, believers in houses of clay. From pole to pole it is but as a point with Him who views the various nations of this habitable globe, like a few atoms of dust. As Jerom phrases it; "The Court of Heaven is equally open at once for Jerusalem and Britain." There is not a sigh of prayer, nor an emotion of praise, however secret in any of his people's hearts, but what He perfectly knows, because He first imparted it to them. He knows indeed the mind of every Spirit; but especially the mind of those, who are the objects of his peculiar care.

From hence, lastly, the believer is privileged to rejoice, that, as his salvation is not the purpose of a day, nor rose upon the spur of some accidental occasion; so it shall endure, like its great and bountiful author, *for evermore*. God gives like himself: And his gift is *eternal life* through Jesus Christ. The Spirit imparts this blessing, through his own divine nature, maintains it amidst all the agitations of an evil heart and an evil world, and secures it, beyond all possibility of decay, throughout its own eternity.—With how much reason, then, may the believer entertain *everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace*? With how much absurdity, do those persons think or talk of either, who dream of this Holy Spirit as a *creature, an emanation, a quality, a nothing*?—If He be only a *creature*; he is to *us*, in respect to the *eternity* of our salvation, but as *nothing*.

What comfort results from this whole matter to the weak, the troubled, or desponding soul! Come build upon this *rock of ages*, and thou shalt never fail, never be moved. Remember, his *kingdom is a kingdom of all ages* [Psalm clxv. 13. margin,] and his *dominion throughout all generations*. He hath visited thee in *thy* generation, and set up a throne within thy heart for his own praise. Now, look to him upon this throne; and seek to ask in prayer *nothing* but what shall be for thy real welfare, and to offer in praise *nothing* but what shall be for his own glory: at the same time, pray to leave and give up the whole into his hands. Then, rest assured, upon the faithfulness of his own word and promise, that thy praise shall be accepted, and thy prayer answered, through Christ Jesus.—"But I want *comfort*; and surely, I should have it, if I belonged to him." O that *selfish* spirit, which ever rises within us! *Thou wantest* this thing; *thou wantest* the other; *thou wantest* Heaven upon earth; all comforts and no troubles:

but, if it be for God's glory, that thou shouldest want all these things (like those noble believers in Hebr. xi.) throughout thy whole way to Heaven; art thou willing that God's purpose should be answered, rather than thine?—Speak to thy heart, reader; and bid it tell thee no lie.—Canst thou give up all, without reserve, to God's will; and *keep back no part* from him?—I know, thou art staggered at this inquiry, and hast need to make a very long pause—Consider well; and pronounce not hastily.—In the meantime, recollect, that to induce this disposition in thy soul, to work this *new* life within thee, and to break down the strength of the *old*; is one great end of all the divine visitations within thee, and upon thy affairs. Providence, to a believer, has no end but grace: and when the effects and purposes of grace are accomplished in him and by him, he has no more business in this life. Our unhappiness consists, as Christians, in getting into a *multitude of things*, for *our own* ends or with relation to others, without *committing our way* to the Lord, submitting to his will, or considering his glory. We feel hurt and disappointed, if our wishes are not attained; if men annoy us; if our affairs are entangled; if our persons are slighted; if we fall into sickness, decay, or tribulation. And can all this *affliction spring out of the ground*? No, indeed; there is a very superior cause; and as merciful (could we view it aright) as it is superior. We are all, by nature, froward children, and want much weaning. The earth is our mother, and we love her milk: and we often roar aloud, only because we cannot obtain it. But God, having *provided some better thing for us*, takes us off from undue attachment to what men call *their* comforts and enjoyments, makes us feel how poor and wretched we are in our ourselves, and at length draws us on progressively to himself. We are then more and more in earnest, that he would not merely bestow *temporary*, but *everlasting consolations* upon us. If we get indeed into the spirit of the world, let our pretences be what they may; we are sure to lose the sweet presence of God's gracious spirit, and to go lean and dry in our souls. And this is one great reason of the empty, barren profession of the gospel, which we see in so many sad instances about us at this time.—Speak, reader to thy heart; and ask, if it hath not been so with thee?—Thou hast *disputed* perhaps for Christ and his gospel, and indeed very sincerely at the bottom, but at the same time with a secret wish to display thy own knowledge or talents, or with the little mean view of conquering an opponent. Thou didst not dispute *by* Christ, as well as *for* him; and, therefore, when thou



retirest to thyself; thou hadst no other delight or complacency, but the poor flat satisfaction of having had the hardest head or the most voluble tongue.\* When thou camest to thyself, how glad wouldest thou have been, *not* to have disputed at all? Christ was not glorified, thy heart not edified, and perhaps some other persons only offended. The martyr was in a much better frame, who said, "I cannot *dispute* for Christ; but I can *die* for him."—Thou hast mixed, perhaps, with the great run of the professing world, which, alas! hath its passions like the rest of the world at large. Thou hast heard great outcries about patriotism, and protestantism, and liberty of conscience, and many other finely sounding names; and hast been persuaded, it may be, to run with a multitude, who have talked much, and loudly too, of all these things, till thou hast been as *heated*, if not as idle and ripe for folly, as they. But, who opposes the Antichrist in reality?—He, who hath ceased from man, and depends upon the living God. Who is the true patriot?—He, who prays for his king and country, rather than he, who only prates about them?—Who enjoys and promotes liberty of conscience?—The *Christian*, who possesses God's *free Spirit*, who hath this noisy foolish world under his feet, who tramples upon the powers of darkness, and whose aim is, that the everlasting gospel may be sent forth to all the world. Out of this frame and temper, the believer is out of his element, finds no liberty, and can justly expect none. God's flock is a quiet assembly: dogs and wolves only set up a roaring. Art thou offended at this, reader!—Turn inward; and first be offended at *thyself*. Take shame to thy heart, that thou hast ever allowed such odious dispositions within Christ's sacred temple; and much more, if thou hast ever *dared* to plead for them. Regret, that thou hast been so forgetful of thy true strength, as a Christian, as to employ any thing, but (what indeed is an "invincible armada") *faith* and *prayer*, in the behalf of thyself and of others; and seek ability and wisdom to handle those truly potent *weapons*, which the Apostle recommends to our use, in 2 Cor. x. In compunction of thine own spirit, implore the power of God's *Spirit*, that his kingdom may be quietly established in thy heart over all the rebellions of the *man of sin* which are in it; and, in the room of the abominable rage and follies of the men of the world,

\* If the reader would wish to examine his *motives* of acting or speaking for God, he may find a touchstone for his heart (and *touchstones* every sincere believer desires) in a very excellent Sermon, preached by the late Rev. Mr. Bostwick, styled *Self disclaimed, and Christ exalted*.

that thou mayest receive *the wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without wrangling [adiaxptiles] or censuring, and without hypocrisy.* James iii. 17. Remember, Christian, if ever thou fallest into a controversy or cabal, that there is such a text as this in thy Bible.

As the ways of the world are not the *ways of peace*; so there is but one spring of comfort in this dreary wilderness. The *Eternal Spirit*, shining upon his word, can only illuminate the darkness of our minds, and, pouring forth his own gladness, can only refresh our hearts. Looking simply to him, O believer, thou art safe, among all the corruptions of thine own nature, and amidst all the confusions of time about thee. Come what may, (and nothing *can* come but what thy Father wills) *all shall work together for thy good.* To the world it may seem, and may be otherwise; but thou art not to reckon *from* the world, nor *with* it. Thou hast a sacred record to peruse, sure and fixed as the being and throne of God: And, from this record, thou art to take the estimate of all things. There is a *sanctuary* into which thou art privileged to go, and to learn the ends of providence and grace; while those, who remain *without*, see nothing but either confusions or themselves. In this *holy oracle*, thou wilt find *the understanding, which is true*; and, by it, thou shalt be *guided in to all the truth.* No outward things can harm thee; if all be but right within: And it is thy privilege to receive the dispensations of Heaven, in a very different frame from the men of the world. What *consumes* them, should only *purify* thee. "In the same fire (said a venerable father) gold brightens and rubbish fumes: under the same stroke, the chaff is bruised, and the corn educed: Nor are the husks confounded with the oil, under the pressure of the same weight. Even so; the same visitation proves, purifies, and purges the Christian; while it ruins, wastes, and destroys the man of the world. This last rages and blasphemes; while the other prays and gives thanks to God, in one and the same affliction. From whence it appears, that it is not of so much consequence, *what things* are suffered, as *what the persons* are who suffer them."\* Let a man *be* a Christian, and let him suffer *as* a Christian; it shall all be well with him at the last. The heavenly potter puts his vessels into the furnace of tribulation, not to break them, but to fit them for use and glory. 2 Tim. ii. 21. *Quæ*

\* Aug. de civit. Dei. l. i. c. 8.

light affliction (light, even where heaviest) which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things, which are seen, are temporal; but the things, which are not seen, are eternal. 1 Cor. iv. 16, 17.

And why should *they* look at, and much less be swallowed up in, *temporal* matters, who have an eternal hope, an eternal life, an eternal home, an *eternal Spirit*, for their comfort, portion, and everlasting security! O why should such heirs of glory wallow in the dung, or covet the dross, of this giddy, dying world! Why should such immortals be bowed down to the dregs of mortality! At this Angels may wonder, and Christians should mourn——— should mourn, that Angels have reason to wonder and be astonished, that Christians can stoop so low, and rise so heavily to join in the anthems of praise. Could we see, what Angels and those spirits of the just now behold, to whom the veil of corruption is no more; what *manner of persons* should we aim to be?—It seems almost impossible, when we get a little way up the mountain which they stand, that our apprehensions of divine things should ever sink so low into this vale of tears, as they too—too often do.\* With what sense and force, hath every heart a reason even the most enlivened heart among us, to cry out; *Woe is me,*

\* We know but little in reality of the natural world, and far less of the spiritual. What we, in following the scripture, term the covenant of grace, with all its relations and dependencies, may only form a part of an infinitely greater system, extended to worlds upon worlds beyond and above us. The Angels, principalities, powers, might, and dominions, in *the Heavens*, of which we have only hints revealed to us, because, as yet, more is not necessary for us to know, may have such a connection with the fall, and perhaps, (at least those who are evil among them) such a share in producing it, as may vastly surpass our present powers of conception. It plainly appears, that, as this world of ours makes but a part of a great whole, so its spiritual concerns may have a relation to transactions in the Heavens, which it may constitute a great part of our happiness to grow more and more acquainted with throughout eternity itself; as doubtless it will add to the felicity of all the inhabitants of glory, of whatever order or degree, to see the consummation of the elect with them, through the merit and power of the Redeemer.

How little do we know of the principle of natural life, even in ourselves? Much less do we know of the life of other beings around us; and least of all of the life of spiritual beings and the manner of their agencies or operations. We understand not the life of a mite; and yet we are privileged to enjoy the life of God, which we know that we do enjoy by its effects, so distinct and superior to the course and bent of natural life, as it now exists in our fallen state, and so plainly stated and delineated in the word of God.—There is no end to these wonders! They are all unsearchable! *In the fulness of times, all things are to be gathered together in one, in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth, even in Us.* Eph. i. 10.

*that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!—*Corruption presses hard upon us on every side; and darkness, with all its power, combines to attack our minds. O for more of this *Eternal Spirit* to dispel the encroaching gloom, and to cheer us with his heavenly light!—We are called out of nothing; we were spoken into being, when it was by no means necessary that we should exist at all, and, by a wonderful act of the freest grace and mercy, are made partakers of an *everlasting existence*. With what humility and prostration of soul, should we, therefore, entertain this benefit, and the means, which God's infinite condescension used to procure it? How happy in our hearts, how holy in our lives, ought we to be, in thankfulness for such unmerited, such superabundant good!—for good, which our thankfulness cannot fully acknowledge; no, not even to eternity. Eternity will not complete this joyful employment, though it will be continued through eternity. It will ever be “beginning to begin;” never ending, nor approaching an end.—“O my soul! says the Christian; is this thine ineffable portion, through the love of the *Father*, the grace of the *Son*, and the power of the *eternal Spirit*; and shall I not stand with rapture and amazement, at such a confluence of all the divine attributes, in all the divine persons, for such a poor, such a helpless, worthless sinner! Can I withhold my feeble praise, can I suppress the grateful emotions of my soul, to whom so much is given, and so much forgiven?—O no! I ought not, I would not, I cannot. Let me join in the triumphant fervor of the holy Polycarp, who when he was leading to martyrdom, could lift up his voice and say, *O thou true and faithful God; I praise, and bless, and glorify thee in all things, by the eternal God and High Priest Christ Jesus, thy beloved Son; through whom, and with whom, and also with the Holy Spirit, be the glory ascribed to thee both now and for ever!* Let me join in the Spirit with that blessed and enraptured throng, who, with a *great voice* and unspeakable ardor, are shouting in Heaven; *Hallelujah! salvation, and glory, and honor and power, unto the Lord our God: Even so, Hallelujah! Amen.*—Thou shalt join them, happy soul; for *the Lord hath spoken it*: Thou shalt join them, in the power of the *Eternal Spirit*, never more to be separated throughout eternity.—Lay aside the willow, then, and take up the palm; shouting, and for ever shouting, *Hallelu-Jahu!*

## COMFORTER.

LEARNED men are divided upon the proper signification of the original word. Some contend that the *Paraclete* is so called, because of his office as *Comforter*; and others believe that the name strictly signifies an *Advocate*. The word, very probably relates to *both*; for, in the application of the office to his people's souls, the Holy Spirit, as an Advocate, with God *in* them, is also their inward Comforter by the exercise of his intercession. He is their Comforter, by explaining how much he is their Friend and Advocate, who has taken upon himself their everlasting interests, and who will *never leave nor forsake them*. The dispute, therefore, seems rather a strife of words; since the thing implied is nearly one and the same. We will treat of the name in both views, and endeavour to shew, that, in both, He, who is this Paraclete, must be God, and therefore able to perform, whatever the illustrious name signifies, for the salvation of his people.

The title remarkably occurs in our Saviour's last affecting discourses to his disciples. He was about to remove from them, and, with respect to their outward sense, to relinquish the office of his personal protection and comfort, which, from their first calling, they had enjoyed continually from him. It was needful and *expedient for them*, that he, in his person as Christ, should depart from their bodies, in order that the Spirit of Truth might perform his spiritual functions of salvation in their souls. For it very plainly appears, that all their first knowledge of Christ was but *after the flesh* (2 Cor. v. 16.) and that they had but poor and low conceptions of his spiritual kingdom, and of the spiritual state into which it was necessary for them to be brought; until the Spirit descended from on high, and made them a very different sort of men. Christ, as God, could, no doubt, have effected this mighty change in their minds; but it is evident, that he did not; and it is as evident, that the Holy Spirit did. The reason seems equally obvious; for, as Christ had declared, that *except a man be born of the Spirit he could not enter into the kingdom*; so the assumption of this office by the Spirit was to be manifested, in a way no less explicit than illustrious, upon the first and greatest of the disciples, on the day of Pentecost. On that day, a *visible demonstration* was given to the then Church, and through it to the Church in all future ages, that the Divine Spirit was the *great*

agent both to purify, as with *fire*, the souls of the redeemed, and also to impart wisdom and to enable them to speak wisdom to others, by being to each of them a *cloven tongue*. The Spirit had exercised this office, in fact, from the beginning; as, in the same manner, Christ was *a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*: For as the *benefit* of his mediatorial office began with Adam, Abel, and the first of the faithful; so did the *efficacy* of the Spirit's work, in applying Christ's atonement and mediation to them. This *benefit* and *efficacy* were always (like the great Agents themselves) *distinct* as to circumstances in the faith of believers, but never *divided*: They went, (as it were) *fieri passu*, or hand-in-hand; so that wherever the *blood* of propitiation was sprinkled, in the *purpose* of the covenant; the *testimony* or *sealing* of the Spirit followed of course, according to the same purpose. To *will* and to *do* with God, are as indivisible as the attributes, from which (according to our notions) the *willing* and the *acting* do proceed: And, therefore, as Christ *was to be* the Lamb slain without the possibility of a failure, and is said, upon this ground, *to have been slain* from the beginning; so the Holy Spirit *was promised to be* the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to his people, that they might know their salvation, but yet was ever that same Spirit of wisdom, who *spoke by the Prophets and other holy men*, and who opened his mysteries to believers, from the foundation of the world. All this was done, because the covenant and purpose of the Godhead could not but be fulfilled; for to him all things are *present*, and the *intention* and *act* the same. Christ could not but perform his undertakings; nor could the Spirit fail in his. An immutable determination existed in both, as persons in the Godhead: And the whole Godhead or essence was engaged in the operations of the respective persons. There is no making sense of the Bible, but upon this foundation: And upon this foundation, there is the most wonderful harmony, wisdom, truth, righteousness, and mercy, pervading the whole of its revelation; so as to render it to those, whose *understandings are opened to understand it* (Luke xxiv. 45.) the most delightful as well as most interesting book in the world. The *want* of this view hath been attended with many *other wants*; for when Christ and the mind of his Spirit do not appear as the basis and substratum of *all religion*: moral *virtue, fitness, propriety*, and many other fine names become mere *names only*, and are scarce understood in fact by those who use them. Yet the *fashionable* divinity of the day is founded upon these sounding words and notions—

*notions*, which are not realized by those who talk of them, and which cannot be realized at any rate by any fallen, helpless, sinful worms, without the power of that Spirit, which many of those worms affect to ridicule or deny. It may well be called *modern divinity*; for, God knows, it has very little connection with his most *ancient* book the *Bible*.

Spiritual and eternal consolation, wrought or established in the soul, is an act of God only. Believers cannot be thus comforted but by the *God of all Comfort*. The *ground*, the *means*, the *end*, of his consolation, all result from his wisdom and power. The *application* of the term to man, shews him to have been in a state of *weakness* and *misery*. If he were not *wretched*, the administration of comfort would be too superfluous an act to require so many circumstances of detail, which the scriptures lay down concerning it. If he were not *weak*, and incapable of being supported by *created* aid; the office of a *divine* Comforter would be entirely useless. But, being both *feeble* and *undone*, the sound of an *Almighty Paraclete*, an *everlasting Comforter*, an *omniscient Advocate*, rings with unutterable delight in the awakened ear. The heart, when made alive to God and renewed, feels the need of this office; nor is the promise of this gracious aid any longer an idle tale, an enthusiastic dream, or at best a scriptural *something*, with which people now-a-days have nothing to do; but *glad tidings* indeed, tidings of great joy, an assurance of *joy unspeakable and full of glory*. Let infidels, in fond conceit of themselves, affect to frown; and the profane, in equal ignorance of their own hearts, attempt to despise; the convinced sinner feels the worth of God's promise, and is neither to be laughed out of his spiritual sense by the buffoon, nor by the sophister to be tricked out of his hope. He knows that their *tone*, if not their *hearts*, will hereafter be changed, according to that striking passage in Acts v. 34, &c. and his worst wish, for the worst of them all, is, that both heart and tone, for their authors' sakes, may be duly changed before that hereafter shall come. 'Tis one thing, however, to *laugh* in the gaiety and health of life; and quite another to *rejoice* in death itself, and in the nearly approaching views of a solemn eternity.

As Jehovah is the author of all true consolation, so is each *person* in him. Hence the *Father* is styled, the *Father of Mercies*, and the *God of all Comfort*. 1 Cor. i. 3. Hence *Christ* is called the *Paraclete*, *Advocate*, or *Comforter*, 1 John ii. 1. *in whom* there is *consolation*, Phil. ii. 1. and who, with the *Father*, *comforts* his

people's hearts, and gives them everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17. Hence also the Spirit is the Comforter, or Advocate; and his people are privileged to walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. Acts ix. 31. It would be beyond the natural bound we perceive fixed to all inferior beings, if creatures were to give the consolation, the everlasting consolation which Christ and the Spirit are said to give: It would be inverting the order of all things, if these, were they created beings, should attempt those eternal mercies, and spiritual creations, which are promised in the word to the people of God. In that case, it would be confounding subordinate with pre-ordinate, and creature with Creator, beyond the apprehension of faith, as well as the comprehension of reason. The scriptures hold a very different language. *I Jehovah, and none else: I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create affliction;\** *I Jehovah do all these things.* Is. xlv. 7. When men want spiritual comfort, the scriptures speak of the consolations of God. Job. xv. 11. and say, that it is Jehovah, who must comfort Zion. Is. li. 3. It must be averred concerning the creatures, in this view, what Job said of his friends, *miserable comforters are they all! There is no help in them.* But, looking to God the Father, the redeemed can bless him, who ordained them peace; looking to God the Son, they can magnify him, as the promised consolation of Israel; and looking to God the Holy Ghost, they can pray for his holy comfort, as from that other great Comforter,† which was promised to console and conduct them in the way to Heaven. They receive this comfort from each of the divine persons, by the agency of the third: and, from the happiest experience, can say of the whole essence or Jehovah, that He indeed is the God of all Comfort, and hath extended his peace to their souls. This Comforter speaketh to the heart,‡ and He alone. All others may visit the ear without effect, or with no better effect than music out of season. *Peace is the fruit of the lips;* and God may bless the voice of man in speaking about his peace: But man's voice is nothing but voice, unless God create peace to accompany it. Is. lvii. 19.

\* *or Affliction, or sorrow, which are opposite to peace; as darkness is to light.* The text has a double antithesis.

† Another Comforter: John xiv. 16. Here is a most obvious distinction of this divine person from the Son—another person—yet the same essentially; for he adds, *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come again unto you.* The former text shows the distinction, the latter the unity, of the two divine persons, in the divine essence.

‡ Hos. ii. 14. See Lancelotti's Note upon the passage in Leigh's Crit. Sacra. in παραμυθησεται.



This Holy Spirit, and heavenly Comforter, is to be *with* his people, and to dwell *in* them,—to be *in* and *with* his people in all ages,—at *one* and the *same* moment in all countries—in heaven above and in *earth* beneath *at once*—without *confinement*; without *intermission*; and without *end*. Is it possible then to conceive any thing like this of a *creature*? Who can venture to assert, that a *finite* being is equal to this momentous, this *infinite* task? Is that to be called folly or presumption, which can dare to pronounce, that *all the creatures together* can create and *suffice* such *infinite* and *everlasting* good?—The language is strong, but not too strong for the truth, that Beelzebub himself, liar as he is—hath not said it: It is a truth felt to the very bottom of hell. The mightiest angel there cannot *create* for himself a moment's *enjoyment of peace*, or a moment's *cessation from pain*. Though reluctantly, yet even Satan owned the omnipotence of Christ in the flesh. He hath owned too the power of the Divine Spirit in the hearts of his people,\* to the confusion of himself, and all his lying oracles.

This Spirit brooded, like a dove, upon the face of the troubled deep; and he warms, in tender love, the far more troubled deep of man's disordered soul. This mystic dove visits his Church (as Noah's dove, his emblem, did the ark) with the olive branch of eternal peace, prognosticates an approaching rest to the heaven-conducted vessel, and leaves it not, even when in full view of the *everlasting hills*. This holy dove, in confirmation of his consolatory office, witnessed visibly for Christ at his baptism, and afterwards spiritually *abode* or *rested upon him*, when this emblem of his presence was seen no more. He took the name and type, possibly to express the *fertility*, *meekness*, *furivity* and *love* of his grace in the redeemed, the *renewal* of their minds into the same pattern by his almighty power, or, as his true *forerunner*, the immediate mission of the great Redeemer. He is, in every sense, the spiritual *oil* to *make the face shine* with the splendor of his holiness, and the spiritual *wine* to *make glad the hearts of man* with his consolation. Ps. civ. 15.

The usage of the term *wine* was to express the *effect* of his agency in the soul. The word *wine* is derived by some from the same root with the word *dove*, and is often used in the scriptures

\* Tertullian, in his *Apology*, hath several remarkable passages upon this subject, and makes an appeal to the *senses* of the Roman people then living (*circ. ann.* 200) for the truth of his assertion, that “the Devil in the oracle, or in the possessed, would confess himself to be *the Devil*, when challenged to declare it by a *Christian*.” *Apol.* c. 22.

to signify *consolation*. Thus the wise man says; *Give wine to them that be of heavy hearts*. Prov. xxxi. 6. that is, *comfort*. *Come, buy wine, &c. without price*. Is. lv. 1. that is, receive *my free consolation*. The like may be observed of other passages. And here, though it be a digression, it may not be altogether wide of our subject to remark, *how* it is, that *wine* is employed to symbolize this effect. Its natural property is, undoubtedly, to cheer the animal spirits; and hence it is very fit to answer the spiritual idea of comfort: but, if we search a little farther, we shall find a still more cogent reason why it is used to imply consolation, and wherefore it is employed by the wisdom of God for this purpose. Christ instituted the sacrament of *bread* and *wine* for a memorial of himself: *Do this* (said he) *in remembrance of me*. We are at no loss to know, *what* the bread means; for he has told us, that it signified *himself*, and that they, who partake of this bread, *live by him*. They become the members of his body. The *wine*, likewise, he explains to denote *his blood*; and commands all his disciples to *drink* of it, in order to *live for ever*. But under the law, the positive command was, that the blood of the creatures, sacrificed or unsacrificed, should by no means be tasted; and yet, here, Christ commands us to drink his own blood. The reason of these commands, considered together, seems very striking and important. The blood signifies the *life*; and man cannot live by pouring out the *lives of victims* under the Jewish dispensation, nor by the *lives of the creatures* under any dispensation. *Their* lives could not atone for *his* forfeited life; nor could *he* live before God by all the powers of *created* beings. In token of this, he was not to support *his* natural life by *their* blood or life, under the law; and from hence he might remember, both that God *alone* was the strength of his life, and that a *higher* life than the life of the creatures must be poured out for his atonement and redemption. Christ, therefore, commands, when he appears in the flesh, that his people should drink *his* blood, in direct opposition (as it might seem) to the Jewish œconomy; in order that they might notice, that though they could not live by the blood or lives of the *creatures*, or by any atonement or activities of inferior beings; yet they could and were to live by *his* blood or life alone, and, *because* it was the life of his *eternal* nature, *for ever and ever*. John vi. 54. Well, then, may the emblem of consolation, *wine*, be used for this *blood*, from which originates the consolation of a saved sinner; and Christ employed the symbol for this end, that it might hold forth to his

people in all ages, *what* he hath borne for them, and that from hence they are to derive their peace. His *blood* was the *means* of their reconciliation with God; because *his* life was shed for their sins, and delivered *their* lives from eternal destruction. He *gave up* a life of infinite value to save their lives from an infinite punishment, due to them through sin, which is infinite both as it cannot *end* of itself, and as it is committed against *infinite* holiness. He *resumed* his life by his own almighty power, proving thereby, that he had cancelled all the debt and fully satisfied eternal truth and justice. The Holy Spirit, as the first office of his consolation, applies this blood through faith to his people's benefit; and *so* imparts the *life* of that blood to their souls, that it becomes *their* life; and then it is, that, *because Christ liveth, they live also*. No blood will serve for this but the blood of the God-man, Christ Jesus. His people's blood would not answer; for in the attempt *their* life must be lost, and lost for ever. Nor can they for themselves, or others for them, atone *in part*, leaving Christ to do the rest; for as, under the law, the blood of the sacrifice was not to be *mixed* with *leavened bread*; so, in the law of faith, no leaven of man, none of his doings, can be mingled with Christ's atoning blood. Nothing will serve for this end, but the *true and living bread*, namely, his pure body and divine righteousness, represented in the law by the *unleavened bread*. Hence, his blood is called *the blood of the New Testament*, in direct opposition to all the works and services of man under that old covenant in which he was born, and which was declared from Mount Sinai. And it is termed also *the blood of the everlasting covenant*; because it was purposed to be shed in the everlasting covenant of grace and mercy. The drinking of this blood spiritually, is drinking or receiving the life of Christ in the soul: And the victories, which the redeemed gain by this blood, (Rev. xii. 11.) are obtained, under that name, by the life of Christ and his almighty power within them. The *application* of this blood, for both these ends, is the office of the *Spirit*. He *takes of the things of Christ*, and explains, and enforces them, in his people; and, in doing this, he makes them *partakers of the divine nature*, partakers of the *life of Christ*: so that *they* no longer live [i. e. of themselves,] but *Christ liveth in them*; and, through him, they have communion with the Father and Spirit. His humanity is their *head*, in whom *all fulness dwells*; and, by him, they dwell in that fulness, or (as St. John expresses it) they *dwell in God, and God in them*.

1 John iv. 16. Let us judge, then, if *his flesh be not meat in-*

*deed, and his blood drink indeed*: Let us consider too, if this blood is not also become the *wine of everlasting consolation*. It is the *new wine of the kingdom* (Matth. xxvi. 29.) of which Christ participates with his people for evermore. And, when believers approach his table below, how ought they to remember, that his *body* was broken, that they might become *one body* in him; and that his *blood* was poured out, that it might become their *life* and the rich *wine* of immortal comfort, through the Spirit, to their souls? Without this kind of remembrance of that dear Lord, the reception of the outward elements would be no sacrament to them, but rather an abomination, and undoubtedly might be ranked with the formal sacrifices of the formal Jews, which God hath severely reprobated. Is. i. 11, &c. with lxvi. 2. But, remembering him aright, that is, *in faith*; then his redeemed find him to be the good and compassionate Samaritan [a Samaritan to the world, *despised and rejected of men,*] pouring into their wounded spirits the *oil* of grace and *wine* of consolation; "then [as the Liturgy well expresses it] we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us, to our great and endless comfort."

The Holy Spirit becomes the great comforter of his people, both by *explaining* these things to their souls, and by *preparing* their souls for the explanation. What Christ said to his disciples, may be said to all sinners in their *natural* state, concerning these consolations; *Ye cannot bear them now*. The heart must both *feel its want of*, and be *fitted for* them. If there be no spiritual sense of *want*; any earthly comforts, however false and pernicious, will be more welcome than all the joys of Heaven. And, if the soul be not *prepared* for these divine realities; they will do the soul no more good, than a shower of rain could refresh a rock. Now, Jehovah only can work these *preparations of the heart of man*. Prov. xvi. 1. He only can *quicken* the dead in sin to a life of righteousness in grace and glory. And he doeth all this, *because, and only because, he is Jehovah*. But as the Holy Spirit is expressly the agent of all these wonderful works in the spirits of the redeemed; it is, and to *them* must be, an undeniable argument of his *divinity*, and consequently of his coëssentiality with the Father and the Son in the *one* Jehovah. They perceive, by the word and by their own experience, that it is He, who *translated* them from darkness to light, who *changed* them from a state of sin and unbelief to a state of grace and faith, who turned the course of their minds directly opposite to the course of the

world, as well as to their own former course in the world. They see the greatness of this operation, in reducing the contrariety of their stubborn nature and in this *new creation* to a glorious life, and therefore acknowledge Him to be Jehovah, *who only doeth wonderful works*. He granted them this *repentance to life*; this change of sentiment and will; this desire for Christ, and holiness, and Heaven: And they find, that this is wrought in them by way of preparation, both for the present consolations of grace, and for the future and unutterable joys of glory.—They see also such a union of love, mercy, truth, honor, justice, and grandeur, in all this dispensation; as carries out their hearts, at times, into the profoundest admiration, gratitude, and praise. O did the men of the world know some of this secret intercourse with Heaven; their surprize would soon cease, that real Christians can love their frequent retirements and solitude, and give up the silly shewy pleasures, which others spend their very souls for, and with so much ardor covet and pursue. And did professors themselves enjoy more, or seek to enjoy more, of this distinguished blessedness, this “calm sunshine of the soul, this heart felt joy;” the world would not have so much reason to reproach them for their too great solicitude upon those things, which in words at least they affect to despise. If the *consolations of God* were not small with too many of them; so many would not find such delight in hunting after *Mammon*, in procuring (what are impiously called) *independent fortunes*, or in laying out for fine houses, splendid furniture, gay apparel, and all the wretched modishness of this dying world. Alas! Alas! what can the mere man of the earth do more? And how much, and how often, do these poor trifles lead astray their souls? effects, like these, render things innocent in their nature, noxious to those who possess them. If the things were ever so *indifferent*, as indeed all such matters certainly are *in themselves*; yet they cease to be so, when once the mind and affections are solicitously employed about them. How rarely is Christ the topic in our elegant apartments and genteel societies! How rude and unseasonable would any conversation there be thought, which referred to the greatest interests of the soul, or conveyed the solemn ideas of an approaching eternity? Thus modern politeness and Christian discourse are held incompatible. The language of the times is become so excessively refined, that the name of Jesus (except by way of blasphemy) appears almost a mere barbarism, fit only for the use of rustics or the *Canaille*; at least, not to be mentioned, but

the old forms of a church, and there to remain, till the people resume their seats and the forms again. In some more learned and (one would expect) more solid assemblies; what a disgusting fool would a man be now set down for, who should dare to enter upon the matters of *salvation*; though they are at once undeniably the *wisdom of God*, and God's great purpose in the original being of man? A discourse upon weeds or butterflies shall be reckoned a thousand times more intelligent and wise.— To *hint* upon these things, is enough to shew the bent and stream of the world, and the direct opposition it makes, not at *this* time or the *other* time only, but uniformly and at all times, to God and his Gospel. To the Christian this should be a lecture; how lightly all these circumstances, which last but for a moment, ought to sit upon his mind; and with how much mercy it is, that God, for the most part, keeps these *lying vanities* out of his people's hands. The society of Christ in a cottage is infinitely a greater estate, than palaces and kingdoms, without any other heart to enjoy them than the *evil heart of unbelief*.\* He, that hath Christ, "hath him, who hath all things." And when Christians can make a true estimate of objects, and have learned to distinguish *appearances* from *truth*, and gold from tinsel, as sooner or later they undoubtedly will; they will grow gradually into the Psalmist's frame, who accounted, that a *little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked*. Ps. xxxvii. 16. They will find, that these wicked *seem* to enjoy, but *do not*; while the believer, in the sense of God's favor and presence, *enjoys indeed*, but without *seeming*. He may make but little or no appearance in the *outside*; yet, like the *King's Daughter*, he is *all glorious within*.

One great office of this holy Comforter or Advocate, whom we are treating of, should never be from the memory of his people. He doth not call them to a set of notions and opinions only, for, with respect to these as mere subtle disquisitions, perhaps the devil himself is as orthodox as any one; but he works in them a *change of heart and newness of life*. This is the true

\* An Heathen could sing:

——— *me silva, carusque*  
*Tutus ab insidiis tenui solvitur error.*

HOR. Sat. I. ii. s. 6

And so a moral poet of our own:

"Then, Pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego;  
" All earth-born cares are wrong;  
" Man wants but little here below,  
" Nor wants that little long."

purpose of all his agency, to make and keep his people in a nearer and nearer likeness to their Redeemer. Their tenets, therefore, or rather the doctrines of the gospel, known as they ought to be known, are *things* rather than *words*, and exist in *facts* more than in *speculations*. A carnal man may know the *form* of the gospel; but the true believer only knows the *matter* of it. To the one, divine truth is but a *picture*, though possibly a very fine one, curiously gilt and adorned, perhaps, by man's art to be gazed at; but to the other it is *substance*, the *food* by which he lives, not lifted up for shew, but taken inwardly for the very sustenance of his life. A man, with a very fine painting of a feast, may want a dinner. And those professors, who can speak or write perhaps very elegantly upon the gospel, and paint its glorious beauties in splendid colours, while they have never tasted and enjoyed its mercies, will, in the hour of trial, discover their own leanness; and the hour of trial may be possibly sent for that very purpose. But he, who has true and solid provision in the house, doth not show it about the apartments for ornament, but brings it forth for use in due season. In like manner, the real Christian aims not to make a parade of his profession, but *lives* within himself upon that bounty, which his gracious Lord constantly supplies to him. He is *renewed in the spirit of his mind*, and is become, in a measure, of the same mind with his divine renewer. *They walk together, because they are agreed*: And all the felicity of God's people, like Enoch's, consists in walking thus to the end——

To the *end* they do walk in safety; and all the *way* thither is truly the way of peace—not perhaps the peace of this world, but that superior peace, which the world can neither give nor take from them. This blessed *Comforter* is the immediate *cause* and *preserver* of it all through Christ Jesus.

In the day of *affliction*, this *ever-present help* stands by with his necessary consolations, and so tempers every affliction with them, as to produce, out of all, the most blessed and perpetual good. Where Christ and his Spirit are, sorrow can do no harm, nay, cannot even subsist long as sorrow, but is *turned into joy*. Nor is the occasion, which works the sorrow permitted to come at all, but for some purgation of evil, or some preparation to good. Flesh and blood revolt; and, therefore, it is commonly sent to subdue flesh and blood, which, in believers, as well as in others, are too apt to entertain *confidence* and *consequence*, and must for their real welfare be brought down and kept down,

Flesh and blood *see* not the reason, but *feel* the pang. And the pang they *should* feel; or the crucifixion, which the Apostle speaks of (Gal. v. 24.) as the necessary consequence of their union with Christ, would never appear, would never be known. This holy Comforter bestows and increases, for a clear view of this case, his grace of *faith*; and faith, enlightened by his tuition, reads his *word*, and there finds the secret of the whole. "He first enables his afflicted children to believe what he had said of his love in afflicting them, and then to wait for the experience of his love under their afflictions. This waiting quietly, without giving way to sense, or unbelief, is *patience*. Faith is tried, and stands the trial. Tribulation comes; faith is exercised with it, but holds fast its confidence in the word of God, and thereby has full proof of the faithfulness of God. This worketh patience—a quiet submission to the divine will—and an holy subjection to the divine rod. The flesh murmurs; self-will repines; self-indulgence rebels: But faith looks up for the present strength, and by it conquers them. It stops their mouths with a hush—Be still, and know that he is God—He is my sovereign and my father. This affliction indeed is not for the present joyous, but rather grievous; nevertheless it comes from his love—love guides his hand—love will bring good out of it. O that all within me may submit to his will, and bless his holy name!"\*

In the day of *uproar* and *confusion*, when the earth seems under the immediate agitation of Hell, this gracious Comforter *keeps those in perfect peace, whose minds are stayed upon him*. Come what may, they are upon the *mountain of the Lord's house*; where they see his presence, learn submission to his will, and look down with calmness upon the tumults beneath; which, however they may shipwreck those who mix in them, cannot reach up to their souls. The Christian can pity the misery of such persons, as conflict with raging passions only by passions equally raging; and, if the storm threaten himself, he commits all to Him, who in one moment can say, *Peace, be still!* and at whose command, in the next moment, there shall be a great calm. The winds and the waves cannot but obey him, who made them; and so also the restrained fierceness of man, aiming however at no such event, sooner or later shall *turn to his praise*.

In the day of *persecution*, God ever did, and ever will, support his people with his *comforting*, or rather with his *triumphant*

\* See that very excellent and experimental *Treatise of the Walk of Faith*, by the Rev. Mr. Romane. Vol. ii. p. 92.



grace. This Comforter has shewn to the strong of the world, that *they are but as tow* with him, and that he can make the weakest of the weak more than a match for all their strength. These last have often smiled at the persecutor's rage ; and dared the coarsest efforts of his power. They have discovered their victorious superiority, by pitying and praying for the poor worms, to whose folly and madness for a while they have been exposed. They knew them to be but the slaves and tools of that infernal tyrant, who would wreak upon them, for this very thing, the permitted wrath of the Almighty. Acts vii. 60. Let any man read Lactantius's account of the *deaths of the ancient persecutors* ; and then let him consider, whether they are not equally the objects of pity and contempt. Though, through the divine providence, the most bitter adversaries to the truth of God cannot at this time, proceed to those enormities ; yet it is worth remembering, however, that, in the *purest* ages of the church, these furies were permitted to range upon the earth, and to carry their rage to lengths, which even common humanity must shudder to write. All humanity was then overborne, or turned into diabolic barbarity, whenever the religion of Jesus was concerned : And it was often observed, that persons, who were the most humane, civil, and polite upon all *other* occasions, laid aside their usual character and put off that agreeable varnish, when the truths or cause of God became the subject of consideration. An instant proof hath then been given, that however education may induce habits, which shall make men exceedingly accomplished in the eyes of the world and for worldly purposes ; no education and no habit can root out the *enmity of the carnal mind against God*. It will discover itself, by some means or other, to be perfectly the same, whether it exist in a Roman emperor or the reviling thief upon the cross, in the highest or the lowest, in the proudest or the meanest, of mankind. According to their capacity or opportunity, they will always find pleas to exercise this dislike. The politician brings his reasons of state ; the religionist, his reasons of superstition ; and the tyrant, his strong reasons of power. It was the same of old. *Si Tiberis* (said Tertullian) *ascendit in mania, si Nilus non ascendit in arva, si cælum stetit, si terra movit, si fames, si lues, statim*—CHRISTIANOS AD LEONES.\* If the Tiber overflow, if the Nile do not flow enough, if the skies are bound from rain, if the earth be loosed and quake, if famine,

\* *Adv. Gentes.*

or pestilence, arise; the cry immediately is—"Away with the Christians to the lions."

In the day of *poverty* and keen distress, this *Comforter* becomes the nearest and the dearest friend. He smoothes the brow of care, and soothes the heart of sorrow. He teaches the soul of the Christian, that *poverty* is but a relative term, and that, out of God, or without him, there is no body rich. All men live by divine bounty, and therefore have nothing properly their own. Whatever God has lent them, arose from his own will: And if he set the *rich man* in a palace, and *Lazarus* among the dogs upon a dunghill; it only proves, that the Lord saw a reason for it, which men perhaps do not see. The *great things* (as they are called) of this world, are so lightly esteemed by God, that he often throws them away upon the vilest of mankind, as people throw trash upon a dunghill. If Christians are too fond of this trash; it may be needful for their souls, that they should be kept from wallowing among the dung, and that their way be hedged up with thorns. The riches of this world are not riches in God's sight; nor even in the sight of mere reason, as it may be proved in the examples of Heathen philosophers who despised them; and certainly they ought not to be so in the eyes of God's children. What a poor creature, at the best, is a rich man without grace? Nay, how poor have people of that stamp thought themselves? We may take their own evidence and confession in this matter: We may learn this truth by their own example. Have we never heard of some very opulent persons, so loaded with misery as well as with wealth, that they could not support the torment of their own minds, and therefore, in the anguish of despair, have attempted to get rid at once of their wretchedness and being? Instances of this kind have occurred in the history of mankind, and are so many blazing beacons to the Christian, warning him against the legions of devouring cares, which in a manner swallow up the world about him. On the other hand, let a man look to God's rich promises; and there he will find both support and supply.—"What! to *naked* promises!" may one ask.—Yes, friend, for the trial of thy *faith*: And if thou hast not faith to rely on these *naked* promises, then (whatever thou hast beside) thou art poor indeed. Thou wouldst not call them *naked*, however; if thou didst but see, that they are richly clothed with all the power, faithfulness, love, and infinitude of God.

In the day of *sickness*, this *Comforter* is at hand to administer his medicines to the soul. He compounds them according to the

word, which is the publication of his skill, and applies them wisely to the case and condition of his people. He is almighty to command, to carry on, and to ensure the effect. His people at such seasons more sensibly feel their need of his aid, and look more eagerly after his power: And he stands by them when they do not see, and comes into them when it is right they should feel the force of his supporting love. He *makes all their bed in their sickness*, and never leaves their *bed nor them*, however it may seem, so much as for a moment.

In the day and hour of *death*, this God is the believer's God, his friend, and infallible guide.—Having conducted him to the last moment by his grace, it would not be for his glory to leave him then. And he doth not. He hath made many a once feeble heart\* to triumph—*O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!* But, whether the nature of their disease allow this noble exclamation or not, all the people of God are *conquerors*, over death, and *more than conquerors*, through *Him that loved them*. They are enabled to conquer death; and then death himself performs the office of a friend.—If the vain and ungodly knew this life in death, or could see it; instead of a foolish laugh or senseless jeer, they would cry out as one of themselves did of old, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his!* Numb. xxiii. 10.

In the *everlasting day* of Heaven, this glorious Comforter will comfort his people with joys beyond measure or end. All his consolations below are but as a spark to that eternal blaze of rapture, which shall glow through their spirits above.—But *here* imagination will fail, and we must be content with that summary description which the scriptures afford us, That this everlasting state is an *exceedingly exceeding and eternal weight of glory*; and that *eye hath not seen, ear heard, nor hath it entered into the*

\* If Lucretius had seen a Christian, in dying triumphant over death, he would have omitted, if not some other arguments he uses against the immortality of the soul, certainly this:

*Quod si immortalis nostra foret mens:  
Non jam se moriens dissolvi conquerevetur:  
Sed magis ire foras, vestemque relinquere, ut anguis,  
Gauderet, prælonga senex aut cornua cervus.*

Lib. iii. l. 611.

. e. "If our mind were immortal; in the article of death, it would not murmur to be dissolved, but rejoice rather to go forth from the body, and leave it, as a snake doth its skin, or an aged stag doth his weighty horns."—Blessed be God, many of his redeemed have rejoiced to quit their bodies, and have left them with a hope full of glory and immortality.

*heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love him.*

And now, dear Christian, what are thy thoughts concerning such a *Comforter* as this?—concerning one, who hath done so much for thee, is doing so much in thee, and will continue to do so much both for thee and in thee to all eternity? Is he not indeed *God the Comforter*, full of royalty to command comfort, full of deity to ensure it? Canst thou think that an Angel, or ten thousand Angels, or all the Angels and all the creatures, which ever knew existence, are or can be equal to bestow such floods of comfort, such an infinite ocean of everlasting joy, which will replenish thy soul, and the souls of all the blest, in glory?—Thou dost not, canst not, think so. *They* only, who never tasted his holy comfort and are strangers to its nature, can think thus madly and blasphemously of this blessing and its author. But thou hast felt its divine force in thy soul; and, when thy faith is lively, thou continuest to feel it. O look to this *God of all Comfort* to increase it within thee, in such manner and degree, as may be expedient for thy good and his own glory! If there were no sin or corruption within thee to be mortified and subdued, thy heart would be a little Heaven. If thy faith *were* but as fixed, as thy condition is secure; thou wouldest be but little short in joy of a Saint in light. Thou art not straitened in Christ, nor in this Comforter from Christ: All the confinement is from *thyself*. Thy own tempers and unbelief are the only bars to the richest consolation of grace on this side of eternity. When, therefore, thou complainest of darkness, dulness, and despair; search, (and pray to the great searcher of hearts that thou mayest search duly) if thou be not in some dark path, out of the narrow way which leadeth to life, and if some sinful practice or some sinful opinion be not indulged in thy soul. Christ will not dwell in his temple, as in a *den of thieves*; but will either scourge them out by some sharp trials, or leave thee for awhile to the natural deadness of thy heart, without one ray of his presence. Bad practices and evil doctrines are an abomination to the Lord. On the other hand, if this Comforter fill thy Spirit with his pure consolations; pray to him earnestly, that pride may be hidden from thee, and that carelessness or drowsiness do not overtake thee in the gracious sunshine, nor entice thee to lie down and sleep. But *watch and be sober*, be circumspect and serious; for thou art here in the enemy's country, and always upon polluted ground. Pray, that the manifestations of Almighty love may be so many attractions to thy soul.

and the means of putting spirit and life into thy affections and duties. Remember, that the most, thou canst enjoy here, is but a slight foretaste, a little drop of that infinite ocean of pure joy, which thou art to inherit in Christ. This should cause thee to thirst for more, and to aspire after greater attainments. Finally, what a weight, what an eternal weight of transporting bliss is before thee, prepared for thee, secured to thee, by omnipotent power and endless grace !—Reader, hast thou *no* longing for this ? *Is* thy heart, *can* thy heart, be all dead, and dull, and damp, to such unmeasurable glories ! What ! not a ray of hope, not a thrill of joy, at all this unmerited mercy ! At all this mercy merited *fully* and *only* by Jesus, for thee !—It is enough to make the stone in thy heart *to cry out*. The heart must indeed be *the heart of stone*, if it feel no emotion *here* ! The *heart of flesh*, renewed by the *Holy Spirit*, will triumph in the glorious expectation, and be *looking out*, beyond all perishing shadows, *for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ* : And, blessed be this great God and our Saviour, it shall not look in vain.

My soul in fervent longing waits

(Each true believer cries)

For God to end my earthly straits,

And bear me to the skies.

O when shall this poor scene depart,

And Heav'n itself appear !

God hath so widen'd all my heart,

It can't be filled here.

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## SPIRIT OF LIFE.

ALL life is motion, though all motion be not life. What ever lives, acts ; but what is acted on, being only passive power at the utmost, and moving because it is moved, cannot be said to live. The true definition of *life*, therefore, is—a principle of power to act or move, inherent or planted in a distinct substance or being. A being, thus possessed, is said to *live*, because it can act from within itself. If we speak of a being, who lives *inherently* or *of himself* ; we must say, that He is God, and that there is no other, who can live in this self-existent mode, and perform motions without the assistance of another. If we speak of a be-

ing, who lives *derivatively* or *by another*; we may affirm, that he is a *creature*, and that the life in him, though distinct from and perhaps independent of all other beings who live derivatively like himself, is not without God, though its motion be contrary to him. Evil spirits subsist by the first life, which is God, though they act in opposition to his holiness. When, therefore, we define life in a creature, we mean, that this life exists independently only of all other creatures, but not of God its Creator, *by whom* those creatures *live*, even when they sin or act against him. If, for instance, a creature breathe; its power to perform that action is beyond the aid of all other creatures, and arises independently of them. And so it may be said concerning the rest of its functions, which discover or exercise the principal of animal life.

There is also a life, which consists in motion, but which is not obvious to the animal sense. The life of man's *immortal* and *immaterial* part acts and moves, not from the *vibratory motions* of matter, but by a principle to which matter has no relation, and to which matter itself, being passive and inert, is and must be subservient. The collision of two stones might as soon inspire them with thought, as the vibration of the nerves, being mere material motion, could constitute the intellect of man, which, in a thousand cases, has and can have no sort of relation to the motion of matter. Those, who propagate this notion, are only supporting the cause of *materialism* or *pantheism*; for, when once a rule is established, that matter produces thought; it is no very distant nor difficult transition to urge, that matter itself, as the author of thought, must therefore be God, and consequently so much the source of all intellection, that there can be no ideas without it. Hence thought is nothing but matter acting upon itself, and of consequence the universal harmony and arrangement of things appears a most lucky and fortuitous jumble of matter in atoms. Here atheism comes in with a full tide, and offers to sweep away religion, revelation, and even morality itself, into the ocean of anarchy and universal infidelity. Those pretended reasoners, therefore, who promote such principles, either see not the mischievous and preposterous result of them; or, if they do see them, are very little entitled, either by their heads or their hearts, to the respect and attention of mankind.\*

\* We have had several attempts of late to introduce the fatality of the Stoics, and the absolute necessity of all things, without reference to the will or providence of God, which itself, according to some, seems tied down to this all-ruling fate, after the representation of the ancient heathens.

† This is, to all intents and purposes, mere *materialism*: And the arguments,

The life of *Spirits*, not only distinct from but heterogeneous to *matter*, is exercised in memory, will, understanding, reasoning, &c. and *moves* by these faculties, as the body obtains sensible motion by its members. When this spiritual principle is remo-

which are brought to prove that sort of natural necessity, do conclude in materialism.

If matter existed before mind, those philosophers are undoubtedly right, who raise all the actions of mind out of matter, in which case there is no supreme intellectual Being; and then the creed of *Spinoza* (following some ancient heathens) that "God is all things," must in consequence be received. Upon this plan, it will be right to allow, that, in *all* respects, the principle called the *soul* is wholly modified and governed, entirely acts and thinks, according to the disposal or organization of the *body*. The next step after this is, when the body perishes, the soul ceases to be. And here we may look round us, and see religion and revelation swallowed up in the vortex of infidelity and atheism.

But if mind existed before matter, or, in other words, if God existed before gross substance, and is in his own nature different from it; then, all forms of being, whether sensible or intelligible, are *copies* of those ideas which pre-existed in his mind; or, they were created without design. Those ideas also must have been *essentially mental*, because they existed before the *sensible* forms, and are not the *objects* of sense in any respect. It follows, then, that his ideas (speaking with humble reverence) were *prior* to the modifications of matter, and that those modifications *exist* agreeably to the ideas; otherwise, there is no such being as *God*, considering him as *pure spirit*, nor any such arrangement, as we understand by his *providence*.

If this last conclusion be impossible and absurd (as may well be believed) God, as an infinite and eternal Spirit, is the *mental cause* of all *material* existence, and the source of *intellection* in all *spiritual* being. Whatever exists, or acts in its existence, received its substance and all its powers entirely from him.

That organization of body is not necessary to the acts of the mind, is evident from the Angels and spirits of just men made perfect, who see and enjoy felicity and knowledge more purely and freely without body, than we can, who remain in the flesh. This we must believe, indeed, upon the authority of the Scriptures; or, if we will not believe them, we may commence Sadducees, and say, there is *neither Angel nor Spirit*, who, if they exist at all, must necessarily exist more perfectly and sublimely in thought and power, than creatures surrounded with clay.

If mere organization of body was sufficient to work up thought, or to modify it into reason and wisdom; the *Ouran-Outang* would have as good a chance to comprehend or cogitate, as the being called *human*. M. Buffon says, that "all the parts of the *Ouran-Outang's* head, limbs, and body, external and internal, are so perfectly similar to the human, that we cannot collate them together, without being amazed at a conformation so parallel, and at an organization so exactly the same, though not resulting to the same effects. The tongue, for example, and all the organs of speech, are the same in both; and yet the *Ouran-Outang* does not *speak*: The brain is absolutely the same in texture, disposition, and proportion; and yet he does not *think*: An evident proof this (continues he) that mere matter alone, though perfectly organized cannot produce thought, nor speech the index of thought, unless it be animated with a *superior principle*."—One is almost tempted to think, that the similarity between this brute and human nature was created on purpose to shew us, that the soul is a principle independent of matter, and that we do not think and reason because we have *bodies*, but because (in that nearer approach to the image of God) we have immortal and immaterial *souls*.

If the excellency of the mental faculty depended on corporeal organization; then the most beautiful, strong, and well-proportioned bodies must think,

ved, the body becomes torpid and inactive: When this principle is only suspended, as in trances, or in bodies half-drowned, there is no action in the outward machine, though all the nerves remain, and no alterations appear in the material frame. But, let

and reason, and understand, with the greatest force, perspicuity and wisdom. But nothing needs to be added to refute this proposition.

It is one thing to say, that the soul receives many of its ideas through the medium of the senses; and quite another to affirm, that the senses generate those ideas. *Sense* and *sensible objects* may (as it has been well expressed) be "a medium to awaken the dormant energies of man's understanding; yet those energies themselves are no more contained in *sense*, than the explosion of a cannon in the spark which gave it fire."\* The mind of man, simply considered as mind, must be *similar* to that of Angels or *disembodied spirits*; as their mind is (so far as finite can respect infinite) to the mind of God. There must exist something of *congeniality* in the whole spiritual world; or there could be no *communication* between human and angelic spirits, or between those and God.

This *congeniality* or *identity* of ideas, between *human* and *superior* spirits, seems to demonstrate of itself, that *ideas* are not *dependent upon* or *formed by matter*; because, if they were, pure spirits could not *think* at all. Nor could the *identity* of ideas subsist between men, and angels, and God; if the origin of the human idea was placed in *sensation*, and the origin of pure spirits in *absolute intellection*, which are properties entirely discrepant and heterogeneous. And if heterogeneous, how can *matter* produce what is so unlike itself, as *mind* is?

Carrying our ideas still higher, we may make this principle confute itself. For, if matter generate idea; it will follow, that there is no idea without matter: And, if there be no idea without matter, then, either God is matter, or depends upon matter for his ideas, which will amount to nearly the same thing, and is down-right Pantheism.

Further; it seems unavoidable, that all, which *begins* with matter, must *end* with matter; because no effect can rise above its cause: And from hence likewise it will follow, that all that philosophy (as 'tis called) which makes gross substance the *primum mobile* and the principle of thought, tends only to establish the blind fate of the heathens, or direct materialism.

But, among other proofs, that the mind of man did not originate from matter, it doth not *end there*, but seeks for itself a more perfect and exalted good. The whole world cannot fill the soul, nor satisfy it; and the spirit of a man can find no true rest or complacency but in an *intellectual* good. The good, which is *goodness itself*, and fills all things, can only fill that "aching void," which every man, by the corruption of his nature, feels within him.

Undoubtedly respecting the material substances about us, we form our ideas of them through the *medium* of matter. But matter doth not *form* those ideas; for, if it could, the eye would see, and the organs of sense would continue to perceive, when the spirit is departed. It is the spirit, which employs those organs, as instruments, to range in the world of matter, and by the application of them determines upon the quality or quantity of substances, very different from itself. God hath given us this constitution, and wonderfully enables us to perceive by it. Indeed, it seems a greater wonder, that matter actuated by mind should seem almost to investigate matter, and so rise above it, than that mere mind should comprehend matter, as it undoubtedly must, if there are such beings as Angels and the spirits of just men made perfect. Our spirits can work upon matter, can frame ideas of it or according to it, and through the intervention of matter can receive ideas. But matter is on-

\* See a learned and elegant discussion of this Subject in Harris's *Hermes*, Book iii. chap. 4.



the *spirit* be restored, the body revives, and proves itself *animated*, or endued with *something far above itself*, by those actions which correspond with its frame. Shall we say then, that this mass, which presently corrupts without that other principle, is the life

by the *medium* (as we said before) not the *cause*. If a man *invent* a science, the origin of the idea was intrinsically *intellectual*. The spirit combines the material forms, and discovers conclusions, which, however they may exist in the matter, matter itself could not have discovered. Geometry, for instance, respects material proportions; and these proportions exist in the substance of matter: But was it the eye, or the hand, or the ear, of *Euclid*; was it his *mind*, or his *body*, which traced them out? His body, surely, was but the *machine* of his mind, and acted upon matter by its direction.

If the soul hath no ideas but what it derives from the body; then it is not an *ens* distinct from body, but a *co-essential substance* with it, though rarified to the utmost degree of exility. Hence, it seems perishable with body; or, if it could exist without it, yet having no body to act with, it can have no ideas, but must lose the very activity of its being, and sink into an inertness, which contradicts every notion of spirit.—Of such consequence is the opinion, which renders the soul dependent upon matter: both *in esse et in operari*, that it directly removes the basis of the immortality as well as immateriality of all spirit, and puts men, nay, God himself, upon a level with the *beasts that perish*.

When we ascend to forms purely *intellectual*, we seem to act as truly spiritual beings, and leave matter quite out of sight. We *think*, without the intervention of our animal senses, upon many subjects, and upon some of which those senses could have no exercise. Our corporeal frame, for instance, has nothing to do with religion, but to be governed according to its dictates: It has no particular relation, as a lump of matter, to its spiritual concerns, and can afford us no ideas, no nor yet sensation concerning them. It may be acted upon and assuredly is, in this momentous case; but it doth not and cannot act from itself. See John iv. 24.

Upon the ground of the *Christian religion*, this Epicurean business of the potency of matter must presently fall into atoms. Here we find, that there is no activity but in spirit; and that this activity originates from the supreme Spirit, is communicated by him to every thing which acts, and is limited by him in the *mode* and *degree* of action. Matter is all obedience here; and even spirits themselves are active, only through the impulse of his activity. As volitions, or comprehensions, are as much mental acts, as local motion is an act of the body; so these are determined, as well as that, by the motion of the suprememind: Otherwise, there would be a principle of *self-determination* in the creatures, which would render them *independent* of his direction. In other words, they would, in that case, be no longer *creatures*: And so there would be an utter end of all *Providence* in the government of nature, and of all *grace* in the Revelation of God. There would be no *certainty* in any thing, and consequently no order; for order is certainty, wearing only another name. But if we view God's *Providence* in the government of things, carried on with his *grace* in the salvation of his people; we may see a *beautiful arrangement* in the whole disposition of the *intellectual* and *natural* world, and a strength in the whole fabric, which renders it indemolishable. Yet there could be no arrangement of a *whole*, without the previous disposition of *all the parts*. How God influences the will of Spirits, we cannot define; nor can we define the mode of God's action in any thing: But we are sure, as his word can teach us, that it is He who doth *make them willing*, and that they *will and do according to his power*. We are also sure, that He effects this disposition in our souls, sometimes with, and sometimes without, the intervention of matter; and that, therefore, matter is not absolutely necessary to his operation. Meaner and worse agents than this can affect the mind, and give it inclinations, which it had not of itself. The tempta-

or motion of that principle? Or, rather, that this immaterial part, which can leave the body without taking away one atom of its substance, is the life, which thinks in that body, and the motive power which acts upon it? It seems even *reasonable* to as-

tions of the Devil are not always by material objects, but remote from them, and often affect only spiritual concerns. From these short hints, we may conclude that God is the *sovereign agent*, that he acts according to his *providence* and *grace*, and that both *matter* and *spirit* are acted upon by Him.

That God acts by *necessity*, in the usual sense of that term, it seems as impious to affirm, as it is above us to enquire. If we say, he is his own necessity; we can only mean, that he has no necessity *out of himself*: And how far we can pretend to determine what that *self-necessity* in the Godhead is, should be left for a very modest consideration. Certainly, he is his own law in this respect: And if we say, that God is his own freedom or his own necessity, we are too bold, if we mean by these terms more than this, that God acts according to his pleasure, and that all his pleasure must be just and true.

To a Christian, then, the naked notion of an *absolute necessity*, independent of the divine controul, is as absurd and blasphemous a tenet, as the opinion of *self-determination* and *free-agency* independent of the divine direction, is untrue and impious. In all things, we *should* be guided by God; and certainly in all *must* be ruled by him. Otherwise, there is an end of all providence; and we might adopt the poems of *Lucretius*, in the room of the two Testaments, called the Bible. "God's will (says Bernard) is done *concerning*; all men, and *by* all but not *in* all; for his people only have this blessing—He is pleased with good things in themselves, and satisfied with his wise and good disposal even of the bad." "Judas did ill in betraying Christ (says Austin) but God out of his treachery produced a good, which Judas never thought of. God viewed our salvation; but Judas only filthy lucre." Farther; if matter could not *exist* but by spirit (as matter, in any other view, will be *eternal*, and *its own maker*, which is preposterous) certainly, it cannot act but by spirit. It will follow, hence, that all the *impressions*, which may be derived to the soul from matter, must be *arranged* according to *Spirit*, and that this Spirit must be God. If this be admitted, as it seems but just to admit it, the divine providence opens to our view in its resplendent glory; free grace in its sovereign beauty; and all the attributes of God uniting in the salvation of man, with the utmost perfection and harmony.—This is all the *necessity* for which a Christian should contend, and all which he is concerned to know. And this he *should* know, because God hath taught it: This he *should* believe, because the Author of truth himself hath been pleased to reveal it.

He is bound to *believe* this, let his outward *senses* oppose or let *sensible matter* appear, as it may. Indeed it is the great business of faith to live above mere *sense* and *sensible* objects: And hence again it may properly be asked, how then is faith to receive any ideas from them? It can receive none, but under such distributions of the sensible forms, which speak (as it were) spiritual things, and so are composed to shadow forth what *they have not in themselves*. Such were the *Levitical* institutions, which led sense, even away from itself, up to faith; thereby proving themselves, when abstracted of their object, but *weak and beggarly elements*. A Christian now is not to judge from the appearances of matter, but live above matter upon his God. This is one branch of the life of *faith*, which is contradistinguished from *sense* in almost every thing.

There is no absurdity in this, unless it be absurd to believe God, and to be persuaded that he cannot lie: And of this it becomes us to be, at least, as fully assured, as we are of any evidence which can result from our corporeal senses. It is possible, that *these* may deceive us; but it is impossible, that *God* should. We may err in the application of our senses; but God cannot be mistaken in the declaration of his will. Every idea of *certainly*,

sert, with the voice of *revealed truth*, that *it is the Spirit, which quickeneth: The flesh profiteth nothing.*

Life, however, is motion, whether in the *animal*, or the *intellectual* world. In the one case, *matter* is moved: In the other, *spirit*. The first cause of both must be that GREAT LIFE, who only can be said to live independently, necessarily, and eternally. What had a *beginning* of life, owed that beginning to a superior cause; for no being can produce itself out of nothing. But God, having no beginning, existed from himself, and is consequently independent, necessary, and eternal. This he gives us to understand from his name JEHOVAH, which implies all that we can conceive (and probably much more) of *life*, without beginning, dependence, or end. In truth, *He only lives*; because he is the only cause of life, and the only determiner of its various modes of existence. He is the great author of all *understanding*; therefore the *intellectual* substances *live* by him, and act in mind, thought, reason, and memory, by his power. He is the sole Creator of that gross substance called *matter*; therefore, all *material* natures are *moved* (having nothing akin to motion in themselves) by his activity and direction. He is the first cause of all existence; therefore, in him all things, whether *spiritual* or *material*, have their being.

Hence, it appears, that God only is *the Life*, properly so called, and that no other being hath a life of *its own*, independent or underived. It is nonsense, as well as blasphemy, to say of a

both in the moral and spiritual world, is derived from the existence of God, without whom all is darkness, anarchy, and error.

The intelligent reader will pardon the length of this note, if it appear in the least to establish, what the author means it should establish, That all *matter* was produced by God, the *creating mind*, and that it is *modified* according to his *will*; that all *spirit*, is derived from God, the only *first spirit*, and hath no right or true end but communion with God; that both matter and spirit are controuled in all things by the constant superintendance of his PROVIDENCE; that they cannot act for *good*, without his *efficient aid*, nor, for *evil*, without the *permitted* abuse of his *power*; and that there is no *necessity* in any created beings, beside that of their dependence upon him, nor any *self-determination*, beyond the limits of his *will*.

In this view, it is evident, that man is *free* when he acts *by* and *according* to him, who is the author of all *freedom*; and a *slave*, when, abusing the powers given to his nature, he attempts to act *without* or *against* him. In the one case, as a child of God, he is privileged to walk in his *glorious liberty*; and in the other, as a bond-man of that evil spirit who exists without that liberty, he is *taken captive by him*; while that spirit himself is held *in chains of darkness* by the power of his Maker. Thus every man, in his depraved state, is at best but the slave of a slave. Righteousness and true holiness are the essential liberty of the divine nature itself: And therefore sin and corruption, having no *communion* with the Almighty, though under his *controul*, are \* weakness, misery, and bondage.

\* Boethius, p. 91

créature, that he is *life of itself*: And all beings are creatures but ONE, who, in an eternal distinction, is denominated *God the Creator*.

Now, then, we must adopt these conclusions, that whatever being is truly and justly called *the life*, as the *cause* of life, is and can be no other than *God*: And that whatever being is thus termed by divine revelation, is therefore most truly and strictly so.

That the Father hath *life in himself*, nobody will deny. Here all men, who believe that there is such a being as God, are agreed: And as for those, who venture to deny his existence; their understandings rather demand our pity than an argument. A fool only can affirm, *There is no God*.

Of Christ it was said, that *in him was life, and the life* (or that life) *was the light of men*: And he says of himself, openly and expressly, *I am the life*. Hence, then, the Father and the Son, assuming this essential name, claim to be true and very God.

That the Spirit is also *life*, will appear both from the *attribute* being applied to him, and from the *exercise* of the attribute by him.

In Rom. viii 10. the Spirit is called *life*, in opposition to the condemnation or death, which comes by the transgression of the law. He is termed, not only *life*, but what is more emphatical, the very *Spirit of life*, in many places of the New Testament; and stronger still, in the Old Testament, *the Spirit of lives*. As if it had been said, he is Life, the very Life of life, the original Life of all lives. To denominate the Holy Ghost thus, is calling him *God* by the strongest terms, which could be used. It is representing him essential (as it were) to the divine essence; because he is called the very Spirit of that life, in which the essence exists. He is denominated hereby the very energy of its energies, the very principle of its action *ad extra*, the divine glory of its power in all the creatures. Compared with this, to say simply, that the Spirit is God, though it be the same truth, is certainly not the same forcible expression of the truth. God (as it were) clothes the assertions of the Spirit's divinity and glory by periphrases and terms, which may excite the strongest faith and comfort in the hearts of his people, and leave without excuse those who, knowing not his grace, have dared to dispute his being.

If we consider the Holy Spirit's *exercise* of this attribute of *life*, we may still be farther convinced of the same important doctrine, revealed by his name. *The Spirit* (says the Apostle) *giveth*

*life.* 2 Cor. iii. 6. He gives *natural life, spiritual life, and eternal life*; and, in this view, He is the *Spirit of lives*. All live by Him. It was the *breath or inspiration of the Spirit of lives*, which communicated *natural existence* to all the creatures, at the beginning. Gen. vii. 22. And when that breath is taken away, *they die, and return again to their dust.* Psalm civ. 29.

With respect to *spiritual life*, man by the fall was cut off and *alienated from the life of God*. In this view, the human spirit is accounted as *dead*, and affirmed to be so in a multitude of texts; because it hath now no *true spiritual action, no pure motion*; and because it is in that state, separated from the holiness of Him, whose life is holiness itself, and in communion with which all perfect creatures are moved and centered towards him. Thus, not to *think* what is good, not to *love* what is good, not to *comprehend* what is good, not to *follow* what is good; is that cessation from the most truly spiritual motion, which constitutes spiritual death. If all death be the privation of life; *this is most eminently so.*—Now, who could restore this life, who could repossess the human mind with activity for God, but God himself? Yet the *Spirit of life* doeth this; it is his office to do it: and he takes this name, among other reasons, to denote, that it is his own peculiar office to do it. *The law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free* (says St. Paul) *from the law of sin and death:—For the minding, will, or purpose, of the flesh, is death; but the minding, will, or purpose, of the Spirit, is life and peace.* Rom. viii. 2, 6. *Margin.* See the whole chapter.

As the Spirit gives *natural and spiritual*, so he bestows *everlasting life*. *He that soweth to the Spirit* (says the Apostle) *shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.* Gal. vi. 8.

It appears, then, that the Spirit is both “the Lord and the Giver of life.”—Of life abstractedly, i. e. of all the life, which we can understand or know. And if this be his title and his power; if there be no energy but by him, no principle of being but from him; what shall that opinion be called, which denies him to be God? Shall we say, that it is an absurdity? It must be so, if a contradiction to all truth and evidence can merit the name. Shall we believe it to be blasphemy? It cannot be otherwise, if a word spoken against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come. O how fearfully, then, do they presume; how dangerously do they trifle with their own souls; who, not content with speaking *a word* against this blessed Comforter, write *volumes upon volumes* in degradation of his

glory, and seek to make proselytes to the most daring defamations of his person among men !

As the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, have *each* life in themselves, and are therefore three persons ; so, there being but *one* original life, the *three* persons, by claiming that original life, do declare themselves to be but *one undivided essence*. They could not be persons ; if they had not this life *distinctly* : They could not be *one essence* or *God* ; if there was any *separation* or *difference* in the life. Hence the coëssentiality and the coëquality are as common to *each*, as the life is common to *all* : They coëxist, as one God ; and yet exist in distinction, as three persons. Thus, *each* is called Jehovah in scripture, and *is* certainly Jehovah : Yet there is but *one* Jehovah, and can be *but* one. Of course, the three persons are, in a mode inconceivable by the creatures, the one Jehovah ; and the one Jehovah exists in the three persons : Or the scripture will contradict itself, and be untrue ; which is either impossible, or it is not a divine revelation. Each of the three persons, then, is *self-existent* ; or each cannot be Jehovah, which is the name for self-existence, and which means the same thing with the *having life in himself*. They are also *coëxistent*, or of *equal* existence ; else, it is impossible, that they should be of *one* essence. There is not, there cannot be, higher or lower, inferior or superior, difference or inequality, in Jehovah ; for such discord would destroy the very sense of the name, and is repugnant to every scriptural, and even rational, idea of the perfections of the Godhead. As each person claims the *essential attributes* ; these attributes could not be essential, perfect, and divine, unless the three persons were equally so. It is impossible, that either of them should hold the same attributes in a higher or lower degree ; for that notion destroys the very idea of the essentiality of those attributes, and divides and distributes, what is absolutely indivisible and unimpartible.

Those people therefore, who suppose any *inferiority* in the Godhead, do not seem perfectly aware to what consequences their notion will lead them, and how, by supposing it, they entirely darken the divinity of *two* of the divine persons, and in fact deny the *personality* itself. Otherwise, to avoid this conclusion, they must run into absolute Tritheism, or, if they please into positive idolatry. Thus,

*Incidit in Scyllam, qui vult vitare Charybdim.*

It may be said, and it has been said, " That God is a Spirit, and that this name of Spirit may belong to him as one indistinguishable

ble person."—Respecting the subtlety, purity, and absolute immateriality of his nature, it is undeniable, that God is *Spirit*, a Spirit, *one Spirit*; because He is one nature, and one essence; and, in this respect, the Father, Son, and Spirit, being holy, may justly be termed Holy Spirit. But these last names are names of office, and were not intended so much to convey the notices of what the persons are *in themselves*, as of what they are *to us*. The Spirit of God, for instance, is so named, because it is his office in the covenant, to breathe life, to inspire the strength of that life, and to be the very Spirit, fountain, and cause both of it and of its continuance, in all the redeemed. In this respect, He is also their *Father*; and is so called. The Son of God, for a similar reason, is styled, *The everlasting Father*.\* And, when we address ourselves in that perfect form of words, which Christ hath taught us to use; we address the three persons in one Godhead, and style them, *Our Father*. As it hath been already observed in the former volume, p. 149, the characters and offices of the eternal Trinity are plainly marked out and expressed in the course of that prayer; and the interchanging of some of these characters and offices to the respective persons in the Godhead, seems evidently designed to demonstrate their respective equality, and their mutual consent and energy in all operations. We, in fact, cannot address *one* of the divine persons, without worshipping the other *two*; because we worship him *as God*, and because there is but *one* essence or Godhead. A true Christian cannot be an *idolater*, for he doth not worship the figment of his own brains, but a God *revealed*; nor a *Polytheist*, for he worships *one God*; nor an *Arian*, for he worships *each person* in the Godhead; nor an *heretic against the Holy Ghost*, for he adores the Godhead in the Spirit, and by the Spirit, and also the *Spirit himself*, in the Unity of the Godhead. He believes God's own account of his own divine nature, and implicitly obeys his sovereign direction in all acts of adoration and duty.

The enmity, which has been shewn to this *fundamental doctrine* of true religion, both by Jew† and Gentile, is the best apology

\* See under this name in Vol. i. p. 94.

† When the enmity of the Jews is spoken of in this case, it is to be understood of the *modern Jews*. The *ancient* people of this denomination were of a different opinion respecting this and some other doctrines of Revelation, and agreed in substance with the Christians. Some proof of this has been given in the introduction to the first volume of these essays; and the learned reader may find more, in Mornæus's book *de Veritate Religionis Christianæ*, and in Pococke's Notes upon Maimonides's Dissertations, entitled *Porta Moisi*.

It may not be unsatisfactory to readers, who have not opportunity to con-

for considering it in so many of the various ways, which relate to our faith and hopes both here and hereafter. The souls of men are at stake in this case; and the dignity of God forbids all presumption and trifling. We, therefore, for safety fly to his word, which, we are sure, can never deceive us; and we stay ourselves upon his revelation, which alone can precisely inform us in all things, which are proper or necessary to our salvation. Of one thing, we are very certain, that, if God hath not told us the truth, respecting his own nature and his engagements to us, we shall never be able to find it out of ourselves; and in that case we may (old as the world is) erect another altar, and inscribe it, with the Heathens—ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΘΕΩ—TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

We have hinted, in another place, for what reason the third sult such kinds of books, to lay before them an abstract of the *present* Jewish fundamentals; by which they may see something of their distance from the Christian religion, and how little in fact they differ from Socinians, Turks, and the men of what is called *natural religion*; even while they profess to believe in a divine Revelation. These fundamentals are stated in the celebrated Catechism of Rabbi Abraham Jagel, and were originally extracted from Maimonides, as may be seen in the *Porta Moors*, p. 164, &c.

1. That there is a *Creator*, by whom are all things.
2. That this Creator is *one God*, of the most perfect simplicity and unity of being.
3. That this one God is absolutely incorporeal, and cannot be included in *body*, nor wear the likeness of *body*.
4. That God is also eternal, without beginning or end.
5. That this one eternal God only is to be worshipped by all the creatures.
6. That God hath imparted his Will to Moses and the Prophets, by his own inspiration.
7. That the prophecy, delivered by Moses, is more excellent, than that delivered by the Patriarchs and other Prophets; because Moses spake with God, face to face, without vision, or suppression of the natural faculties, or any previous preparation; which was peculiar to Moses alone.
8. That Moses acted as the mere amanuensis of God, in writing both the historical and ceremonial parts of his five books.
9. That to this Revelation nothing is to be *added*, and from it nothing to be *diminished*.
10. That God knows all the thoughts, words, and works of men.
11. That God will punish or reward men in another life, according to their works, and particularly the Jews, more or less than others, for their obedience or disobedience of the law.
12. That God *will yet* send the Messiah to deliver the Jews from the bondage of the Gentiles, although his advent be long delayed; that this Messiah is to arise of the stock of David, the son of Jesse, of Bethlehem; that he will govern the world in righteousness; that, upon his advent, the Jews shall repossess their own land, rebuild the temple, and resume all the ancient ceremonies and observances of the law; and that it is their duty to pray for this continually.
13. That there is a resurrection of the dead.

Concerning this last article there is much difference and disputation among them; as may be seen at large in the very learned Notes of Dr. Pococke above mentioned, c. vi. p. 86, &c.



person in the Trinity hath assumed the name of Spirit. It is a title borrowed from the *air*, which we breathe, to convey to our minds, under that *sensible* form, our *spiritual* dependence upon his person. As *wind* is air in motion, it is his frequent emblem to denote the quickness, subtlety, and effect, of his activity. No animal can subsist a moment without air, not even the fishes under water: all the vegetable tribes live by it, and without it perish. It is, in fact, so much the life of all creatures in this system, that to breathe and to live, are perfectly synonymous. We have no power in our animal sense, but by this medium. Air conveys sounds to our ears, smells to our nose, and reflects the light of the heavenly orbs to our eyes.—What this subtle and most necessary fluid is to our bodies; just such is the most holy and blessed Spirit to our souls. We have no spiritual life but by his momentary supply. We have no spiritual strength but by his continual support. Whenever we move for God; he is the spring and life of our motion, gives all the efficacy, and doeth all in us and by us. Our bodies, possibly, are not more gross in comparison of the air, than our spirits are to the subtle nature and force of the spirit of God. We know the action of the wind, though we cannot see it; and throughout eternity we may be perceiving the impressions of the Holy Ghost, without being able to explain them. It will be sufficient for us, both here and hereafter, to enjoy the fulness of his almighty love, which, because it is infinite, must always be indefinable. As our outward senses cannot be exercised without the intervention of the air, his emblem; so neither can our spirits hear, taste, see, and enjoy the wisdom, grace, and righteousness of God, but by his constant inspiration. He reflects the light of Christ upon our souls, explains the things of Christ to our minds, and applies the salvation of Christ to our whole frame. We are spiritually dead without him, separated from the life of God, alienated from the love of God, altogether both spiritual and natural rottenness, corruption, and mortality, or whatever of misery and death can be included in those terms.

God hath given his people a pointed description of their case, in the xxxvii of Ezekiel, under the very emblem of which we are treating. The Prophet was carried out in the spirit of the Lord, and was set down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones; and those bones were very dry. They (whom these bones represented) were in a low place, far from the mountain of God's holiness, and void of the least oil or moisture of his

grace. "Is it possible, that these bones can live?" The Prophet knew, that nothing was too hard for God, though every thing of this kind must be too hard for the creature, and therefore referred the answer to his wisdom and power. He was commanded to preach to these bones, in the name and by the word of the Lord. Could his feeble voice avail? No. He might sooner turn the tides of the sea, and cause the winds to be still, than impart life by his speaking to the least of these dry bones. But he did not *reason* like a bold rationalist, who must be informed of and will pretend to understand every thing, or will credit nothing; he *obeyed* like a true believer in that God who cannot lie, who orders nothing, and who will do nothing, in vain. As he *spoke*, while the words were in his mouth, the effect began: the wind breathed upon the bones; and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, even an exceeding great army. This was the vision or parable. Immediately afterwards is subjoined the comment or explanation, which contains one of the most noble testimonies in the Bible for the Spirit's divinity and glory. *I will put my spirit in you, and ye shall live*, says Jehovah to his people. As if it had been said; "your souls are as dead to God, as these dry bones are to the world: ye have no power to raise yourselves from death, any more than they. My word, by my appointed instruments, must come forth; and my spirit must accompany that word, to make it effectual for your regeneration. When that Holy Spirit is placed within you, ye shall *live*—live spiritually by his continual inspiration, and finally enter into the possession of Heaven *your own*, for ever appointed to be, *your own land*." Taking this whole expressive prophecy together, it evidently appears, that as the dry bones, when restored to their original state and form, that is, compounding the respective men to whom they belonged, could not live without breathing the material wind; so neither God's people, even when regenerated and renewed, can subsist in their spiritual life, without the breath of that Holy Spirit, whose office it is to impart and maintain it in their souls.—A man must be most violently prejudiced indeed, who will not see, that this is the obvious and important doctrine, inculcated by the prophecy before us.

When men can live naturally without air for their bodies, they may live spiritually without the Holy Ghost for their souls. This is one of those evident and solemn truths, which shine through the fabric of the book of God. And if, therefore, it be equally true, that in God we live, are moved, and have our being: will it

not demonstrably and undeniably follow, that the Holy Spirit, by whom we thus live, is true and very God? Doth it not appear upon the ground of that fact, highly absurd to deny it? Even reason becomes, in this case, a handmaid to faith, and bears evidence for the divinity of Him, who created her. If the Holy Ghost be not God, he could not *give* life, which is solely the work and the gift of God. If the Holy Ghost be not God, he could not *maintain* life, because this is the prerogative of God. If the Holy Ghost be not God, he could not bestow life *everlasting*, because this is the sole possession of God, and cannot be enjoyed but in him. But the Holy Spirit doeth all these things, hath done them from the beginning, and hath promised to do them for evermore: He doeth them to myriads upon myriads of creatures, in the same instant of time, beyond the impediments of space, and according to their various capacities. Is it *unbelief* only to say, then, "that he is not God ever-blessed?"—If these premises be true, it must be spiritual folly, absurdity, and impiety.

Could we ask the highest creatures, which God hath made, to communicate to us the gifts and excellencies of grace; the nearer they are to the throne, the louder they would say, "It is not in us to bestow them." They are as much indebted for divine life, and all its sublime advantages; as the poorest reptile which crawls upon the ground, or as the smallest insect which floats in the air, are for their lives, to the Almighty Creator. Nor could they convey any of their natural endowments to man, more than man himself can impart his human nature to a fly. Life, with all its proper appendages, capacities, and exercise, flows freely and solely from Him, who only *hath life in himself*, and who infinitely and eternally lives, independent of others. "Creatures live, but they are not *life itself*, because they have their life by participation: And every being by participation must be reduced to somewhat, that is such [life or being] *of itself*"; therefore the life of the creature must be reduced to *God*, who is life itself."

Upon the whole, we see, that if the Scriptures be true, in *ascribing* this name and attribute of *life* to the Holy Spirit, and true, in *relating* the facts of his granting and supporting life in the creatures; the unavoidable consequence is, that the Holy Spirit is God or *Jehovah*: But if he be not *Jehovah* or God, then the scriptures are untrue both in *doctrine* and *record*, the Christian religion becomes at once a *fable*, and there is *no hope of salvation*.

\* *Egle's Court of the Gent.* Part iv. p. 310.

by the means it proposes, either in this world or in the world to come.

Of such importance to our *faith*, is the doctrine of the *Spirit's* divinity : And it is of no less consequence to our *experience*. If *Jehovah Alehim* alone could breathe into our nostrils the breath of our natural life ; surely none less than himself could impart to our souls the inspiration of spiritual life. Gen. ii. 7. And if this be from him, we must depend upon him for it on the one hand, that it may be constantly maintained in us, and, on the other, live out of ourselves and reject the pride of our fallen hearts, which very hardly stoop to this dependent situation. This proud independent Spirit is so dear to us, that the giving of it up is called a *crucifixion* in the scripture, and even a *losing of our very life*. To do this daily (and daily it must be done) is *taking up the Cross daily*, and following Christ. It is that surrendering up of life *for life*, which every believer is more or less acquainted with, all the way to Heaven. " This, (says the excellent Mr. Dorney) cuts the heart of *self pride*, *spiritual surfeiting*, and *slothfulness*, when I live every moment at the mercy of another, even Jesus Christ, both for justifying righteousness, and every influence thereof, *by the immediate breathing of his Spirit*, according to his good pleasure ; having not the power, so much as to make one hair white or black : But I must *wholly work* by his hands, *see* by his eyes, and in his light *behold the light*. What more powerful inducement can there be to self-denial than this ? *Boasting is excluded* ; because Christ, in his own *person*, and by his own *Spirit*, doeth whatsoever is done *for me*, or *in me*. Here lies the mystery and labor of faith, which the mere motion thereof can never reach unto, so as to improve the same to a *self-denying activity* for God, in the paths of Godliness and travel towards Zion." This is one of those *mysteries of Godliness*, which, to the ungodly, the carnal, or mere reasoning professor, will *always* be mysteries. Not to live a man's own life, but to *live by the faith of the Son of God*, and to breathe spiritually by the *Spirit* of God ; are inexplicable points even to *masters in Israel*, who walk by their own understandings ; though obvious enough to the meanest disciple, who knows the *truth as it is in Jesus*. We are, by nature, fond of our own will, wisdom, power ; and, at every turn, are ready to cry out, *Who is Lord over us ?* We presume, in consequence, upon our free agency and the vigor of our faculties, and fancy we can do all things for God, while we perceive not, that we have not at present the will, and that, in fact, we have never had the power

to do any thing for him. The louder the boast, the less the deed. The Pharisee in the temple was of this cast. He came in the undiscerning pride of his natural state, and therefore was rejected. Another spirit actuated the Publican, led him to renounce himself, and to see that he could do nothing at the most but cry for *mercy*. He could not even have cried for that mercy; had he not already obtained the mercy to cry for it. It was *grace*, which made the difference: It was *sovereign* grace, which filled his hungry soul with good things, and sent the rich and self-exalted empty away. Instead of *giving* to God, as too many dream; we can only *receive* from him: And, when we have received *one* blessing, we must receive *another*, that we may be enabled to use *the first* for good. If we have the *life* of the Spirit, we need the *strength* of that life for its exercise and employment. If we pray and receive, we want grace to *fraise* for the receiving: And if our souls are enlarged towards God, we must be indebted to his conduct, that we be not puffed up within ourselves. If we are diligent, the Spirit of Truth, who gave us power to be diligent, must preserve us from the pride of human activity. If we are depressed or deserted in mind, the same Spirit must uphold us from falling and fainting, must restrain our ungrateful hearts from murmurs, and our lives from disgracing his truth.—Real believers know much of these wrestlings; and they know them, because they are really *alive*. The life in them, given by the *Spirit of Life*, struggles against the attacks of disease, which is sin, in their carnal nature; and, struggling by a strength far above itself or what can be exerted by a creature, it assuredly and finally prevails. It gives no quarter to the least unholy thought, declares perpetual war against all evil words and deeds, and tends to reduce the whole man to the love and obedience of Jesus Christ. His “service being perfect freedom,” it seeks the utmost liberty here, not for an *occasion to the flesh*, but for the glory of God.—Will any man venture to say then, that this holy guide can lead to licentiousness, or that those, who are led by him, can be the servants of sin? Can the boldest mortal declare, that doctrines, like this, or founded upon this, tend to diminish morality, or corrupt the principles of holiness, either in heart or life?—If they can insist upon so strange a conclusion; they may also insist, that the sun is the cause of all darkness, and that the icy regions of the north send forth the intolerable heats, which pervade the Arabian sands. The Spirit of God in the believer leads him as opposite to

all sin, as the Devil leads those, over whom he has power, in ways contrary to all holiness.

“But may not people be deceived, concerning this life, and fancy they have it, when they know nothing of the matter?”—Most undoubtedly. The scripture mentions such persons in the Apostles’ time; and there, most likely, have been such at all times. But this is no argument *against* the truth, but *for* it. Here, as in other cases, *exceptio probat regulam*: if there was no line, there could be no deviation. It, however, strongly urges, that every professor should *examine and prove himself*: and *this* the real believer is always desirous to do. Our Lord hath proposed a *rule* for trial; and so have his Apostles. He tells us, concerning others, *by their fruits, ye shall know them*: he assures us, concerning ourselves, *ye must be born again*. His Apostles follow his doctrine, and affirm, that *if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his*; and that *every man, that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure*. Take these with many other such tests, and compare them together in our own bosoms; we cannot but see something correspondent with or contrary to them, arising within ourselves. If we are *sincere* in the inquiry, we shall pray before we make it: we shall pray to that searcher of hearts to *prove and try, whether there be any way of wickedness in us*; and we shall beg, with tears, to be *led into the way everlasting*. No hypocrite asks about the matter, at least never asks in this secret earnest manner before God. He wishes to take it for granted; and he desires, that all men should take it for granted too. The true Christian is never satisfied, but with the testimony of his own conscience, the testimony of God’s word, and the testimony which is laid down in this sentence of the Apostle, *hereby we know that he [God] abideth in us, by the spirit which he hath given us*. 1 John iii. 24. These evidences, indeed, may be sometimes clouded; but there will ever be light enough to distinguish the reality of their existence; as, in the shortest and the darkest day, people can see a wide difference between that and the night. Serious Christians soon will discern a real believer under a cloud, even though the believer seems himself bewildered, and ready to give up all for lost. Persons upon a hill can see the end of the thickets beneath them, while those in the thickets are puzzled about the way through, think themselves in an impenetrable forest, and cannot view a step of their progress before them. In temptations of this kind, it is well to advise with established and experimental Christians, and

Especially pious ministers, who if they have not been exercised in this manner themselves, must know many that have, and are therefore the more able to suit their instructions and advice.

It is an invincible argument of comfort to the believer, who knows, that the life, which he liveth in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God, is an *indefectible life*, that he can never perish from it, and that it cannot cease from him. He is enabled to view it, not as *his own life*, but as the *life of God in him*; and he, therefore, is the more persuaded of the *permanency* of the gift from the *perpetuity* of the giver. To talk, as some poor unacquainted people do, of the perishing nature of this immortal life, appears to him (what it truly is,) first, the uttering of an absurd error in itself then, a most gloomy and uncomfortable position for the soul of the Christian, and in fine a direct blasphemy against the divinity of the Holy Ghost. 'Tis readily granted, that such persons do not see these consequences, or it may be hoped they would abhor them; but they follow as necessarily from their principles, as the conclusions of the most perfect syllogisms do from their respective premises. Such professors debase the glory and truth of God's promises, which are as immutable as himself; they endeavour to rob his people of their *strong consolations* founded upon this immutability; and they hold forth, in its stead,—what?—a dark uncertain void, where no prospect of stability, no ground of hope, can relieve the mind. They preposterously suspend a man's salvation upon his own will and strength, when the man of himself cannot so much as think one good thought towards it, nor do (what is less indeed than this, because Christ says it is *least* of all with respect to *doing*) *ought to make one hair black or white*.—And thus much for this arrogant presumption of man, which, whether it be more impious or absurd, it is indeed difficult to say.

Our God, believer, is a God *unchangeably true*. The life, which he grants to the soul, is strictly indefeasible; or it could not have been for his glory to have granted it. It was granted by God, upon a *covenant* of promise and power, which stipulates to perform, and *must* perform (if its author be true) whatever it hath stipulated. If, when we were dead, this Spirit, of which we are treating, graciously gave us life, without any procurement of our own; surely, he will, at least with equal ease, preserve this life already bestowed, and lead it on to eternal bliss. This life is given in and through Christ for this very end. He holds it as the *head*, for his people as the *members*. Hence, *he is the*

mediator of the New Testament, or covenant, that—they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. The calling of men by God, is the making of them saints to God. The Holy Spirit doth not sound in men's ears, as men do, without effect, but is a still small voice in the soul, which (while it speaks) works new creatures, and transforms to the image of God's dear Son. The believer also doth not receive this grace of the spirit of life, without a mediation; because, without the Mediator, the holy God could have no communion with defiled sinners: but he receives every grace, mercy, promise, and blessing, in Christ, for Christ's sake and for the glory of Christ. Hence the Spirit is called the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, Rom. viii. 2. as well as the spirit of life from God. Rev. xi. 11. We have no access to the Father but by Christ; no communion of the Spirit, but in him. Through his human nature we approach to the divine; and (what is still more) through the same human nature, glorified in him, we are partakers of the divine. He, that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit: i. e. there is an indissoluble union between God the Father and believers through God the Son, who hath assumed our nature, and who partook of both natures to become a due mediator, and also by the power and effectual working of God the Spirit. Thus their life is hid and laid up with Christ in God; and because he liveth, they live also. The life is in the Son for them, brought through the Son by the Spirit into them, and by it they are united to Father, Son, and Spirit, for evermore. John xiv. 17, 19, 20. xvii. 21. &c. O what glory to God from man, what security for man to God, rest in this glorious truth! The Apostles are full of this subject in their several epistles to the brethren. They admire and bless God for this unutterable benignity to their souls. They seem transported at times with the exhilarating views of the divine beneficence in Christ Jesus, and labor to express the gratitude they felt by words, which after all seem with big thoughts that cannot be expressed. Behold, what manner of love! O the depth! are among the fervent exclamations of their spirits, which could neither fathom the depth, nor describe the manner, of what they saw and enjoyed. They only express by these terms, that the love is altogether inexpressible. In Heaven, doubtless, their language is the same; for the farther they see into what is infinite, and the more they enjoy of what is eternal; the wonder, the love, the transport, must increase upon them, and (in a devotion which mere mortals cannot feel) entirely rapt them up in the sublimity of praise. The highest



praise is even then (as it were) but dumb, in declaring the goodness or the glory of the Lord: the loudest acclamation of Heaven is but like the stillest silence, when that acclamation attempts to utter the mighty majesty of God. It can sing almost nothing. To this purpose, the Psalmist no less justly, than beautifully, says, *praise is silent for thee, O God, in Zion.* Ps. lxxv. 1. It cannot declare his glory, it cannot express how much he is to be praised. As the most pungent grief stuns the faculties and makes men dumb; so this height of God's due praise, when faith can look up to it, absorbs all human and angelic powers, and would leave the creatures, like Daniel and some others, quite overwhelmed with the sense of its majesty (Dan. x. 8. Rev. i. 17. Ezek. i. 28.) did not *the spirit of life from God* go forth to support them.—Happy believer! all this blessedness, all this triumph and transport, shall one day be thine! Thou shalt be fitted for this work; as this work is already prepared for thee.—Doth not thy *heart burn within thee* in the foresight, or rather from the foretaste, of this delightful portion, of this everlasting joy, with which the *stranger intermeddleth not!* Satan cannot touch it, the world cannot take it away; no, nor even thy contemptible flesh detain thee from it. This thou shalt drop as a filthy garment, and the others shall be removed far away. Then shalt thou be all life in this spirit of life, all activity by his power, all love by his goodness, all purity by his holiness, all joy by his blessing. Surrounded by innumerable millions of happy spirits, like thyself; grief, corruption, and sin, thou shalt see no more. Fitted for God, thou shalt enjoy God. One with Christ, thou shalt be like him. The Father, Son, and Spirit, will commune with thee through the human nature of thy Saviour, and impart all, what thou wilt be able to receive of the vastness of glory. Thou wilt then know, whatever is to be known by the purified intellect of man, concerning the Trinity in Unity, the Unity in Trinity, the incarnation of the Messiah, and all the other acts and intentions of the covenant of truth. The veil of ignorance, which thou hast often deplored, together with sin its cause, shall entirely be done away. Every faculty shall be dilated with the love of God, and every capacity filled with his joy. O couldst thou see the high employment of the blest, couldst thou conceive but the half of their glory; this dull poor life below would appear doubly dull and disgusting, and thy soul would be crying out in a rapture, “*come, Lord Jesus; come quickly! Hasten, my beloved, and my friend!* My soul panteth for thee; yea, my heart and

my flesh, the meanest faculty that I have, for thee, even for thee, the *living God*! When Hegesius a great philosopher first preached the immortality of the soul, and from reason asserted that there must be a better world for the spirits of men than this we live on; two of his hearers went away and put an end to their mortal lives, in order (as they hoped) to enjoy it. Though their *practice* was wrong; yet how many, who are called Christians, will their *fervor* condemn! If these Heathens could not endure to live upon earth from the bare notion of an immortal joy; O what hearts have we, that we should cling so close to the earth, and be ready to sacrifice almost our very souls to obtain but a small particle of it; even when life and immortality are, in a manner, laid open to our view by the Gospel! OLD MEN, what say ye to this? Ye, who are treading quick towards the grave, and yet have lingering hearts for the world? Can ye rejoice to die; not because death brings you to the end of pain, but to the end of sin, and to the beginning of life eternal? "Grey hairs (says an ingenious physician) are church-yard flowers, which may serve to them that bear them, instead of passing-bells, to give them certain notice, whither they are suddenly going."\* These hang about your ears: have they sounded *thus* in your ears; and do ye find pleasure in the sound? O what an honorable example are you privileged to give among men, if grace be in your hearts, and glory in your eye? You may respectively say with good old Polycarp, yet without his particular trial, "I have served for so many years, [he served, as he told the Roman proconsul, 86 years] my good master Christ; and he hath ever been kind to me: and shall I forsake him now?" You are upon the threshold of Heaven, and may almost hear the melodies of the blest: surely the din and confusion of the world can never be entertaining to you. What is earthly clamor to those who live above it?—The muttering of slaves in a mine, which free men in day-light and good air, when they hear it, only commiserate or condemn. Come then, old believer, some few steps more; and all the life of Heaven is yours. Commit your grey hairs to Him, who hath said, that not one of them shall perish. And if not one of these shall perish; how much less the least of your dearer concerns, the hopes of your soul, the promise of a mansion in Heaven! Cheer up, therefore, and say, with an aged believer like thyself, "*though my heart and my flesh fail; though all the strength of my nature be gone and the very grasshopper is a but-*

\* Smith's *Portrait of old Age*. p. 148. 3d Edit

den ; yet *God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever !* I trust in the *ancient of days* to whom all my days are but *few*, as to myself they are *evil* ; and he shall *renew my youth as the eagle's*, and give me that immortal bloom, which shall grow brighter and brighter throughout eternity ! Behold, Lord, thy servant : be it unto me according to thy word !" Dear old friend ; it shall be so ; thou shalt have this cordial, and more. Wait for thy Lord ; and *he, that will come, shall come and will not tarry*. He will replenish thee with eternal youth ; and thou shalt remember thy cares and thy infirmities no more for ever.



## WATER OF LIFE.

LIFE hath already been considered as an *attribute* of the Holy Spirit, and consequently as a proof of his *divinity*. He is the spirit of life to *impart* life, and the water of life to *nourish* it when imparted. When and where this spirit *breathes*, this water *flows* : or, in other words, to whomsoever the Holy Ghost *conveys* life, he immediately so possesses the soul, as to *maintain* it continually, finally, eternally. It has been repeated, that God uses this emblematical language in order to illustrate, from the natural objects around us, the necessity, the riches, and (in many respects) the manner of his grace. He hath employed the emblem of *water* for that end, and thereby shews us, that this fluid is not more necessary to the subsistence of the material, than this Holy Spirit is to the spiritual or intellectual world. And, hence, he is most admirably denominated (what the Godhead alone could have denominated him) the *living Water*, and *Water of Life*, or *Lives*.

Every body knows, that water is a simple and transparent fluid, which enters into the composition of all matter, at least all the matter of our system. There is no substance, whether animal, vegetable, or mineral, without it. The accretions of the hardest substances, probably even of precious stones which are as hard as any, are formed by this universal principle, and possibly derive a proportional perfection from its purity. Every being, which has a proper life, lives by it ; and whatever grows, through it receives its growth. When they decay, they return for the most part to water, not excepting the driest substances, as to one of their original principles. We have no fluid so subtle

and penetrating, excepting fire : it enters into the minutest particles and pores of matter, into the finest vessels of animals, and the smallest tubes of plants. It will pierce through substances, which detain air itself. And, wherever it enters according to the œconomy of Providence, it promotes, sustains, and increases life ; preserves all material natures in their proper classes of being ; and is one of the first principles in the fabric and constitution of the world. Whether, in short, it be considered, as productive of health to animal and vegetable being, as requisite to the beauty and existence of the earth, or as the great mechanic power, by which God works in the sustentation and action of the whole universe ; we may perceive a noble propriety in the *sensible* image for a representation of the spiritual agency, and divinity, of the Holy Ghost.

The necessity and use of this admirable fluid in all things, impressed some ancient philosophers with a notion, that it was the first principle of universal life, and that therefore (as they had not then conceived the idea of an universal mind) it must be God, or the source of the Gods.\*

At the creation of the world, the *spirit of God moved*, or brooded † *upon the face of the waters*, ingenerating life with this fluid into all the material substances as they were created, and diffusing the fluid itself through all the members of this terrestrial frame for the support of the life bestowed. In this first great instance, he acted by water for the sustenance of all things, declaring upon fact, that, without his express energy, it had no power of its own to support the natural being of things, and declaring also in the emblem of that fact, that the spiritual life of men is by his infusion, that it can by no means subsist without him.

To explain and enforce this important truth, there are many rites and declarations, concerning the use of water, both in the Old and New Testaments. These all refer to the agency of the spirit of God, and, at the same time, shew, for the most part,

\* Cicero, in his first book *de natura Deorum*, says, that Thales the Milesian was the first who asserted, that " God was that *mind*, who formed all things out of water ;" but he presently adds, that Anaxagoras was the first who affirmed, that the design and frame of all things was planned and formed by the power and reason of an infinite *mind*. The honor, however, is generally attributed to the latter, who was surnamed **Νεϛ**, or *mind*, upon the doctrine.

† The ancient heathens had many obscure traditions both concerning the cosmogeny and the state of man before and about the times of the flood. Thus, according to Dr. Thomas Gale, *quod Mo-es, per SPIRITUM, qui aquas, jovebat, expressit, Egyptii per Ζωϛϛ designabant*. Not. in *Jamb.* Sect. viii. c. 3.

that this agency and its blessings result only through the great Redeemer.

It was not by chance that the people of Israel, after their departure from Egypt, were led to *Rephidim*, where there was no water for them to drink. *Exod. xvii.* God himself led them thither, to teach believers among them, and believers also among us, a lesson of his *grace*, as well as of his *power*. Moses, upon their complaint of thirst, was to go on before the people, and with the rod of authority, which God had given him, was commanded to smite a great rock which formed a part of the mountain in Horeb. It was very improbable to human reason, that a dry impenetrable substance, as a rock is, should afford the fluid of water at all, and much less a sufficient quantity for the lasting refreshment of so many hundred thousand people: but Moses was too wise to reason upon God's revelation: he obeyed it in faith. *Behold* (says the Lord) *I will stand before thee there upon the rock.* In this and in the *xx* chapter of Numbers, where the fact is repeated with other particulars: we find, that the water came out abundantly, and supplied the whole congregation.—We are not left to guess at the instruction meant by this wonderful transaction: the scripture is full upon the subject. The *rock* (says the Apostle) *was Christ*: and Christ, to the eye of reason, when he appeared in the flesh, was just as unlikely to afford all the benefits of salvation, as the rock in Horeb was, at the stroke of a stick, to send forth water. So thought the Jews when they saw him; and so think all unbelieving Gentiles: while both of them, without meaning it, only fulfil thereby the scriptures concerning him. He was a man of sorrows, and, to human view, barren even of comfort for himself. Yet it pleased the Lord to smite him; and, at his smiting, forthwith issued out the water of life everlasting. *John iv. 14.* He gives this living water. *If any man thirst* (says he,) *let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they, that believe on him, should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.* *John vii. 37, &c.* God was in Christ; and this he emblematically declared, when he said to Moses, *behold, take notice, I will stand before thee there upon the rock.* The rock was nothing in itself to this purpose, and could have yielded nothing without God: nor could Christ have redeemed us by his human nature alone; for he could not have merited but by the *divine*.\* When this human nature was

\* See Vol. I p. 90, &c.

*smitten for the transgressions of his people*; then came forth, even with *sensible* demonstration, the Spirit of God from this Jesus. It was however the same spirit, which, in all past ages, had proceeded from him, and even then had spiritually accomplished his own office to believers in those types, which proclaimed the work and sufferings of the Redeemer, till he should appear in the world. The spirit operated in virtue of that eternal covenant, by which Jesus also was considered as *a Lamb already slain from the foundation of the world*.—The whole congregation of Israel was replenished from the water out of the rock; and so is the whole Church of God by the spirit of life in Christ Jesus; and this by the way, affords the reason why he is called so often the *Spirit of Christ*, as well as the *Spirit of God*.

It was the same lesson, which was taught by the standing rite, recorded in Lev. xiv. 4. If a man had been healed of the *leprosy*, the mode of cleansing was, that the Priest should go forth to him *out of the camp*, and command two clean living birds to be taken for the person, with cedar-wood, and scarlet (or scarlet-wool or silk) and hyssop. One of the *birds* was to be *killed in an earthen vessel*, over running water (Heb. *living water* or *water of lives*;) and the other bird was to be dipped, with the cedar, the scarlet, and the hyssop, in the blood of the bird, which was killed over this running water. The man was then to be *sprinkled* seven times with the *blood*; in consequence of which he was pronounced clean, and the living bird was let loose into the open field.—So the redeemed of the Lord have Christ for their High-Priest, who came to them in their pollution, and when cast *out of the camp of God*. He is also the *sacrifice* itself. His divine nature, represented by that aerial creature the bird, was placed in our human nature, under the well-known image of an *earthen vessel*, and, in it, suffered for their sins. Out of his side came forth *blood and water*, the two testimonials of cleansing. As the bird was killed over or upon the living or running water; so Christ *offered himself through the eternal spirit*, which that water signified, *unto God*, and *poureth out* that spirit upon his people, when he *sprinklet* them with his blood. The *sprinkling*, reiterated *seven* times denotes the *perfect* purification by that blood. The *living bird* also represents, under another form, the Lord Jesus. This was to be *dipped* in blood, and to *rise* from it, and to *fly away*. So Christ was buried, and rose again, and is now ascended into Heaven, *having obtained eternal redemption* for his peo-

ple. Through him, the Spirit of Life became the Water of Life for them, all-efficacious to cleanse and replenish for evermore.

If we go through the whole ceremonial of the law, we shall find the application of *water* made in a variety of instances, which were appointed to shadow forth the necessary and illustrious agency of the Spirit of God. The Priests were to be outwardly washed with water, in sign of their inward purification, and not from a political motive of *mere cleanliness*, (as some authors have very unscripturally supposed;) and, in allusion to this, the great expounder of the Jewish ritual, recommends to believers, that *their bodies be washed with pure water*, by which he means, that their outward life and conversation should be purified from the filth of sin, as well as their *hearts be sprinkled from an evil conscience*. Heb. x. 22. Exod. xxix. 4. Lev. viii. 6. Men are not truly qualified to minister in holy things without the *water of life*, whatever be their parts or learning; and nothing, done for God, can be holy, but by its *purification*. Lev. viii. 7. It was necessary even for Christ himself, as the great High-Priest of our profession, to offer himself with this water, or the *Eternal Spirit* so called; as was prefigured by the sacrifice of the *red heifer*, whose ashes were to be mingled with water, and kept for the Church, as a *water of separation*, or *purification for sin*. Numb. xix. Thus Christ came *by water*; not only in his own *innocence* but in the power of the *Spirit*; and also *by blood*, shedding his own life for the lives of his redeemed. His merit was confirmed by the Holy Spirit, and is applied by him to all the people of God. This the Apostle seems to mean, in 1 John v. 7, 8, by the *Three that bear witness in Heaven*, and the *Three that bear witness in earth*; the former giving *spiritual* testimony, the latter a *sensible* one, that the work of salvation is accomplished by Christ. The three divine persons bear witness to believers concerning Christ; and this is called *the witness of God*, which *every believer hath in himself*: verses 9, 10. The spirit of the believer witnesses to the truth of what God reveals, *setting to his seal that God is true*, respecting the efficacy of *the water and the blood*, or, in other words, of the *Spirit and Christ*, in their engagements of salvation. And *these three*, namely, the believer's *spirit*, this *water*, and this *blood*, agree in one: i. e. they all harmonize and agree together in one *object*, and in one great *end and purpose* fully accomplished for that object. Thus (we may repeat the heavenly truth) Christ *came not by water only*, to sanctify by the Spirit, *but by water and*

blood; i. e. by the united efficacy of *his own* atonement and of the Spirit's purification and blessing.

Nothing was clean or purified to the Lord, but by this emblematic *water of separation*. The spoils taken from the enemy underwent this ceremonial or purification. Numb. xxxi. 23. And this was to declare to believers, that all victory over sin was to be effected by him and ascribed to the Spirit of God, working in them through the great Mediator. For this reason, Christ is said to be *with his people always, even to the end*; not in his corporal presence, or human nature, for *that* is ascended *into the holiest* till the time of restitution; but in the Spirit, who is one with him and with the Father, and who, dwelling in his people, fulfils the scripture, *that God is in them of a truth*. In a word, there was a constant use of *water* in the Mosaic ritual, in order to shew the Jews, and to shew us by them, that the grace of sanctification and all its blessings must be derived through Christ, from the Holy Ghost. Considered in this view, they *do exhibit* many important truths, which, as other parts of scripture prove, they were *intended* to exhibit; whereas, without this consideration, they dwindle into insignificant ceremonies, unworthy of a divine institution, and have either no meaning at all, or no meaning of importance to any man. And this result would contradict an universal rule, laid down concerning the Bible, that *ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for Instruction in righteousness*. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

If we turn to the Christian dispensation, water, as the emblem of the Holy Spirit's agency, is appointed in one of the two sacraments to signify, that our introduction to a new life, and to the company of those who have obtained this life here and hereafter, is by his renovating power alone. *Except a man be born of water, (says our Lord, employing the long-accustomed emblem) and of the Spirit, (explaining directly what the emblem signified) he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.\** John iii. 5. The simple element alone is nothing in this respect, not even the whole world

\* As the Spirit of Life preserves the faithful, so he is the breath of the Lord to destroy the ungodly. The same water, which drowned the world, sustained the ark, or church, from destruction. It is a just observation of the learned Mr. Bryant, who, speaking of this ark, says; "It was of such a model and construction as plainly indicated, that it was never designed to be managed, or directed by the hands of men. And it seems to have been the purpose of Providence throughout, to signify to those who were saved, as well as to their latest posterity, that their preservation was not in any degree effected by human means." *Anal. of ant. Myth.* Vol. ii. p. 197. The Christian reader will anticipate any reflections, how exactly this emblem corresponds with the state of the church in all ages.



of waters, could they be thrown upon a man, or were he plunged into them. Of themselves, they could sooner wash the *Ethiopian* white, than purify one sin. If they had a voice, they would take up the words in Job; and *the Depth would say, It is not in me; and the Sea, It is not with me.* Job. xxviii. 14. *God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.* v. 23: It is from Him alone, that there is any blessing or use in the creatures. He only makes his ordinances effectual, and adds to the outward sign the thing signified thereby. To be truly born of water, is indeed to be born of the Spirit: In other words, the Spirit of God will operate upon the believing soul, as water acts in the frame and composition of all material things. These cannot live, nor increase, nor be pure, without that salutary fluid; nor can the Christian be in reality a Christian, nor put forth one act of the truly Christian life, but by the life and agency of the Spirit of God. All substances are dry and dead, when deprived of elementary water: And so are all souls, as dead to God as souls can be, and as evil Spirits are, without the possession and support of this *water of life.*\*

The whole office of the Divine Spirit, under this emblem of *living water*, turns upon these two points of *Life* and *Purification*, throughout the Bible. In fact, these two are but one; for purity, being the true life of Spirits, purification is nothing more than the *continuance, increase, or support*, of the spiritual life bestowed. When a being *continues* to live, it is not by the adhibition of another life, but by the support of the same life. In like manner, the soul, being made alive by the agency of the Spirit, doth not receive new and new life from time to time, but a maintenance of the same spiritual life by the Spirit's power. Thus, a soul, once born of God, or of the Spirit who is God, can never die again, unless the being of whom it is born, can die, or should withdraw the support of his life, which he hath most positively declared he will not. Hence, those people, who talk of the defectability of grace, approach so nearly to charging the Almighty Spirit with *impotence* or *falsehood*, that they ought to consider well, how closely they advance to indirect *blasphemy* against him. It is not sufferable among men to publish any thing, which affects the honor and dig-

\* When man fell from God, he lost this *water*, and so became *parched ground, a wilderness*, &c. Hence it was, that when believers in the Old Testament acknowledged their fall and loss of God's presence, they poured out water before him in humiliation and confession of soul, acknowledging thereby, that they were lost and undone without his mercy. See 1 Sam. vii. 6. 2 Sam. xiv. 14.

nity of a king : and how far the *truth* and *majesty* of Jehovañ can be safely questioned by poor mortals, it seems of much importance to them, that they should inquire.

In the law (as we have said) there was no sacrifice for sin without some use of water. This points out to us, that, as the Spirit never acts but in and through Christ with respect to his people; so Christ is never received but by and with the influences of the Spirit. They are as undivided in their operations, as in their essence. A man cannot truly believe in Christ, but by the power of the Holy Ghost : Nor can a man have the Holy Ghost, who doth not truly believe in Christ. There is a reciprocity in the two divine offices, which illustrates and magnifies both, and for which, respecting the divine glory, they were covenanted and undertaken. Christ is the *fountain of life* ; and the Holy Spirit is the *water of life* from that fountain. Christ is also called the *fountain of Israel*, because the *water of life* flows from him only to his Israel, or true and spiritual people. Christ is likewise termed a *fountain sealed*, a *fountain of gardens*, a *fountain opened to the house of David*, and *to the inhabitants of Jerusalem* ; because none but the Spirit of God can *unseal* this fountain, and impart the water of life from it ; because it is not a *common* spring, but stands in God's Garden or Church ; and because only the house or family of the spiritual David ; i. e. all true believers, who are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, are privileged to draw from it. As Christ cannot be a dry fountain, or be without water for his people ; so the Spirit, as the water of life, flows only to them through that fountain. The humanity of our great Redeemer is the grand *nexus* or bond by which we are united to him, and in him to the Spirit, and through the Spirit to the Father. Hence the life of believers is said to be from Christ, who is *their life*, and from the *Spirit* and from the *Father* ; because it is their *joint bestowment* as to its nature, though each distinct person is æconomically distinguished in the respective *manner* of its bestowal or enjoyment.

For this great purpose there is so much mention made in the scriptures of the use of *living water*, or the *water of life*. Believers, being planted or grafted into Christ, are to grow and increase by the continual watering of the Holy Spirit. As they need his influence and support, from moment to moment : he hath graciously promised to *water them every moment*. As they require free access to Christ, as to their fountain, from whom this water of life proceeds ; the grant runs, *Whosoever will, let him*

*Take the water of life freely.* They are *athirst* for this, and therefore they *will* to drink ; and, being *willing* to drink, they may *drink freely* and for ever. The Spirit gave them *life*, or they could have *felt* no thirst : They thirst for *increasing* life ; and they may have it to their full replenishment and joy by him. O what a glorious promise is here to those, who *thirst* for the living God, and who feel within them a *will* to drink, not out of the *broken cisterns* of the world, *which can hold no water*, but out of the inexhaustible fountain of living waters ! To such the word is, *Drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved !*

From the foregoing considerations it may appear, that it is the peculiar office and glory of the Spirit of God to be the *water of life* unto his people, and the *water of purification* to keep them clean, when made alive, from their original filth and pollution. He is called the *Holy Spirit*, not only because he is intrinsically holy in himself, for this cannot be doubted, but because he is the author of all holiness and purification to the Church of God. He gives life, sustains it, and purifies it from the filth of the earthen vessel into which it is received. He is not mere passive power like elementary water, and therefore he calls himself *living water, water of life, or of lives*. He both gives life, and acts in the life given. As water naturally rejects impurities, and purges away all heterogeneous particles, till nothing remain in its substance but its own pure fluid : How much more, then, must the *water of life* cleanse all defilements from the hearts of his people, till, in the appointed time, nothing shall remain but its own pure life within their souls !

If these premises be admitted, and admitted they must be upon the ground of the scriptures, they conclude most invincibly for the *Divinity* of that blessed Person, by whom such supernatural operations are performed. No effect can rise above its cause : And therefore, as these effects are above all created might, it follows, that *no creature* could perform them. But the *Holy Ghost* hath performed them ; and it is his office to perform them. Will *Beelzebub* himself say, then, that he is a *creature* ? *Beelzebub*, with all his effrontery, would disown such logic, as would render him as much a fool as he is a devil. He knew Christ in the flesh, and acknowledged his divine power and glory : And he hath seen too much of the mighty works of the Spirit of God, not to know, that only God himself could have wrought them. So many demonstrations of this grand truth, even upon *experiment* (to use a favorite word from modern philosophy), might convince modern

philosophers themselves, were they to be convinced by God's machines rather than their own, that this is a truth resulting from the God of truth. *The mighty signs and wonders, wrought by the power of the Spirit of God, do so manifest and testify his eternal power and Godhead, that they, who presume or persist to deny it, are left without excuse.* Rom. xv. 19. i. 20. They have no refuge, but to deny the signs and wonders themselves; and, in this refuge, they must deny all religion and revelation, commence avowed heathens, and utterly reject the scriptures and their God.

Upon these strong foundations, believer, rest the proofs of thy blessed supporter's Divinity. They, who deny it, may pretend indeed to kiss the Bible; but they do it, like Judas, either to betray, or, like some customary perjurers, only to gain by it. That a sincere, sensible, and intelligent mind, which is able to see the consequences and combinations of facts and doctrines, should oppose the very principles upon which all those facts and doctrines have proceeded, and in spite of the effects disown the cause; can only be accounted for in one way, and in the way St. Paul accounted for the preposterous unbelief of the Jews. Acts xxviii. 25, &c. And that this is the true mode of accounting for this procedure, appears from hence; let the man be once touched by the grace of this Spirit (and, blessed be God, there have been many instances of this kind); let him feel himself to be, as he is, a poor, lost, and guilty creature; let him find his own nature sinful, helpless, and hopeless in itself throughout; let him embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as his only rock of salvation, and his blood and righteousness as the only means of his acceptance with God; and he owns at once, that this mighty change in his heart and life could only be effected by a divine power, and that this is the power of the Spirit of God. No longer will he doubt of the divinity of his person, no longer disown the omnipotence of his grace. He is charmed with this truth, as the comfort of his soul, and blesses God, that, as he alone could have mercy upon such a worm and restore him to life, surely he will do nothing in vain, but bless him to life eternal. The demonstration is brought home to his heart; and he could just as soon deny his own existence, as dare to oppose the divinity of God the Holy Ghost. It is a truth, as certain as the Bible itself, that, let the man be who he may or what he may, if he gainsay the divine nature and glory of the Spirit of God, he neither knows his own heart, nor the book of God, nor the power of God, and hath no true hope or

comfort in his soul, while he continues in this state, for life eternal. Speak, conscience, in him that reads this, and bear witness for God, that *these things are so*.

The whole book of God is a book of *experience*, as well as of instruction. It is a channel provided by the Spirit of Life, and himself, as the Water of Life, flows within it; and thus wherever the book is understood, it is not like other books labored with fine thoughts or bright compositions only, but full of life, demonstration, and power. To the real believer, it is a *book* sprinkled for his use by the blood of Jesus, and his conscience is sprinkled with the same blood to use the book. See Hebr. ix. 19. There are no naked principles, void of influence or use, in the scripture; but they all apply to the heart, mind, and conduct, and, wherever they enter, make the whole man the wiser and the better for eternity. Continual appeals are made in this book to men's experimental knowledge of divine truths; and this kind of knowledge is the only one called by that name in the original word, and becomes the *taste* and *enjoyment* of the things assumed to be known. Carnal professors of Christianity do not comprehend this quickening mode of acquiring theology, but erroneously suppose, that it consists in high notions, refined ideas, or some metaphysical speculations. On the contrary, it is so plain to the renewed capacity, that *he who runs may read it*, and he, who wills, may enjoy it. The Spirit of truth prepares the heart for the truth, and, by this preparation of the Spirit, the most ignorant man apprehends so much truth as is necessary to salvation; and the most learned can do no more. As with the manna, he that can gather but little, has no lack; and he that gathers much, has none to spare. The reason is, both apprehend it by an higher operation than their own: And, without this operation, they cannot apprehend it at all. There were *divers washings and carnal ordinances imposed* on the Jews, *until the time of reformation*, or the appointed season of correction and explanation; and these shadowed forth the purifying operations of the Holy Spirit: But the carnal Jews, like too many of our nominal Christians, knew nothing of the matter, and did the work as a work, without the sense of its experimental instruction. They were no more cleansed by the spirit of the law, though they punctually followed the letter of it, than some of our modern professors are by the sacrament of baptism. They thought, that, *if they put away the filth of the flesh* literally, it was all very well with them, and that their mind and conscience, however de-

filed, would stand in the judgment. Our Lord corrects this gross mistake in Mark vii. And in Luke xi. 38. he seems to omit the common practice of *washing* before meals, on purpose to have an occasion of explaining that original design, which had been forgotten, and without which all these outward services became empty ceremonies, or (in the Apostle's indignant phrase) *weak and beggarly elements*. That design was not a political one framed by Moses's own brain, in order to induce cleanliness in a hot climate among a nasty people, as some have pretended to account for the institution; but a piece of instruction to the people, like the rest of the law, to lead up their minds by *natural* types to high and *heavenly* things. As all natural men do, the carnal Jews courted the shadow, and lost sight of the substance. They did what was right in following the outward precepts, but they become guilty of perversion, when they so rested in them, as to look no farther. Hence, the Apostle calls such men *wells without water*; they are in form *wells* professing to have and to yield water? but because they have none, they may justly be called *empty professors*.

When a man, therefore, applies to his own experience, he soon may know, either that he hath not this divine Spirit, or Water of Life in him, and so he knows not, in truth, *whether there be any Holy Ghost*; or else, that he hath the blessing of his grace in him, which, from the very nature of it, he is sure could only be the work of a divine agent. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his*: and in that case all his belief or unbelief, respecting his divinity, is a mere notion, and ends in nothing (unless God prevent) but to harden him on the one hand, or to make him secure and careless on the other. To convince a man in his sins of this truth, speculatively, that the Holy Ghost is God: is not worth the labor of writing one line. He may hold it, or not hold it; it is just the same to him. The divinity of the Spirit can afford no more comfort to him, than the bare idea of God's justice or vengeance upon sinners. On the other hand, when this truth, concerning the Holy Ghost, is *applied* to the real believer; he can say, upon the warrant of God's word, that he *ought*; and upon the testimony of his own conscience, that he *doth* apprehend and know it, *experimentally*, to the comfort and support of his soul. He further can say; "once I was dead, but now am alive to my God. Once I was blind to my true, and my everlasting interests; but now I see them: once I was a scoffer at true religion, and could not endure (what I thought) the insup-

portable strictness of an holy life ; but now I love and rejoice in it as my portion, and find all its paths to be paths of peace. God's word tells me, that this renewal or restoration to life is by the power of the divine Spirit ; that *he converted my soul*, and supplies it with that *living water*, by which it is comforted and nourished for his heavenly kingdom ; and that I am, with all the redeemed, to be *an habitation of God through the spirit*. My heart's experience tallies with the holy scripture, and assures me, in conformity to it ; that *he, who hath wrought this self-same thing in me, is God*. And I see it as impossible for it to be the work of a creature, as it is impossible for creatures to create at all, and so give a life which they have not in or from themselves. I could much sooner believe that a fly could create an Angel or frame a world, than that any being, who depends for his all upon another, should *of his own will beget me by the word of truth*, and *as he will, divide unto me and others severally*, all those gifts, which are positively and directly called *the operations of God*." James i. 18. with 1 Cor. xii. 6, 11.

Experience, which is the repeated work of God's spirit in the soul, teaches the believer, that the several outward acts of washing and cleansing loudly preach purity of heart and life, and were chiefly enjoined as expressive symbols for that purpose. Thus the *having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience*, is the great object of the legal injunction, that *our bodies be washed with pure water*, Heb. x. 22. Thus the purpose of being baptized outwardly, is a sensible expression of faith, that *our sins are washed away through Christ Jesus*. Acts xxii. 16. Thus this outward washing is typical of the mystical *washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost*. Titus, iii. 5. See also Ezek. xxxvi. 25. And the whole design of it is comprehended at once by the Apostle in these words ; *but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God*. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, the Ganges of the east, nay, Jordan itself, dignified as it hath been by Christ and his Prophets, could not wipe away one spot of sin, nor purify to the least degree of holiness :\* but the blood of Christ, and the living water alone, from the spirit of God. Man can at any time find water enough ; as John Baptist said, *I baptize with water*, &c. But God alone can baptize with

\* *Epiphanius* goes farther, and says, in the words of his translator, *Neque enim oceanus, neque omnia fluentia ac maria, fluviique perpetui, ac fontes, universaque imbripera Natura in unum congressa, peccata delere potest. Contra Memerob.*

(what the water signifies) the Holy Ghost, for the ablation of sin. In vain do men catch at the shell of religion, if they enjoy not what lies within. The shell hath no life nor food in itself, though ordained to hold and communicate, what is altogether food and life to those, who receive it.

But some may yet ask, "how shall we know indeed, that our experience is true, and that we are really partakers of this Water of Life?"—Consult the emblem, which God has set before you. Common water is called living water, because it is *running* or *moving* water.\* So the spirit of God in man moves and acts, is not inert himself, nor suffers the creature to be so. Has he stirred up the mind towards God, and Christ, and heavenly things? Doth he cleanse from the filth of sin, and the flesh, and earthly things? Are the affections of the heart engaged for God, and the actions of the life employed to his glory? Is there a positive renunciation of self, and a continual breathing after a nearer communion with God in all duties and functions?—These are the *acts of life*. This is the motion of the living water, which our Lord describes as *springing*, continually running and springing *up into everlasting life*. It flows because it lives. View its emblem in plants and animals. The water which nourishes them, and forms a considerable part of their composition, is ever in act and exercise, is always moving through the various parts and channels of their frame. Thus also, the Holy Spirit acts in the soul of the Christian, and is to it, respecting its divine life, what material water is to the animal life of the body. He nourishes, saturates, and prepares it for everlasting glory. This is a very common image in the holy scriptures, particularly in the Old Testament, and must have occurred to the frequent observation of every serious reader.

As we have corrupt bodies, and walk in a filthy world, we ourselves have need of frequent cleansing from our own unavoidable deficiencies, and should look, therefore, with candor and compassion on the defilements of others. This lesson is taught us in a most forcible emblem by Jesus Christ, in John xiii. His disciples, except one, were all clean, and truly so, by being washed in the fountain of life. Yet the *feet* needed repeated washing by *him*, and, not only this, but washing by *each other*. In plain words; our *obedience*, signified by the feet as the instruments

\* *Quemadmodum enim corpus animâ carens non movetur, sed contra vivum, animæ vi movetur: sic aqua è fonte profuens non quiescit sed movetur.* Gomar. in Johan. iv. 19



of motion, is imperfect at the best, and requires much cleansing from God: and it is also so combined with corruption, that Christians, knowing their own infirmities, should be tender to the infirmities of others, endeavour to recover them from their falls, strive to cleanse away dirt instead of sticking it on, and cover with a mantle of charity whatever may be concealed without injury to the cause of God or to society. He should hate the *sin* as much as possible, but not the *sinner*, who is to be tenderly prayed for, and *restored* upon his penitency *with the spirit of meekness*.

When this well of living water springs up in a man, it disposes his habit and frame to the likeness of Christ in all the duties of love, patience, forbearance and humility. The life and conversation of a person will soon shew, whether this water be in him or not, and how strong or weak it is in him. It cannot run long in him without cleansing his lips and his life; as the muddiest channel will be washed from its filth by the continued accessions of running water. A foul mouth is a lying mouth, if it pretend to have been cleansed by the water of life: And the same may be said of the heart, if it can indulge itself in allowed impurities. If Pericles also an Heathen could affirm of a General, that "he ought not only to have clean hands, but clean *eyes* too;" undoubtedly it may be urged with far greater reason concerning the Christian's employment of that faculty.\* *Turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity*; was an excellent prayer for as excellent a practice. There are many *cups and flatters* fairly washed on the *outside*, which will not bear to be looked at *within*.—We may also judge of the strength of the stream by the manner of its flowing. Shallow little rivulets make a wonderful rippling noise, because they are only little and shallow. The deeper the stream, the more solid and calm it will glide along. Its object is *use*, and not *clamor*. While it yields fertility to the shores, and profit to those who pass upon it or receive a portion of its flood; its depth is not seen by the eye, nor can the ear perceive its flow; yet the ear is gratified by the sounds of those who enjoy its benefits, and the eye is filled with the prospect of advantages arising on every side. But rivers are rare, and deep rivers still more rare; while rivulets, bourns, and shallows, not to say puddles, are common wherever we go.

Talking or writing about this living water, if it end in writing or talking only, will do the soul no good. A dissertation upon the

\* Plutarch. Life of Pericles.

properties of the elementary water will not quench the thirst of a man ready to perish, nor yet a view of its use by others : It must be *drunk*, received within, and appropriated to himself. Hence, all true believers, are said, by the Apostle, to be *baptized by one Spirit into one body*, which regards their *purification* as members of Christ, and to *have been all made to drink into one Spirit*, which implies their reception of this *water of life* so as to *live* by it. 1 Cor. xii. 13. They are cleansed from outward defilements by that very Spirit, by whom they inwardly enjoy the life and peace of God. Were this more understood, and the necessity of it more forcibly felt, even by good men ; we should see more honor appear in the world for the cause of true religion, than can possibly be expected from hard words and sharp disputes, which, whatever they do beside, certainly can edify nobody.\*

Happy believer ! How art thou privileged constantly to be drawing water, this very water of eternal life, out of the *wells*, or rather fountains, of *salvation* ! Isa. xii. 3. Thou art by nature a dry soil, and situated in a wilderness, where there is no water : But God hath promised to *make this wilderness a pool of water*, and this *dry land springs of water*. Isa. xli. 18. He hath begun to fulfil this promise in thy heart. Thou canst not say, as formerly, that there was no plant of grace within thee ; no hope, no

\* It seems impossible for any real Christian to read the following words of the late Dr. Deddridge, without an edifying satisfaction. This amiable man, though a dissenter, undertook a very laborious revisal of Archbishop Leigh on's Commentary on the first Epistle of St. Peter ; and, towards the close of a long and excellent preface, drops these sentiments, which do him as much honor as a Christian, as his other valuable performances distinguish him for a scholar. " It is truly my grief that any thing should divide me from the fullest communion with those, to whom I am united in bonds of as tender affection, as I bear to any of my fellow Christians. And it is my daily prayer, that God will, by his gentle but powerful influence on our minds, mutually dispose us more and more for such a further union, as may most effectually consolidate the Protestant cause, establish the throne of our gracious sovereign, remove the scandals our divisions have occasioned, and strengthen our hands in these efforts, by which we are attempting, and might then I hope more successfully attempt, the service of our common Christianity."—If the pious reader did not read this preface, and the admirable book to which it is prefixed ; he has yet a satisfaction to receive, which it would be even injurious to deny himself. Leighton's works stand among the foremost upon practical and experimental Divinity. Dr. Deddridge's edition is wholly in private hands ; but it is a favor to the public, that another has lately been set forth, under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Foster.

The pious reader will also be pleased to find almost these very sentiments in the Diary of Mr. Matthew Henry, published in the account of his life by Mr. Tonge, p. 225. It is with delight one reads these candid and catholic opinions, which (God be praised) are to be found among the most eminently gracious writers both in and out of the established church. May this harmony of grace be increased !

love, no desire to please God, nor solicitude about salvation. These graces are all *trees of the Lord's planting*: 'The wilderness within, which is but a parched sand, could not have raised them. And what he plants, he waters; sometimes with *rivers*, which represent his sensible, solid, and lasting grace; sometimes with *rains*, which, though perceptible, are short and occasional; and sometimes only with *dews*, which fall invisibly, yet keep the plants alive between shower and shower, till they are matured for glory. The Spirit of the Lord hath an order and a season for all his operations. Not a drop more or less of the living water falls upon a believing heart, than is appointed for it, or appointed for particular good. Hence the Psalmist said, *my times, my seasons, opportunities, or fit times, are in thy hand or power.* And hence the wise man observes, *To every thing there is this time or season, and to every purpose under Heaven.* The world of grace is no more conducted by *chance*, or the *self-determining will* of man, which is exactly the same, than the world of nature is. And for this reason, believer, thou art privileged to entertain a more abundant joy, which none can take from thee. God's omnipotence and faithfulness are thy safety, and form a ground of security which cannot be found in all the creatures. His wisdom, likewise, metes out thy proper portion, and works in the whole of it for thy real welfare. The divine Spirit waters, cleanses, replenishes, and sustains, from time to time, by his grace all that principle of life in thy soul, which, left to thy own corrupt nature, would soon perish or decay. It is thy privilege, therefore, as well as thy interest and duty, to be ever looking up to Him, and to be praying for strength and wisdom to be, as constantly, looking out from thyself. In *thee* all is barrenness and misery: In *Him*, all is life and peace. It was a gracious cry of St. Augustine; *Domine, libera me a malo homine meipso!* "O Lord, deliver me from that evil man myself!" And it is a cry, which none but a truly gracious heart can feelingly utter. Whoever can utter it aright, is enabled so to do by the power of that Spirit, who discovered so much weakness, sin, and corruption within the heart, as to make it loathe itself, and to cry out for his present and omnipotent aid. Nothing but omnipotence will satisfy a mind, who considers the extent of sin with its infinite train of evils, the power of Satan and his adherents, the snares of all sorts laid in the way, and the inward disposition of corrupt nature to follow all these, both in ignorance of the worth of God and in enmity to the will of God. To discourse with such an one, about his natural powers in spiritual

concerns, is to him entering upon a romance, which never has been realized since the fall of Adam, and which never can be realized upon the present constitution of things. It will only prove, that the discourser, however eminent or intelligent in other affairs, knows nothing of the subject in hand, or (mortifying as it is to human pride) is not duly acquainted with his own heart. It is seeking the garden of Eden in the deserts of Arabia; nay, worse, it is representing those very deserts, which are vast tracts of inhospitable sands, to be groves, and parterres, and gardens, and even paradise itself. Such a *fairy land* may amuse those, who pursue religion as they do their reveries; but the Christian seeks for solid ground to walk upon, solid comforts upon that ground, and finds both to be only attainable through the *word* and the *working* of Him who built the world.

Blessed be God, solid ground and solid comforts are attainable here: And every believer is privileged to possess them. "But if this be the case (says some drooping heart) why go I mourning thus all the day? Why do I not experience this inward blessedness of God's people, and taste the felicity of his chosen?"—Ask thyself first, "*Why* do I desire the blessing?" Is it with a view to *God's glory* alone; or is it for some ease and satisfaction to *thyself*? It is *natural* to desire happiness; but it is *not* natural to desire it in the right way, and for the right end. The Devil, without doubt, would be happy if he could; and so would the wickedest mortal upon earth. Art thou contented to go without happiness, if it be God's will? And canst thou say to him, *Thy will be done* in this respect? *How* art thou seeking peace for thy mind? And what *end* dost thou propose to thyself in having it?—These are questions which are worth examining; for there are many people, who expect the *comforts* of the gospel, without the *faith* of the gospel; and as many, who would have the *peace* of grace, without the *life* of grace. Into these two classes, perhaps, all sorrowing professors may be resolved. If they have not true faith, or do not exercise that faith truly; it is impossible they should have peace. While darkness rules in the mind, and hides the object of salvation; they can no more trust in it, than the Israelites could look upon the Serpent in the wilderness at midnight. The *truths* of the gospel must be obvious to the understanding, and the will and judgment must cleave to them, before a man can be comforted by those truths. And, therefore, where the soul is enabled to see, that both itself is a sinner, and that Christ died for such sinners, holding forth his salvation to them who feel their need of

it, without any conditions or qualifications but that *need*; it will also be enabled to see, that one soul, thus circumstanced, is as welcome to Christ as another, and that, if it had not been welcome to Christ, it had never been made to see this absolute need of him, nor to feel any distress about its own miserable condition without him. There is no ground of hope but this; for God's people do not come to Christ for salvation as *elected* persons, but as *sinful* persons ready to perish. Afterwards indeed, when faith is established, the sense of their election fills them with "sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort;" but it is by no means their principle of hope or action in coming to Christ. They come as wretched and undone *sinner*s, depend upon him only as such; and, then, finding his gracious *joy and peace in believing* communicated through the divine Spirit, they have a testimony of their *adoption* into God's family, and find this testimony confirmed by the assurance of his free favor in their election. Now, a man cannot see and feel all this, without receiving consolation: And he never loses this consolation, but when he gets off from this hinge upon some other. And

Here, he gets into the *second* class abovementioned, namely, of those, who live not the *life* of grace. The greatest saint, that ever lived, could never find peace in sin: and all things are sin, which are not conducted in a gracious *spirit* and for a gracious *end*. This sin is the source of all sorrow. A negligent walk and conversation proceed from lifelessness in grace; and, therefore, it either degenerates into downright hardness and stupidity, proving the man to be a hypocrite; or it brings on trouble and inquietude of soul, in order to shew the man, that he is out of the highway to Heaven. If a careless walk will break tranquility; what must be said of a sinful and unholy conduct? There are many persons, who are always aiming to unite God and Mammon; and, indeed, it is from one of the prevalent corruptions in our nature that they do so. They carry on their business in the world without the least grace in it, or prayer over it: and a man, who cannot pray over what he is doing, may be sure that there is no grace in it, but a great deal of sin. A person, in the commission of a fraud, (though it may not be an open cheating like an avowed thief; but a fraud of trade and occupation) can never be so impudent with God, as to pray for his assistance in it: and, if he doeth it by himself, God surely leaves him to misery as the effect of it. A cool and deliberate *smuggler*, for this reason, has no title to the name of a Christian; nor those *liars*, (for they are

not to be called by a softer name) who ask high prices, that people may *bid* for commodities more than they are worth; nor those *cheats*, who will *take* more. People, who follow evil professions of business (and a man may know that a business is evil which cannot be prayed over, both in its *act* and *design*,) or who follow just professions in an evil way, who seek nothing but money or self in them, without any respect to God's glory or the good of men; these people cannot expect happiness in the Christian profession, while they allow themselves in practices incompatible with it. They cannot say over their gains; "here, Lord, thy providence hath bestowed this money upon me, as the medium to answer my own necessities and those of my family. Thou hast been pleased to give it me in the use of that lawful vocation, which thou hast assigned to me in the world; and I pray thee to put thy blessing in it, that the *little* may go a great way in good purposes, or that the *much* may answer thy will in the holiest uses; so that, *for all of it*, I may have reason to bless thy providence and love, in bestowing upon me the means of doing good, and enabling me to employ the means for thy glory. O help me to be thankful for this mercy, in time and in eternity!"—Can a man be so presumptuous, to expect peace with God in the world, who cannot *thus* pray to him? Can he dare to hope, that God will be his *partner* in fraud and deceit, or in telling lies in the shop, or in perjury at the custom-house? Can he believe, in his sober senses, that, while he lives in the indulgence of any impurities, either in thought, word, or deed, the Holy Spirit will vouchsafe him the comforts of holiness?—It is impossible.

To enjoy peace from God, a man must *walk with him*, and with him *be agreed*: and the closer he walks with him, the more peace will be found to flow. The soul, which hath the true taste of the Water of Life, will always be thirsting after it, that, in its strength, he may come nigher and nigher unto God, and enjoy the sweetest communion with him. O what are all other things to such a Heaven-born, such a Heaven-desiring, soul! What trash does all the world appear to him, at such moments of life and fervor, which men vex themselves about for a short space of time, and then, at death, cast all away! What poor trifles, in this consideration, are the honors and opinions of dying worms! What empty joys their highest pleasures! He longs for God: he thirsts for him, as the Water of Life; and he uses the things of time, as a traveller does a carriage upon the road, only for an appointed means of bringing him nearer to the fountain, whence

this water flows. God hath given him a mind too great to be taken up with little things, and a temper too justly ambitious to be put off with less than eternal things. It becomes him, therefore, as a Christian, to be exalted above other men; not in pride or conceited airs, for these are baseness and folly; but in that dignity of sentiment and expectation, which renders him most like to the God he serves, and most useful to the world about him. In this high, yet heavenly, frame, he enjoys the sublimest and most extensive views: and the higher he ascends to the object of his soul above, the less and less do all worldly matters beneath him appear. And when he loses sight of them (as ere long he shall,) he comes at once into the full vision and fruition of God. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, ἀπαφίτι, instantly or perfectly.* There is not a moment lost between their death and their everlasting bliss. They come, *at once*, to that *pure river of the Water of Life, clear as crystal*, i. e. of the most transparent holiness, *which proceeds out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb.* This is that Holy Spirit which comes from the Father and the Son, and which purifies and replenishes the Church and temple of God throughout eternity.—O then, what are men doing, who seek not this eternal good! what are believers considering, when they consider not their latter end! Is *this* the voice of Christ! *The spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth, say, come. And let him, that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.*—Here is a triple call to endless joy: who that hears it, who would not wish to obey! Who that feels its worth, would not answer; *come Lord Jesus, come quickly!*



## SPIRIT OF TRUTH.

*WHAT is truth?* was the inquiry of a Heathen, who neither loved it nor cared for it: and *truth*, in the sense of the scriptures, is no more the concern of the great bulk of mankind, than it was of Pontius Pilate.

Truth, strictly speaking, is that which exists *firmly* and *unalterably*. It cannot *change*; for then it would lose its nature: error only is mutable and various; and, though it pass through numberless forms and semblances, can never become the truth, which is perfect *unity* and *simplicity*. Hence, truth is not *only*

the foundation and reality of all existence, but is also *infinite existence*; for it must be commensurate with all being, as without it being is only ideal, or rather no truth of being at all. But there is and can be only *one* infinite existence, comprehending all things and comprehended of none; for, could it be comprehended of any, it must necessarily be bounded, and therefore not infinite. Here then truth appears to be an infinite, unchangeable, and eternal attribute, which can be applied to no being, but *that* which is infinite, unchangeable and eternal. It can belong therefore, to none but God, who *is* his own attributes, and consequently that distinguished one, truth *itself* in the abstract. And he is called the God of Truth because truth in him, as the fountain, flows from him into all the creatures. They have no reality or existence but in him: and he only can impart that permanency to them, which forms the continuance of their being. According to his name Jehovah, *He is*: and he alone exists *of* himself: all entities are in him and from him, and with this difference likewise, that time is applicable to them, but not to him. All being, but the *Divine*, *began* to be; whereas Jehovah eternally *is*, and only *is*, in an unutterable supremacy of nature.

It must be the same with all the spiritual and invisible species of being, as it is with the visible and material. There can be no truth in mental act or energy, but as it proceeds from this root of truth, which communicates what is communicable of itself to all existences, according to their order and capacity. The gospel, which treats of both *truth in essence* and *truth communicated*, is the *truth of God*, because it both proceeded from him as its cause, and returns to him and to his glory as its end. It takes in man's salvation as means or uses to that end; but this salvation necessary as it may be to the happiness of a fallen creature, can be no more the original motive of God's action than his other operations in the world. He will ever appear to be *his own motive*, having none higher or lower than himself, which certainly is suitable to his perfection; and whatever he hath wrought in and for his creatures, *began* with himself, and therefore not *occasioned* by them. The proof of this, were it necessary, might be easily given at large from his own revelation.

Here reason seems to shew, with what strict propriety God hath assumed this name of *Truth*. But it was only the revelation of God himself which could convince, how suitably and justly this bright attribute operates for the eternal welfare and salvation of sinners.



In the holy word, this title of truth is frequently applied to God: and when any matter concerning the welfare of men is mentioned, where all the comfort depends on its being *true*, there is constantly a reference made to God himself, as the source from whom, being *the truth* essential, it entirely flows.

An argument or two from scripture will serve to convince an unprejudiced mind, both that this title of *the Truth* is proper only to God; and that, as to God or each person in the Godhead, it is also properly applicable and applied to the Holy Ghost.

In Deut. xxxii. near the beginning, Moses publishes the name of Jehovah, and, among other titles, ascribes to him the remarkable one, *Al the Truth*, which is rendered in our translation, *God of truth*, but more justly by Montanus, *Deus Veritas*, "God the truth."—But the Apostle John says (1 John v. 6. *It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is* (ἡ ἀληθεία) *THE TRUTH*.—The Spirit, therefore, is *Jehovah, Alehim*, and *Al*, which are among the titles given to *the Truth* in Deuteronomy abovementioned.

In Psalm xxxi. God is styled *Jehovah Al the Truth*, or of truth, according to our translation.—But the *Holy Ghost* is named *the Truth*, and *Spirit of Truth*. Consequently he is *Jehovah Al*.

The Prophet Jeremiah (c. x. 10.) says, *Jehovah Alehim is the Truth, he is the living Alehim*, (or Alehim of lives, i. e. of natural and spiritual life,) *and everlasting King*—But the *Spirit is the Truth*, according to the text in 1 John v. 6. And, therefore, is *Jehovah Alehim*, the Alehim of lives (as all live by him) and the everlasting King.

It appears from hence, that *truth essential*, and especially *spiritual truth*, which is our more immediate subject, is applicable only to Deity. Whatever is *true*, is true alone in God, and must have some respect to his excellency and glory. And the privation of spiritual truth, or, (what is just the same) a separation from God, is darkness and error, the effects of which are sin, confusion and misery. Truth in the concrete is *from God*; as truth in the abstract is an attribute *of God*, or rather *God himself*.

For this reason the Psalmist prays to Jehovah, *Lead me in thy truth*. Psal. xxv. 5. But Christ himself says, that *the Spirit of Truth shall guide into ALL truth*. John xvi. 13. Of consequence, the *Spirit is Jehovah himself*, or he could not, at that time and in all times to come, guide into the truth of Jehovah, and much less into *all the truth* necessary to salvation.

Nehemiah confesses to the Lord, *Thou gavest thy good Spirit*

to instruct the people of Israel, or rather to make them to understand, Neh. ix. 20. But it is very particularly delivered to these very Israelites themselves, in Deut. iv. 36. that Jehovah Alehim, and NONE ELSE beside him, out of Heaven made them to hear his voice, that he might instruct them. The Spirit, therefore, is Jehovah Alehim, whose office it is to guide his people, in all ages, into all the truth.

And it was God and his revealed truth, which these Israelites were constantly opposing. *Ye do always resist* (said Stephen) *the Holy Ghost : as your fathers did, so do ye.* Acts vii. 51. But if Deut. ix. 7. be compared with Psalm cvi. 25, it will appear, that this resistance of the Israelites was made to Jehovah, himself. It follows, then, that the Holy Ghost is Jehovah, and, as such, true and very God.

It is written in Isaiah concerning the Church; *ALL thy children shall be taught of God.* Is. liv. 13. Which promise is referred to by our Lord in John vi. 45. But it is said also by our Lord to his disciples, *the Holy Ghost shall teach you all things.* John xiv. 26. And the Apostle assures the Corinthians, that he spake of divine things, *not in the words which \* man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.* 1 Cor. ii. 13. The Holy Ghost, therefore, is God.

Not to multiply arguments from scripture under this head, let one more suffice, which the Arians and Socinians may do well to consider.

*The Spirit* (says the Apostle) *searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* 1 Cor. ii. 11. But the Psalmist, speaking of Jehovah, says, that *his understanding is infinite.* The Spirit, therefore, in order to search *all things* and the *deft things* of God must necessarily be *infinite* too. If he be *not* infinite, he cannot search the deep infinitude mentioned; but, if he *be* infinite, he must be *coëssential* with the Godhead, and consequently God.—What further confirms this argument, is the prophecy of Isaiah concerning *the everlasting God, Jehovah*, of whom it is said, *There is no searching of his understanding.* Is. xl. 28. He evidently means, not by the *creatures*,

\* It has been well observed by an able writer, that the antithesis is in this place, of man to the Holy Ghost, according to the usual style of the Scripture, is sufficient alone to prove the Spirit to be God. *Jones's Catholic Doctrine*, p. 30.

not by any *finite being*. But if the Holy Ghost doth search this *infinite understanding*, or the *depths* of God himself; it is a demonstration of his infinitude and Deity, and that nothing can possibly be hid from him. The Psalmist, upon this ground, justly inquires, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I go from thy Face? If I ascend up into Heaven, Thou art there?* Ps. cxxxix. 7. What words can more strongly mark the omniscience and omnipresence of the Holy Spirit? What could more directly assert him to be Jehovah? "I can go no where from thy Spirit; for *thou* art every where."

It was a great expression for a heathen that, "He is most perfect, who understands all things, at all times, and all together." Max. Tyrius. The Spirit of God so understands; or he could not be qualified for the great office of leading the whole company of the faithful into *all truth*. No created being can be omnipresent, nor omniscient, nor infinite. Not the brightest angel of Heaven can be in the hearts of all God's people *at once*, helping their infirmities *every moment*, and conducting them *all together* in the way of truth. They are scattered far and wide. They all want help in every instant; and God hath promised, that in every instant he will water them. Water is the Spirit's emblem, and he is poured out, according to his office, upon all his people, through *all ages*, in *all places*, and upon *all together*. Who but God is equal to a task of such magnitude, power, and salvation? Who, but God, could *fit* his help to the occasion, with such exactness and wisdom, to millions of souls, in all ages and countries at once; so that, *as their day was, their particular strength should be?* This the Holy Ghost hath done, this he doeth, and this he will do to the end. For the promise of his gracious aid was not only to the Jews and to their children, *but to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* Acts ii. 39. This free donation extends to all his people that are afar off, in point of *time*, or *place*, or *disposition* of soul. They all meet in this one Eternal Spirit, and are *brought nigh* by the blood of Christ. And if all this be done in them and for them by *one* great agent; what absurdity, as well as blasphemy, is it to suppose that this agent can be less than the Omnipotent? A man, who can deliberately utter such a position, must not only understand very little of the Bible, or the experimental truths which it contains, but must, allowing this Bible to be a divine revelation, make war against the plainest deductions which reason itself can make from it. For as this revelation states, that, the whole of

man's salvation is planned, effected, and completed by God alone, while, at the same time it represents the particular, the constant, the efficacious operation of the Holy Ghost through the whole of it; we cannot, with any consistency, avoid the immediate conclusion, that he is, upon that very account, *God over all, blessed for ever*. This truth, so consentaneous with positive revelation and those plain inferences which reason fairly makes from it, one would think, would be obvious to every candid inquirer, and shine bright enough to confound the dark prejudices of all opposers.

But, however we may err by ourselves or in following others, we surely cannot be mistaken in an humble dependence for instruction upon God. He hath promised to give his spirit to them that ask him; and his word declares, that *the Spirit is Truth*, who therefore cannot give a false evidence of *himself*. He is *the Spirit of Truth*, and cannot misguide us. He is Jehovah Alehim the Truth (Jer. x. 10,) and therefore able to effect all, which he hath promised to do or bestow. Hence, to his people, who believe in and rest upon him, he gives *an earnest* of himself in their hearts; by conferring, what in the Old Testament is called, *the peace of truth*, and in the New, *joy in the Holy Ghost*. They can say, with holy boldness, *the truth dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever* (2 John 2;) for they find, according to the promise of Christ, that *the truth hath made them free*. They were slaves once to the world, flesh and Devil; but now are brought into a glorious liberty. They love truth and righteousness, which they formerly loathed; and they tremble at sin, which heretofore they had loved. Their happiness\* lays entirely in their love and duty to God; and they know, by *the witness of God's spirit with their spirits*, that there is no method of maintaining and increasing that happiness, but by cleaving to and depending upon him in humility and holiness. He, that walketh not according to this rule (if the scripture may determine) *is a liar, and the Truth is not in him*; or, in other words, *he is sensual, not having the Spirit*.

In the Old Testament, there is a very particular and frequent conjunction of *mercy* and *truth*. They are *attributes* of the Godhead, and, in this conjunction, are used as such.

As they operate in this fallen world, they beautifully display the two distinct, yet inseparable, persons in Jehovah. It seems

\* "Certainly (says Lord Bacon in his essays) it is Heaven upon Earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth."

no strain to say, that the attributes are sometimes used, by a metonymy, for the persons themselves. Thus *mercy* frequently stands for the great Redeemer, by whom alone mercy did and could come to man.\* And *truth* as frequently denotes the *Spirit of Truth*, by whom alone the redeemed are led into truth. They are inseparable whether *in se* or *ad extra*; that is, whether they are viewed as attributes in the Godhead, or exercised officially by the Son and Spirit. If any soul partake of *mercy*, it is in strict and indissoluble union with *truth*: that is, if a man taste of the redemption of Jesus Christ, it is through and by the *Holy Ghost*. No man can truly call Christ *his* Lord, but by the Spirit of Truth. And this furnishes the criterion or rule so often proposed in the scripture, that a man should examine himself by: *know ye not, that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* It appeals to their internal perceptions, for the assurance of his mercy. Again. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* This applies to the same demonstration of sensible consciousness, by which a person knows any thing to be true, and much more when he enjoys God, who is the fulness of *truth*, for it would be strange indeed, that a creature should possess such operative principles, and never know or be sensible of the profession. Thus *mercy* and *truth* meet together, and thus *all the paths of Jehovah are mercy and truth*; because he walketh among men for salvation in no other way, but that of grace through the *Son* and *Spirit*. There is no approach to the Father, but by Jesus Christ, and the *Holy Ghost*. Hence, believers are exhorted to call upon the Father in the name of the Son, by the Son himself; which would have been a useless injunction, if they might have been accepted without it. And hence, likewise, the same unerring witness hath said, that they who worship God, *must worship him in spirit and truth*, or they worship him not at all. Agreeably to this, it is said, *the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him*; but it is said with an explanation, that it might be particularly noticed, *to all that call upon him in Truth*. Ps. cxlv. 18. The Truth itself must enable the heart truly to call upon God, by freeing it from the dominion of sin, and by releasing it to a state of grace. In this state, *the Spirit helpeth the infirmities* of his people, and *worketh in them both to will and to do*. They *will* the truth in

\* The Prophets, and even the ancient Jews, understood the Messiah by this name of *Mercy*: And the Messiah himself leaves no room to doubt, that the Spirit is the truth. See several testimonies to this effect in that incomparable book *De Verit. Rel. Christ.* by the celebrated Mornay du Plessis. c. 22

his willingness, and they *act* in the truth by his energy. Thus acting and acted upon, not by a slavish constraint but by a joyful harmony of spirit, they are said to *do* things, which, of themselves, they are morally and naturally incapable of doing. Very remarkably are they said, in this view, to *work out their own salvation*, by an Apostle who affirms, that *of himself he knew nothing; because it is God which worketh in them*. They cannot, therefore, but *work*: for they have an almighty helper, and are privileged to work *with* him, and *by* him. In another place they are said to *purify their souls in obeying the truth*—but it is added, *through the Spirit*. The Spirit of Truth enabled them to obey his own truth revealed, and, in the obedience of faith, they obtained remission of sins and justification of their persons. The excellent Archbishop Leighton says upon the passage; “It is certain and undeni-  
“able, that the soul itself doth act in believing or obeying  
“the truth, but not of itself; it is not the first principle of mo-  
“tion. They purify their souls, but it is *by the spirit*. They  
“do it by his enlivening power, and a purifying virtue received  
“from him. Faith, or obeying the truth works this purity. But  
“the Holy Ghost works that faith, as in the forecited place, *God*  
“*is said to purify their hearts by faith*. He doeth that, by giv-  
“ing them the Holy Ghost.”\*

These expressions of scripture should be well considered by those, who contend for the *free will* and *free agency* of the natural man. We can only say of so high an opinion in this place, that, in order to be a *free agent*, not only man, but every being, must be entirely *independent*; for how can he be free, who depends from moment to moment upon the will and power of *another* being for the very existence and support of *his own*? And if he be not free, and hath not an *unlimited* enjoyment of *existence*: how is it possible that he can be free, respecting an unlimited *exercise* of it? The Apostle says, in God *we live*: we derive our existence from his will—in God *we move, or are moved*; we take our activity from his power—in God *we have our being*; we enjoy the continuance of both, in utter dependence upon him. This one text, duly considered in all its connections and consequences, ought to humble the insolence of man, when he assumes to be, what even angels, pure and perfect as they are, cannot

\* The famous Dr. Scott himself, whom nobody will suspect of pleading for enthusiasm, asserts, “that our *knowledge* and *belief* of divine things, so far forth as they are *curing* and *effectual* to our renovation, are the fruits and products of this *internal illumination* of the Spirit.” *Christian Life*, vol. ii.

venture to claim. *They are ministering spirits, they serve, they obey*: and they find that, in all their duty, is comprized (what real Christians also find) the most "perfect freedom."

Besides; how obviously is it the setting *imperium in imperio*, a rule against a rule; if we state more independent principles than one, in the ordination and controul of all things? And if there be any thing independent of God, or any being which can frustrate his designs, or any event which can arise without his permission; it seems something more than a limiting of the Most High, for it takes away his infinitude and deity. As the infinite God, he must include all things; for that cannot be infinite, which is excepted and bounded in any. Upon this account, the Psalmist could even say; *If I descend into Hell, Thou art there*; though the *manner* of God's presence be very different in Hell and Heaven. God can pervade Hell and the deepest recesses of the damned, as a pure and refined Spirit can grossness, without being effected by evil. We may therefore safely talk of God's free-will, but very dangerously of man's, when not in strict conjunction with and dependence upon his Maker's. In this dependence it may be allowed to be free, because it then will be righteous; and all righteousness is freedom, and essential to it. Nor need we fear the *limitation* of the human will in this dependence; unless we can suppose that the human will may over pass *unbounded* holiness and truth.

One observation more shall suffice, in this essay, to prove the necessity of the Holy Spirit's agency for the instruction of his people in the truth of his will; and consequently, from the nature of that agency, the divinity of his person. Christ said to his disciples, just before he departed from the world; *It is expedient for you, that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you*; and then he proceeds to explain his office and character. Upon a review of the whole of that passage, it is plain, that the Mediator, as *God manifest in the flesh*, was about to complete *his* official part in the covenant of grace, styled *the work which the Father had given him to do*; that though this work was perfect in itself, and the ground of salvation was finished for the redeemed, insomuch as to be incapable of any addition from all the creatures; yet that it was not and could not be finished *in* them, but by the advent of the Comforter. It also appears, that, in order to prepare their souls for the reception of so great a mercy, it is the office and work of the Comforter, to convert the people of God in their *understandings* from error to truth, to change

their *hearts* and *affections*, to apply the salvation of Jesus for the *remission of their sins* and their *justification* before the Father, to preserve, strengthen, and settle them to the end ; and, in a word, to do all that remained to be done in them, for them, and by them ; previous to that glory, to which he finally and infallibly conducts them. It was expedient, therefore, that Christ should depart upon the finishing of *his* work, that the agency of the Holy Ghost might eminently ensue in his crowning grace, and yield his own sealing pledge of eternal glory. How expedient all this was, we have a proof upon fact to convince us. No mortals could be more unlike themselves, in point of knowledge, faith, and courage, than the Apostles were *before* and *after* Christ's ascension to Heaven. And *who* made the difference ? It is undeniably evident, the Holy Ghost alone upon the day of Pentecost. View them from that time forwards, and they appear heroes of grace, or rather lambs in holiness and lions in boldness. Peter, who denied Christ with oaths, and all the rest who ran away from their master and fled, rejoiced from that day to suffer reproach and even death itself for his sake. Could any created being work this astonishing change, and by a visible intervention equally astonishing ? A man must have the credulity of an Atheist, who pretends to think that there is no God at all, before he can believe that any being *but* God could work all this and carry it on against the utmost malice and opposition of the world. The same proof upon fact is carried down to this day in the heart of every believer, who can truly say, " Once I was darkness, but now am I light in the Lord ; once I was dead in sin, but now am alive unto God ; and once I was without hope and an Atheist in the world, but now I have obtained hopes full of immortality, and a Comforter who will never depart from me."

The word *truth*, O believer, contains a sense in its original language, which is both precious to thy soul and confirmed by thy experience. It signifies not only *truth* in the abstract, which carries along with it the idea of *firmness* and *stability*, and so relates to God himself ; but it also signifies to *nourish with the truth*, and bears the sense of the Apostle's expression, *as new-born babes desire the sincere (or pure) milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby*. In the former view, thou hast reason to rejoice in the never failing ground of the *Truth*, because it is a *rock* and full of *perfection* ; but, in the latter view, thou hast a title to be exceeding glad, because of that *nourishment*, which it supplies to thy soul, of *truth communicable*. with all its train of graces and bles-



sings. The one is truth as the spring, and therefore inexhaustible : The other is truth in the stream, and therefore to believers gracious and accessible. In the former respect, it is illustrious ; and, in the latter, comfortable. It is comfortable dear Christian, whosoever thou art that hast a right to *that* name ; it is full of “sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort” to *thee*. Thou hast an infallible rule, and an infallible guide ; the one in the Word of Truth, and the other in the *Spirit of Truth*. This guide, who laid down that rule, applies the rule to thy heart, works by it in thee, and according to it for thee. This rule is the sensible manifestation of invisible truth, so far as it concerns thy happiness and salvation. He hath new created thee *in the holiness of truth* (Eph. iv. 24.) ; and he conducts thee in the truth and beauty of holiness, from day to day. He doth not merely prescribe, but enables. Thou hast no mental powers, capable of discovering the things of God, or capable of exercising themselves upon those things : It is God the Spirit alone, who *teacheth thee to profit*. If all the Saints of God were equal in spiritual endowments with the Apostles, if all the Apostles, together with those Saints, could descend from Heaven to instruct one soul, and if all of them had the eloquence of Angels, or the highest created eloquence and wisdom which can be imagined ; vain would be their united efforts, unattended by this Holy Spirit, to *translute* that soul *from darkness to light*, and to give it that right understanding of the truth, which consists in the real enjoyment and participation of it. They would all *plunge and water in vain*, unless God should *give the increase*.\* What an argument is this, to thy soul, of the divinity and glory of thy Holy Teacher !—And if he hath *once* taught thee the way of life and truth, shall he not teach thee to the *end* ? Who can pervert his counsels, or frustrate his designs ? It is God, who hath drawn the plan. Who can obstruct the execution to its full effect ? It is God, who worketh all in all. Who can plunge into error, or into Hell the consequence of error ? It is the Spirit, who is truth, and who will lead into all truth for ever. Fear not, fainting souls, thou hast not only an all-wise conductor, but an Almighty agent, who hath undertaken to bring thee safe home. Thy *safety is of the Lord*, and not from thyself, nor from the whole creation together. Without him, all the Angels in Heaven could not pre-

\* *Non sufficit homini spiritali Mosem aliquem audivisse, aut Apostolum, aut, si forte, celestem Angelum, nisi arcane accesserit DIVINI SPIRITUS Sermo. Ministrorum Conciones Animo insinuans, exponens, confirmans, atque ab ignavis. Witsii Misc. Sacr. Vol. ii. p. 35.*

serve thee for a moment : Nor without him, could they even support themselves. How then shouldest thou stay thyself upon his *everlasting arms* ! He cannot deceive thee, for he is the *truth* itself ; he cannot forsake thee, for he hath *promised* to keep thee ; he cannot be overcome, for he is the *invincible God*. Thou, O feeble fainting heart, art more his care, if there be any difference in the divine care, than the strongest believers. His holy word is more frequently addressed to such as thou, than to them. O believe this record, which is of much importance to thy happiness, and which in itself must be both faithful and true. Pray to this author of truth to bless thee with the clear perception and enjoyment of it ; and thou shalt not pray in vain. He will give it thee in thy *head*, in such measure as shall be expedient, but certainly he will pour it into thy *heart*, so as to induce a solid and a comfortable experience. His truth is not a shadow or a phantom, but substantial life and everlasting love ; and thou shalt possess the delightful pledge of it now, and the full enjoyment in God's due time. In one word ; *he will guide thee with his counsel, and afterward receive thee to glory.*



## SPIRIT OF GRACE.

THE word *grace* is used in two significations. In one sense it is taken to convey the abstract notion of *free favor* or *gratuitous bounty* ; and, in the other, to imply the positive possession of that *divine principle* within the soul. In the first instance we may contemplate what it is *in itself* ; and, in the other, its operation and effect, or what it is *to us*. In the former case, we should remember, that it exists only in God as the *giver*, and in the latter, that it descends to man as God's *free gift*. These distinctions are included in the term *grace*, with all their relations and consequences.

*Grace*, in both these respects, is the cause and the means of all true blessedness to man : and God the Holy Ghost is called the *Spirit of Grace*, because he is the fountain from which this grace doth wholly flow. He is indeed Grace itself, though, in condescension to our apprehensions, he hath been pleased to convey the notices of his love by figures and expressions, which strike our senses and apply to the objects we perceive about us. We

are not able to survey the unlimited ocean of goodness ; nor, if our capacities were enlarged to ten thousand times their present dimensions, could we enjoy all that is to be enjoyed of it. God would still be an *Infinite* beyond us ; and the most we could receive, either in such a state or our own, would only be a larger or a smaller drop of an unbounded sea. We could say, with certainty, from our participation of its nature, that it is *good* and *very good* : but *how much* so, it would be a depth and a breadth eternally beyond us.

The spirit is called *grace*, or the *Spirit of Grace*, because he is the convincer and conductor of grace to the souls of his people. Christ suffered and obtained ; and therefore *grace came by him* (John i. 17 :) and Christ was *full of grace* (John i. 14 ;) because he was full of the Spirit. He received the Spirit likewise *without measure* ; because he had an infinite capacity, which cannot be said of any *creature* : and the Spirit itself must therefore be *immeasurable* and *infinite* to fill that capacity ; and these are terms, which can be applied to none but God.

The scriptures have many passages of this sort which may strike every gracious mind with full conviction of the proper divinity of the Holy Ghost, and which ought to silence the blasphemy of those, who have ventured to deny it. His word witnesses for him to all men ; and he witnesses with his word, by a most gracious and particular evidence indeed, to the hearts of his people. Let us consider then some testimonies of his divine glory, as they occur under this name of his office, or in relation to it.

Sanctification, considered as an act of grace upon the soul, cannot be performed or maintained by the agency of any creature. It is always ascribed to God throughout the Bible. Whatever means are prescribed or used, they have apparently no efficacy but by him. The God of peace must *sanctify his people wholly*, or they cannot be truly sanctified at all.

This operation is ascribed to the Father, in Jude, v. 1. who addresses his Epistle *to them that are sanctified by God the Father*. It is ascribed to the Son, the Lord Christ, in Heb. ii. 11. and other places. And it is no less directly referred to the *Holy Ghost* in Rom. xv. 16—This to a fair and candid mind would alone be a sufficient evidence of the *equality* and coëxistence of the three persons in the Godhead ; for if an act, which can only with propriety be ascribed to God, be *equally* ascribed to three distinct persons, it proves that *each* of these persons is God, and that their

(both in union and distinction) have one common intercommunity in the divine nature, which at the same time must be one in itself, or such intercommunity could not subsist. There must be an homogeneity of essence or existence in the three persons: for a division of substance would be a difference of mind, will, and operation, and, of course, a gross tritheism contrary to the Bible, which declares *that Jehovah is One Jehovah*. Deut. vi. 4. But, stating the doctrine of three persons, to whom severally and distinctly are referred several agencies and operations, which, though they vary, are, notwithstanding imputable to none but Deity; we find an *harmony* in the scriptures, respecting the nature of God's unity and personality, which, without this doctrine, is most evidently broken. If, therefore, God only can sanctify the ungodly; and if we find, that the *Holy Spirit* doth sanctify them; it proves most incontestably, that he is God, and consequently the great object of praise and adoration.

It is also true, that no peculiar attribute of God can be properly ascribed to a creature. One creature may be used as an instrument to convey the *agency* of that attribute to another creature; but it is not *inherent* in him, nor is it in his power to use it, when or how, or where he pleases. Now, *grace* is a peculiar attribute of God in every strict sense of the term. He only *has* it, as the fountain. He only can *give* it, as a stream from the fountain. Whatever the first Angel or the first Saint in glory may possess of grace, it is not their own radically. They enjoy it by donation, and by the donation of God. They are what they are by his free favour and bounty. He is therefore called *the God of all grace*. 1 Pet. v. 10. There is no grace but from him. Christ is said to bestow grace, Eph. iv. 7. because there is no grace but by him. And the Holy Ghost is called repeatedly the *Spirit of Grace*, because there is no grace but with him. He is, therefore, conjointly with the Father and the Son, true and very God.

The gifts of grace, and the attestations of them in the working miracles, are directly applied in scripture to the Holy Spirit; and so directly are they applied to him, that it is affirmed, that *no man can say*, knowing what he says, *that Jesus is the Lord*, or *Jehovah*, *but by the Holy Ghost*, because without the Holy Ghost, in strict truth, he can know nothing of the matter. He may use the words and syllables; but he has no demonstration or conviction of the thing. *Our sufficiency* (says the same Apostle) *is of God*. It is God alone, who can controul the powers of nature, and interrupt those laws of being, which he hath placed in the

world of matter. It is God alone, who can govern in the spiritual and invisible world, and direct effects in the souls of men, which can be ascribed to no subordinate or created cause. This none but an Atheist can deny. But the Holy Ghost expressly said by the Apostle in 1 Cor. xii. to have accomplished all this. The word of wisdom and of knowledge, the grace of faith and the gifts of healing, the working of miracles and the power of prophecy, the discernment of spirits with the variety and interpretation of tongues, are ALL wrought by one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. And yet, in all these diversities of operations, it is the SAME God which worketh all in all. The Holy Ghost consequently, is this same God: and a man must resist all sorts of evidence, delivered from the senses and testimonies of others, oppose even the most common principles of ratiocination; and renounce the Bible itself, when he denies this conclusion. And yet it must be owned, there are people who, in the face of such testimonies, do venture upon this denial, of whose mental accomplishments in other things there can be no doubt. We can only take up the words of the Prophet concerning them: *the wise men—have rejected the word of the Lord? and what wisdom is in them?* Jer. viii. 9.

*Justification*, another act of divine grace is from God. *It is One God* (saith the Apostle) *which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.* Rom. iii. 30. *It is God that justifieth.* Rom. v. 3. 33.—But believers are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. 1 Cor. vi. 11.—The Spirit therefore is God: or, are there more Gods than one.

One of the greatest, if not the greatest, operation of power in the heart, is the creation or donation of *faith*. The Apostle says, *it is not of ourselves: it is the gift of God.* Eph. ii. 8.—But he also says, in another place, that *Faith is given by the Spirit.* 1 Cor. xii. 9.—The Spirit, therefore, is God.

All the work of grace in the soul is to *prepare it for glory*. It is an agency of divine love; and none but a divine hand can perform it. For this purpose, God promised in the Old Testament to *dwell* in his people and to *walk* in them; and hence, because of his presence, they are called *the temple of the living God.* 2 Cor. vi. 16.—But in another place (1 Cor. vi. 19.) *their body* is said to be *the temple of the Holy Ghost.*—The Holy Ghost, therefore, is the living God.

Many arguments of this kind might be drawn from the scrip-

tures to prove, under this title of *grace*, the proper personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost. To the Christian, these will more than suffice; and to establish the Christian in this important truth, are these papers principally written. With respect to the unbeliever, all the arguments in the world, which are drawn from the figure or its analogy, would fail of their effect, if he were not furnished with that grace, which the Holy Spirit, as it is usual, bestows *as he will*. If his reason were silenced or convinced, the effect would be just as it was before: And to make a man a Christian in head or in notion only, would be rendering him as useless as the paper which might be wasted for the purpose; or at best would be drawing a mere portrait, which has neither life nor sensation, and which, as it is calculated to deceive the sight, has for its only worth its capacity of deception.—A qualification, which no sincere mind would wish to acquire.

But they, who *have tasted that the Lord is gracious* can never dispute, that the grace they enjoy can only be from the Lord. Acquainted with the powers of corruption and the strength of sin, they know full well, that none but He, who is stronger than the strong One armed, could have rescued them from the iron bondage, in which they were held. They perceive *experimentally*, that none but God could *plan* such a determination of free grace, as the scripture reveals: that no *created* being could have either the wisdom, will, or power, to *accomplish* all that was necessary for their salvation and that only the infinite and everlasting Jehovah could make it really an everlasting salvation.

When the believer considers himself, he is ready to say: "Here am I, a sinful inhabitant of a wicked world, without any thought of God by nature, and turned away in my affections from all that can be conceived of divine purity and perfection. I feel no natural inclination to goodness; but a strong propensity to all things, which are corrupt and perishing. My soul never sought after its God; and, if it has thought of futurity, it considered the eternal state as a dark barren void, the gloomy apprehensions of which inclined me to forget it as fast as I could. My heart was all alive to the pursuits of the world, which, in my sober moments, undistracted by the immediate presence of the objects, my heart told me were altogether perishing and vain. Still I run on the mad career, sure of a precipice which must terminate my course, and sure of nothing beyond it. Thus my whole nature I have constantly found rivetted to the earth, without one aspiring thought or desire of its own to quit it. The very idea indeed of

quitting it, has filled me with horror and pain. In this state, always in quest of good without ever finding its satiety, I have heard and read of God, and with the mere curiosity of a man, have perused his word. I saw nothing in the holiness and omnipotence of my Maker, but which struck me with a sense of my distance from *him*, and with a terror of his future approach to *me*. All his attributes considered in the aggregate, filled me with awe: His mercy alone afforded me some hope, when I thought of it *by itself*; but attempered with his justice, even mercy increased the dread. The very goodness of God must detach him from all that is sinful and impure, and consequently (as I saw) must detach him from me. The scripture appeared dark and confused to my understanding. I saw no propriety in many of its precepts, no force in its allegories, no comfort in its promises, no glory in its end. Indeed, its end I did not understand; for it seemed void of scheme or plan, and only, to my dark mind, a rude and undigested mass. It was, in all respects, a book sealed to my eyes, a book unaffecting to my heart. Some of its moral precepts alone seemed worthy of attention; and these I viewed distinctly from all the rest; and, thus viewed, I thought that Cicero, Seneca, or any of the philosophers, had or might have delivered as good as those. Thus I was left afloat in an immense ocean of uncertainty, without chart or compass to direct my course, or to promise me an harbor of comfort or repose. I found, likewise, that I had no rudder to my bark to steer it aright by any rule, could I obtain one; and that I lay exposed to the united agitation of winds and waves. To sink, filled me with horror; to swim, afforded me a prospect of continual restlessness and care. I saw others in the same situation of distress, some sensible of it and others stupid or asleep; but this only wounded my humanity, without presenting me with relief. At length, a voice reached my heart; a voice, not of sound but of power, which I had never perceived before. "God hath sworn by an oath to his people, that he would grant unto them, that they, being delivered out of the hands of their enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of their life." A sun-beam, darting upon the eyes of a man just recovered to sight from being born blind, could not fill him with so much amazement and wonder at the light, as these important words did my soul at the truths, which they contained, and which, though I had read them an hundred times, I never had perceived before I saw, I felt an elenchus and a power in them; which no mere

words, formed by any kind of art, could possibly have induced. I stood astonished; not at the *demonstration* of truth alone, though *that* appeared bright and obvious; but at the *force* and *impression* with which it seized my soul. It was *quick and powerful* indeed, and *sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* The electrical fluid could not pervade the body with more subtilty and surprize; than the heavenly flame affected and seized upon the powers of my mind. I soon found, that to know a truth, is not merely to *see* it, but to *feel* and *enjoy* it too. I *tasted, I handled, I felt the word of life.* I found it was life indeed. Soon my soul, like a new-born babe, casting its eyes around, perceived its situation by nature, and the gracious change, which had passed upon it. By degrees, it could explore the darkness of sin and error, by the light of grace and truth. I saw, that through all my past life, I had been in a state of *bondage*; that I had been a *slave* in the hands of my most cruel enemies; that I had feared God only as an angry and inexorable Judge; that, so far from walking before him in holiness and righteousness, I had counted it as the best enjoyment of my life to turn away from him; that it had been a part of my misery to reflect upon his transcendent holiness, to the commands of which I neither could yield, nor loved to yield, obedience; and that all his attributes were at war with me a sinner. I now saw, on the other hand, how God could be *just*, and yet *the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*; and *how* all my sins, sufficient as they were to damn a thousand worlds, could be blotted out and forgiven. I perceived, with horror, the deep apostacy of my nature, and my total aversion of heart to God and his holy will. I was covered with shame and contrition, in the view of *myself*, and with wonder at so much goodness and beauty, in the consideration of *him*. My soul was bowed down with the conflict of remorse, hope, love, adoration, and surprize. I saw, I felt, I believed. I wondered, at first, that I had never seen, felt, or believed before. But I soon found that this wonderful change in the human mind, is indeed a blessing and a gift from God; that it is not *of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, who sheweth mercy*; in short, that it is not of human might or power, but altogether by God the Spirit. The scriptures now were unsealed in all those parts which became necessary for my establishment; and they shewed me that God only could raise the dead—the *dead in trespasses*



and sins to *newness of life*; that no human wisdom can impart spiritual instruction; that the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus can only sustain that life, which it is his office to give; and that the same Spirit of grace and truth alone can confer the grace and truth, which are needful for the soul in all its conflicts with its enemies, and for safe conduct to eternity. And, O what a harmony and glory did then appear in all the offices of the everlasting covenant; what a propriety and suitableness in the work of the divine persons; what a lustre in the satisfaction of their unchangeable attributes; what a force and savor in the holy scriptures; what a hope from the promises; what privileges from communion with God, in his will, and love, and mercy! In short, it was altogether wonderful, and altogether new. It was a life of newness, as well as a newness of life. There was indeed a life and glory in the whole, which those, who have enjoyed them, can better rejoice in than describe. In one word, I felt a hope full of immortality, and found new and earnest desires after immortal life."

This, more or less, is the growing experience of every believer. He is a child of wrath by nature, and hath had a transition from this natural state to a state of grace and favor. It is so great a change, that it cannot pass upon a man unknown to him. He may not know, indeed, the hour, the day, or perhaps the month of this translation; but the translation itself he must know, or he hath found none. He once was darkness; but now he is light in the Lord. And can a man emerge from darkness into light, without perceiving the change? He once was dead in sin; but now he is alive to God. Can any creature pass from death unto life, without any perception of the difference? Impossible! Equally impossible also is it for a soul to live unto God, but by the power of God. An Angel could not impart life to a fly; and can any created being induce a life immortal, and eternal, to man? Can that, which depends for the existence and support of its own being on the will and power of its Creator, act independently of that Creator? Lazarus might, with equal ease, have raised himself from the dead, and come forth. It follows, then, that as spiritual life can only be given from God, it can only be exerted by him. Grace is not a principle given to man to render him independent, but to increase his dependence by increasing his communion with God. He cannot live to God, without God. The strongest believer cannot excite so much as one good thought in his soul, without the agency of the divine Spirit; and much less can he bring that

thought into act without the same agency and aid. *It is God which worketh in you* (says the Apostle) *both to will and to do. We are not sufficient of ourselves* (he tells us in another place) *to THINK any thing as of ourselves. Our sufficiency is of God.* Again. *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what to pray for, as we ought.* “As thou (says that most excellent Collect in the Liturgy for Easter-Day) by thy special grace *preventing us* dost *put* into our minds good desires, so by thy *continual* help we may bring the same to good effect.” To the like purpose is the tenth article of the Church of England. To say, that a man is good without communion with the *author* of all goodness, is a blasphemous assertion of human independence, and as false in speculation as in fact. An Heathen philosopher could teach a better doctrine, and has taught it. Seneca says, *Sacer intra nos Spiritus sedet—Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est—Ille dat consilia magna et crecta. In unoquoque virorum bonorum habitat Deus.* Ep. xli. “An holy Spirit dwells within us—No man can be good without God—He gives exalted and upright instructions, and resides in every good man.”—Alas! how many, who are named *Divines*, and who have professed themselves *moved by the Holy Ghost*, to take upon them their sacred office, will this ingenious Heathen one day condemn? How many condemn even themselves by their subsequent lives and doctrine, both in works and in words denying the efficacy or the existence of the Spirit of Grace? Such persons should remember one text, which they are often obliged to read—*If ANY man have not the SPIRIT of Christ, he is none of his.*

But to thee, O believer, the mere argument of thy teacher's divinity needs not to be urged: Thou hast been taught the heavenly truth by an heavenly guide. Thou hast been made to see and to feel thyself destitute of all spiritual life and grace; and thou knowest, by experience, that none but God himself could ever give thee life, or maintain it when given. Thou art sensible too, that the life of grace from the dead is of far more importance and dignity, than thy mere life of nature as a creature. The unction of God's Spirit, which anointed thy Redeemer for this purpose of salvation, hath descended from him upon thee. The *Spirit of Grace* hath distilled like the dew upon thy barren heart, and enriched it with the knowledge and the love of God. He hath been and is to thy soul a gracious Spirit, according to the everlasting covenant, both in coming *freely*, and in working *efficaciously*. He came with free grace, because the value of his blessing could

not possibly by thee have been purchased; and with efficacious grace, because none but a divine power could remove the opposition of world, flesh and Devil, and introduce the divine life within the soul. O what a debtor art thou already to this Almighty Lord! And what an increasing debtor wilt thou be throughout eternity! He is and will be the Spirit of Grace to his people in everlasting glory. All the company of the blessed are imbued with his divine anointing; and they enjoy him as their life and their portion, world without end. The spirits of just men are made perfect by God the Spirit. He fills their capacities with his divine inhabitation, and they live in and by him as the great spring of all their bliss. They are there become a perfect unison with this Holy Spirit. And what they are, redeemed soul, thou, even thou, shalt one day be. Corruptible as is thy body, and feeble as thou feelest thy inward man; within a while, and a short while too, thou shalt part with corruption and weakness; and all the enemies of thy peace, which thou hast seen in the days of thy flesh, thou shalt see again no more for ever. God will wipe away not only all tears from thine eyes, but the cause of all tears from thy heart. There thou shalt never shed another; unless it be possible to shed one of gratitude, wonder, and joy. O what hath God the Spirit done in thee now! He hath subdued thy reigning sins, and mastered for thee thy domineering corruptions. He hath released thee from thy bondage, and brought thee into a glorious liberty. And all this he hath done as the *earnest* only of greater blessings. The mercies, that remain behind, are beyond all human account or conception. The pledge is delightful and full of an uncloying sweetness: What then shall the full measure of grace and glory be; where there is nothing to abate it, or to distract its course for a single moment?

And all this is thine, assuredly thine, thou weakest of believers! God never gives grace to the soul, to disappoint it of glory. It is a blasphemy, perhaps, against the Spirit of Grace to utter so detracting an expression against his nature and office. The very term of *communicated grace*, precludes such a notion. For if it might be lost as soon as given, it appears no better than the gift of a man, who cannot secure the possession of any one thing to himself or to others, for a moment. But *the gifts and calling of God are without repentance*; and whom the Lord loveth, he loveth *to the end*. Man would change in a moment without the divine help; but God, being God, *changeth not*. All *change* implies *defect*; and therefore *both* are impossible in God. Christians in this life

are full of defects ; and are kept from changing only by an Almighty hand. It was Cain's curse to be a vagabond or wanderer upon earth. The law of God restrained him not ; and the grace of God, not being imparted, gave him no rest. All men by nature, like Cain, stroll about in the land of Nod ; and none enter into Canaan, but (as Abraham did) through the sovereign call and power of God. But Grace, which is fixed in itself, fixes the believer in Jesus. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, and, to the redeemed soul, it is one of the most incontestible arguments of his divinity. He is essentially God to bestow grace : And He is God Almighty to preserve it, where bestowed, against all the powers of darkness for evermore. By him, from being a dismal *wanderer* after peace, the Christian *enters into rest*. His aching heart is privileged, through him alone, to obtain quietness and assurance for ever.—And this is thy privilege, fainting, feeble, and heavy-laden soul : It is thy privilege more than any. For he, that thirsts most after God, by God's own promise, hath the most right to him. O look upon this grace, which God the Spirit can alone bestow ; and is not thy very soul wrapt up in eagerness to possess it ? And why is thy soul thus eager ? Is there any principle in thy heart in the least similar to this heavenly gift ? No. Thy heart is naturally full of baseness, corruption and unbelief, and would lead thee (like fallen Adam) *from* God instead of *to* him. This is the cause. The Holy Spirit hath already quickened thee with his living grace, and worketh in thy soul all these desires after himself. If he had not wrought them, thou never couldest have had them. And if he hath stirred up these holy longings ; did he stir them to disappoint thee at the last ? O think not so unworthily of the God of all grace ; for this in fact is calling the God of truth by the name of liar. He hath *promised*, nay, to give thee *strong consolation*, he hath *sworn*, and sworn by *himself*, because he could swear by no greater ; that *whosoever cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out* ; that they, *who hunger and thirst after righteousness, shall be filled* ; that the *weary and heavy laden, who come to him, shall find rest to their souls* ; and, in a word, that he will be *a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow, and a help, a very present help in the time of trouble*. God is thus rich in mercy, that thou shouldest be rich in faith ; And when thy faith once embraces his mercy, thou wilt have a present comfort in that act, and ere long, in the best time, a sure fulfilment of the promise. Remember ; God *cannot* lie ; and

while thou trustest in him, thou canst not be disappointed. The *manner* and the *means* may not be after thy imagination ; but the *end* will be right, and thou wilt rejoice in it at the last. Thou hast laid hold of an omnipotent arm ; and thy great business is to be *staycd* upon it.

In the view of all these things, what encouragement is there for the believing soul, not only to contemplate, but to enjoy the Spirit of Grace, and the effusions of his divinity? He is the Spirit of Grace, and grace itself, which, like all his other perfections, is unutterable. Grace is his nature ; and grace, in the effect, is his office. *He will be gracious to whom he will be gracious* ; for he possesses grace as the sovereign dispenser, and receives it from none. In the union of the persons in the Godhead, he enjoys every essential glory, in perfect equality and concord, and bestows the grace of the eternal throne, according to the eternal covenant and decree. He is the immediate agent conferring that grace in which the other two persons essentially concur. It is equally the grace of the Father and the Son ; but it is the Spirit's office to reveal it unto men, and to effectuate by it their eternal salvation—O wonderful creature, thou believing Christian, who art born of God !—Saved by a cost which Angels cannot count, and in a manner, which fills all Heaven with amazement ! A brittle clod, a crawling worm, or, at the highest, a rebellious sinner, full of the enmity of Hell and the insignificance of earth ; is saved for glory, for the highest glory of Heaven ; saved by the abasement, by the sufferings and death of the Son of God ; saved by the power of the Almighty Spirit and his effectual grace ; saved according to the eternal purpose and decree of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ! What an expense of salvation for beings, who are minute as atoms in the universe of things, and fit only for Devils and the damned in the bosom of hell ! *O the height and depth !* Love passing knowledge ! Love without end ! Angels wonder, and all Heaven is filled with joy, both at the complacency of God, and at the happiness of man : And shalt not thou, O believer, participate the joy, who art so immediately the object of its excitement ? Can *Heaven* pour forth its praises for thee ; and canst *thou* be dumb ? No. If thou art silent, it must be from the excess of gratitude and joy, overpowering the organs of speech or the extent of imagination ; and, in this respect, there may, sometimes, be *silence in Heaven* : But it will not, it cannot last. God will improve thy power of praise, with the increasing sense of its due. *He will be glorified*, and thou shalt be blessed in glorifying

him, throughout eternity.—*Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him ; or the Son of Man that thus thou visitest him !*

Spirit of Grace, my heart renew,  
 (Each faithful Christian cries)  
 And where the weeds of error grew,  
 Let plants of truth arise :

My soul, an howling wilderness,  
 Shall then such beauties wear,  
 That Heaven with rapture shall confess  
 Thy workmanship is there.



## SPIRIT OF ADOPTION.

ADOPTION, among men, is the taking of a stranger into a family, and conferring upon him all the rights and privileges of a son : and as it depends upon the adopter's free choice and bounty ; the favor is more or less valuable, according to the inheritance which is entailed upon it. When Tiberius was adopted by Augustus Cæsar, it was understood, that whatever the patron or adopter possessed, would of right descend to the adopted ; and thus Tiberius inherited the empire of Rome, to which otherwise he could not have aspired from any notion or pretence of hereditary right.

The first instance of adoption, that can be found, is the reception of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter : and from this instance we may believe, that it was in that early age a well-known or established custom ; or it may be presumed, that a king's daughter would not have ventured to begin it. We will omit the silly stories, which Josephus and the Rabbins relate concerning Moses in this exalted station, on purpose (as they think) to embellish his character, and will only add that illustrious testimony of him from the voice of truth, which does him more honor than the plaudits of ten thousand historians. *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter ; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.* Hebr. xi. 24—26. "What a madman !" cries human policy. "What wisdom !" says Moses now, and all Heaven with him.

This practice was so well established among the Greeks, that they had positive laws to direct the *form* and *extent* of it; so that every adoption might appear by a public act, and become notorious to the world.\* And it was followed by the Romans down to the times of Justinian, who, in his *Institutes*, has established particular regulations concerning the adopted, putting them under the adopters' power, as though they were their own offspring.†

God hath been pleased to use this term, in order to convey to our minds another view of his grace and love to the souls of his people. Every image of endearment in nature he hath employed for the expression of his kindness; and this important one, therefore among the rest. The motives of this affection and adoption are entirely within himself. Indeed, they could not be but so; for *all the world was become guilty before God*; and when *he looked down from Heaven*, he saw that *all men were become abominable*, and that there was *none doing good, no not one*. There were no attractions in miserable, hateful, and hating sinners; and there could be none to win the love of a holy and righteous God. Thus, when he was pleased to adopt the people of Israel from among the sinful families of the earth, a very particular declaration is given. That the Lord *did not set his love upon, nor choose them*, because of their number, for *they were the fewest of all people*—nor for their wealth, for *he gave them the power to get wealth*, nor for their righteousness, for they were a *rebellious and stiff-necked people*: but because the Lord *loved them*, and because *he would be gracious to whom he would be gracious, and would shew mercy on whom he would shew mercy*. Every cause, reason, and purpose, existed entirely in himself; and, from his own benignity, did every blessing proceed. And yet *bad* as this people was, what shall we think of this other declaration, which God made in their behalf, in the face of their enemies? *Thus saith Jehovah, Israel is my son, even my first-born*. Exod. iv. 22. See Rom. ix. 4. And of what was said to themselves? רק בנחתיך, *void of all cause in thy Fathers, Jehovah adhered to love them, or would love them*; and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day. Deut. x. 15. Not that the Lord wanted their service, or would have been less

\* Rous *Arch. Att.* l. v. c. 15.

† Justin. *Inst.* l. i. tit. 11. The reader may see a curious controversy, upon the subject of adoption, in the remains of Marcus Annæus Seneca, (father of the great Seneca) in his second book of *Controv.* § 9. *cum notis varior.*

a fulness without their salvation, for the *Heaven, and the Heaven of heavens, belonged to Jehovah their Alchim, the earth and all that is therein.* v. 14. He chose and adopted, not because *he* wanted them, but because *they* needed him. And he mentions to them their high inheritance, that they might adore his bounty, be encouraged to live upon him, and be looking beyond the grave for the full possession.

What the Lord once did to Israel, he doeth for ever to all his people. The calling and salvation in the type fully expresses, and was designed to express the calling and salvation of all the redeemed in every age of the world. His election of grace is a truth as positively revealed to believers by the Old Testament, as it is or can be to them by the New; for the same eternal Spirit dictated *both*, and both for the *same* end. And the only difference between the terms *election* and *adoption* is; the *former* expresses God's *simple choice* of his people, without any motives for that choice, but his own; and the latter implies the same kind of choice, but at the same time conveys with it an idea of what they are elected to. Election is the choice of God, as it *exists in himself*; and adoption is that very choice as it becomes *manifested to them*. By their adoption therefore they are persuaded of their election; and not of their adoption by their election. Their faith does not conclude from what exists in the *unrevealed* mind of God, which it is impossible for them to know; but from what hath already passed upon their own minds, agreeable to his mind *revealed*, which God hath designed that they should know. They do not infer without *evidence*, which would be enthusiasm with a witness, or something worse; but, in their earnestness for the *knowledge of salvation*, they are so far from being satisfied with faint hopes and mere conjectures, that they require no less testimony than God's own warrant, and God's own seal with that warrant to prove that it is for them. This doctrine consequently, cannot be abused, wherever it is understood in *faith* and *experience*: and as for those, who will abuse it; they are to be pitied and deplored for the predominancy of that corruption, which ever turns the use and benefit of the best things into uselessness or destruction.

If Israel, after the flesh and in type, was adopted to be the Son, and the first-born, of Jehovah; Israel, after the spirit, and the consummation of that type, can certainly be invested with no inferior privilege. If God chose the *one* from motives of his own; surely, the *other* hath no other motives to plead, why he should



ever adopt them. If Jews were *stiff-necked* and *sinful*; can Gentiles plead *greater* obedience and purity? And if the children of Abraham, who were brought up in the faith, and who had the promises of the life that now is as well as the future were not received, *because they were his children*; how shall *strangers to the covenants of promise, aliens from God's commonwealth, and atheists in the world*, dare to hold up their heads, and claim the inheritance of glory by *desert*?—If this argument of adoption were but rightly understood in the *heart*, as well as the *head*; the pride of man, which inspires him with high notions of his own will and powers, with the wild farrago of opinions issuing from those notions, would tumble, like Dagon before the ark, and be broken into ruins.

“But *how* are God's people adopted by him; when *he* is immaculately holy, and *they* are altogether defiled by sin?”—This is an important question; and the answer, which God's word affords us, is no less complete than delightful.

The Apostle tells us, that we are *chosen in Christ*, that God hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, &c. Eph. i. 5, 6. and that God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Gal. iv. 4, 5. God sent his Son in human nature to redeem us first, and then to give the right of adoption to us. To them, that received him, gave he power [Marg. right, or privilege,] to become the sons of God. John i. 12. As, among men, they were to be made *free*, before they could be positively and effectually adopted; so we are first *delivered from bondage*, before we can receive or lay claim to the privilege of spiritual adoption. We are, therefore, partakers of this adoption *through Christ*; and we can enjoy it only *in him*: Consequently, we must first *be in him*, before we can *know* our adoption, or *possess* it. He is the great Son, the great בְּנוֹר or *First-born*;\* and we are

\* In a former note [p. 44.] the doctrine of the בְּנוֹר or *first-born*, was briefly considered: And it was shewn to belong to Christ, and to his members through Him. He is also, respecting his *human* nature, the ראשית, the *head*, the *beginning*, and the ראשית בכורי the *chief*, or *first of the first-fruits*, for the sake of his people, unto God: But as to his *divine* nature, he hath no beginning, and therefore cannot be the first or chief of any creatures, because this would express a relation or comparison, which cannot obtain between infinite and finite, or Jehovah the incommunicable and dependent beings. Regarding Christ's humanity, he may be called the *primus inter pares* with relation to his people, as indeed he is their בְּנוֹר [see Volume i. note]

sons and *first-born* too in him, according to the declaration given to Israel. Exod. iv. 22. And therefore it is, that we inherit all the rights, honors, and privileges of the *first-born* and become *joint-heirs* with Christ. He is also, in another view, the *First-*

their *fellow*, and *one*, though the *principal one, of them*: But in his divinity, he is *above every name*, the *name* of Jehovah himself, and therefore necessarily the self-existent and incoercible Jehovah too, the *cause of all things*, and consequently neither *one* nor the *first* of those things. The *primogeniture* and the *blessing* are almost convertible terms; and some authors have observed the same of the two roots, *בכר* and *ברך*, from which those terms are derived. We had forfeited, like Esau our *birth-right* and the *blessing*; and therefore Christ became a *first-born*, and suffered for his people, that they might partake of *his birth-right* and *its attendant blessing*: And thus they are *first-born*, as being members of and in Him. They are, therefore, considered, by the Scripture, as *all one in Christ Jesus*; and he is considered as *their head*. And this *unity*, which subsists between Christ and his Church, is as much insisted upon, perhaps, as any one truth in the Bible; and possibly for the purpose of explaining to his people, that *without Him*, they are nothing, and can do nothing.

From the corruption of this doctrine of the *first-born*, it is very probable, that the Heathen round about *Israel* (for this corruption doth not seem to have obtained much farther) offered to *Moloch* the *sun*, or *king* of the material heavens, their *first-born* for their transgression, the *fruit of their body* for the *sin of their soul*. Micah. vi. 7.

As the *first-born* belonged to the Lord under the law, in type of his *spiritual first-born* in Christ; so the *first-fruits* also were to be offered to him, as peculiarly his own. In Lev. ii. 12. &c. the manner of this oblation is prescribed, and hath an immediate reference to the subject of this essay. The *first-fruits* in this place typify both *believers* themselves, and the *first-fruits of the Spirit* in believers, as his *earvest* bestowed upon them, in testimony of their adoption to the primogeniture. Thus they are *בכורים* *first-born* and *first-fruits* by being members, in the *unity* abovementioned, of Christ the great *בכור* the *first-born*, who is (according to the Apostle) the *first-fruits of them that slept*: And they are to offer up the *first of their first-fruits*, their first affections, and principal services unto God.—The *first-fruits* under the law were not to be *burnt sacrifice* for atonement, but matters of oblation and thanksgiving; so the *fruits of the Spirit* in his people are not to be preferred as means of atonement or reconciliation, but only as duties of devotion and praise. The *זבחה* or *memorial only* was to be *burnt* by the priest before the Lord for an *עשה*, a *fire-offering*, or offering for atonement: And thus Christ, who is his people's *memorial* and representative before God, *offered up himself* (being both priest and sacrifice) for the sole propitiation of their sins. These *first-fruits* under the law were also particularly enjoined to be presented, *after* they had been seasoned with *salt*, called the *salt of the covenant of the Anahim*; and no offering would be accepted without it. How forcibly doth this describe, that nothing can be acceptable to God even from his people, but through the eternal *Spirit*, who is that *salt* and seal of that *immutable covenant*, which the divine Persons entered into for the redemption and adoption, of the *first-born*? Thus God's people are to have *salt in themselves*; because as salt is the appointed emblem of preservation and incorruptibility, they are preserved to an incorruptible life by this *Spirit*, and are privileged to present themselves, as a *living sacrifice* of first-fruits through his divine power, as children of the covenant and adoption, and as heirs of the Kingdom in *Christ Jesus*.—*Oil* also and *frankincense* were to be put upon the offering: And these are emblems of the *Spirit's* grace of *Holiness* and *prayer* or *praise*, with which all the redeemed are to offer up themselves and their services before God. This oil and frankincense accompanied the *memorial itself*: And so the Spirit of the Lord was upon Jesus, who was *holy*,

fruit unto God for us; and we in him are also to God the *first-fruits of his creatures*. He is the *first-born among many brethren*; and those brethren are all *first-born in him*, their common inseparable head. He is the *Ἀπαρχή* the *first-fruits*, 1 Cor. xv. 20. and the *Ἀρχή*, the *beginning* or chief, the *first-born from the dead*, Col. i. 18. or (according to the same titles in the Old Testament) the *רֵאשִׁית*, the *beginning, head, first-fruits, &c.* of all; the *רֵאשִׁית* chief, head, of *Jehovah's way* of salvation, Prov. viii. 22. of whom God said, *I will make him the נָבִיא, the first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.* Ps. lxxxix. 27. And we, his redeemed, being his brethren, nay, *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*, are privileged to enjoy all his inheritance in him, and are thus (according to the promise) *made princes by him in all the earth*; i. e. from every part of the earth are called to this adoption. Ps. xlv. 15. Thus, it appears, we are adopted in Christ, and because we are his members; not in ourselves, individually or separately from him. We were slaves, and could not be adopted till we were made free; and we had neither wealth nor strength of our own to purchase or procure our freedom. He paid our ransom, by becoming *one of us*, by suffering for us.

*harmless, undefiled, and who offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears for the salvation of his people.*—O reader, what a fund of instruction doth all this *mystery of godliness* contain for thy soul! Meditate according to the precept, Josh. i. 8. *upon the purpose of this law, day and night; and then thy way indeed shall be prosperous, and thou thyself shalt have good success, or true understanding.*

Though it may add to the great length of this note, the subject of which would not be exhausted in a volume, it may not be unacceptable to some readers to annex an idea of the truly learned and excellent Archbishop Usher on this interesting matter. "At the time of the passover, Christ our passover was slain for us, and the whole sabbath following he rested in the grave. The next day after that sabbath, the קָמַי (Lev. xxiii. 10. 11.) or sheaf of the *first-fruits of the first (or barley) harvest*, was offered unto God: And Christ rose from the dead, and became the *first-fruits of them that slept; many bodies of the saints that slept*, arising likewise after him. From thence was the account taken of the seven sabbaths and upon the *morrow* after the seventh sabbath (which was our Lord's day) was celebrated the feast of weeks [Lev. xxiii. 15—17. Numb. xxviii. 26. Exod. xxxiv. 22.] the *day of the first-fruits of the second (or wheat) harvest*; upon which day the Apostles having themselves received the *first-fruits of the Spirit*, begat 3000 souls with the word of truth, and presented them as the *first-fruits of the Christian Church* unto God and unto the Lamb. And from that time forward doth Waldensis note [Thom. Waldens. Doctrinal Tom. iii. tit. 16. c. 140.] that the *Lord's day* was observed in the Christian church in the place of the *sabbath*: Quia inter legalia (saith he) tunc sublata sabbati custodia fuit unum, planum est tunc intrasse Dominicam loco ejus sicut baptismum statim loco circumcisionis. Adhuc enim superstes erat Sanctus Johannes qui diceret; et fui in Spiritu die Dominicâ, Apoc. i. cum de Dominicâ die ante Christi Resurrectionem nulla prorsus mentio haberetur. Sed statim post missionem Spiritus Sancti, lege nova fulgente, in humano cultu sublata est Sabbatum; et dies Dominicæ resurrectionis clarescebat Dominicâ." See Archbishop Usher's *Life and Letters*. Lett. 205.

and by paying down the full tale which God's righteous justice required: to which the Apostle Peter alludes; *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold—but with the precious blood of Christ.* 1 Pet. i. 18. Hence, we are said to be, *not our own, because we are bought with a price*; and are now become so much a part of our gracious head, that if men persecute us or do us good, they do it to *him* (Acts ix. 4. Luke x. 16.), and that we are *all one in him, and he in us.* John xvii. 21. All his estate is ours; and whatever he gained in our nature by being a *son made of a woman, and a first-born*; he gained it for those, who by a living faith are united to him. This is, and to eternity will be found, an immense inheritance. God, by his Apostle, hath given us a kind of sum total, because the particulars of it are innumerable. *All things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, [all ministers and Church-ordinances], or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours: and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.* 1 Cor. iii. 21—23.—Look, Christian, if any thing, which thou canst want, is left out here; or see, if thou canst add any thing to the sum!

This is *what we are adopted to*; and this is the *way of our adoption, namely, in Christ Jesus the living Way.* But we are to be *brought into this way*; we are to be *grafted into Christ*; we are to be *made alive in him*: All of them terms, expressive of our inherent weakness and incapacity, and of the exercise of some external power. The very term *adoption* not only implies our *former alienation* (for no true and natural son could be adopted, nor any who possessed an hereditary right to an inheritance,) but also that we are the mere *subjects* and not in any sense the *authors* of it. The adoption must entirely depend upon the will of the adopter. The scripture hath not left us in darkness here. God never appoints an end, but he always provides the means. *As we are the first-fruits in Christ, we are to have also the first-fruits of the Spirit,* Rom. viii. 23. and *because we are sons, and first-born, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father: Wherefore, we are no more servants, but sons; and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ.* Gal. iv. 6, 7. We are *brought* therefore into this state, or *born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* John i. 13. By this *Spirit of Adoption* it is, that we can call freely upon God, claim to be his sons, style him our Father, our tender Father [Abba], and plead all the benefits of our adoption. We can ask for Heaven itself, without fear of

asking too much ; because we ask for *our own*, and *now* our own *just inheritance*. As heirs, we can stand upon our heirship, and need fear nothing but the living below it.

We have here the *means* of our adoption before us, viz. Christ and the Spirit : And are not the *means* adequate to the *end* ?—If these two agents be *divine* ; if they be *Jehovah himself* ; they certainly are *equal* to the task undertaken by them. But, if they be, in any sense or in any nature, *inferior* to Jehovah ; then undoubtedly they are *not* ; and we shall build upon *creatures*, nay upon *sinful* creatures, because they undertake to do, and claim the glory of doing, what is the peculiar alone of the Almighty.

That Christ is not, respecting his divine nature, inferior to Jehovah, but *Jehovah himself*, has been proved in the former volume ; and, therefore, he is equal, in all points, to the agency, which was undertaken by him. That the *Spirit* also is *Jehovah*, or a *person in Jehovah*, seems to have been cleared in some preceding essays of this volume, and will be further manifest, if we consider the gracious character, which he hath assumed, under this title of *The Spirit of Adoption*.

Among men, nobody could *force* a person to adopt another ; but it was also an act of the freest choice and liberality ; nor could any one be adopted to inherit an estate, *not belonging* to the adopter himself. So, in the spiritual adoption, it is an act of *sovereign grace and mercy* ; and the inheritance, consequent upon it, which is Heaven and Glory, is the *Adopter's own property*, and is granted as such to every adopted child. If therefore the Spirit be, according to his name, the *Spirit of Adoption*, and brings into the heavenly family any worms of earth, who were aliens to it, constituting them, by that act, the very *children of God* ; it will follow irresistibly that the Spirit himself is God, or he gives what he hath no right to give, and therefore would be erroneously styled, for this purpose, the *Spirit of Adoption*. But as this last is impossible, because it would overthrow the truth of the Bible ; it follows, that the Spirit is the omnipotent Jehovah, who *bestows* the grace of adoption, in order to *convey* the inheritance of glory, which glory is *his own*, and therefore *freely given* by him to whomsoever he pleaseth. Were the Spirit not the everlasting and true God ; how could his adoption make the redeemed the *children of God* ? He could not confer that title, nor bear witness to the truth of it in their souls, unless the title *God* were *his own* just title. His adoption otherwise might make them indeed the *children of a creature*, according to his own rank and eminence ;

but they could not be made by such adoption the children of the *Highest*. But we read of no *angelic* adoption, no adoption of creatures by *creatures* for glory, nor of any adoption for the kingdom of Heaven established by any one *inferior* to the *King of Heaven*: And, therefore, the *Holy Spirit*, being this *Spirit of Adoption*, whereby the redeemed cry, *Abba, Father*; is necessarily and incontrovertibly, from the word of truth and from the fairest and most obvious deduction, *true and very God*. Here then we see with what delightful propriety it is said, that *as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God*; and that *the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the Children of God, and if children then Heirs, heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ*. We see also another glorious and comfortable truth; that it was God the *Father*, who *predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself*; Eph. i. 5. that it was God the *Son*, who was *made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons*; Gal. iv. 4. and that it is God the *Spirit*, by whose leading, or forming, *we are the Sons of God, and by whom we cry, Abba, Father*. Rom. viii. 15. The whole Trinity concurs in bestowing this blessing of adoption; because it is the result of a *covenant* entered into between the divine persons from before all worlds, and therefore both in prospect and retrospect perfectly everlasting.

The last cited text furnishes another invincible argument for the *Holy Spirit's* divinity. He not only gives a *title* to, but *makes us fit* for the enjoyment of the inheritance. The words of an excellent friend have furnished the following valuable hints upon the subject of this essay. "When an human adopter has raised a poor beggar, he may enrich him with a princely fortune; but he cannot give him the temper and affection of a dutiful child. The adopted may prove ungrateful; He may abuse the favor, and be worse for the adoption. But it is quite otherwise, when God gives his *Spirit*. He, at the same time, creates spiritual life in the adopted son, unites him by his Almighty power to *Jesus*, and thereby enables him to live by faith in and upon *Jesus*, through whom he knows and finds the father's love. Thus he forms the son for the family. He lives, as Christ does; has the mind of Christ; judges of things as Christ does; has the same affections as Christ, 1 John v. 1, 2, 3. has the same relations with Christ, John xvii. 21, &c. has the same inheritance, Rom. viii. 17. and for the same duration, Rom. vi. 23. In this view,

“ the Spirit of Adoption bestows the highest dignity, which a creature can possibly receive—united by one *Spirit to Immanuel*, “ and in him united to the *Father*, and thereby capable of enjoying the greatest happiness, of which any creature can possibly partake, even to be a partaker of the *divine nature*.”—Can the agent, who effecteth all this grace for such consummate glory, be any other than *Jehovah*? Could a creature prepare for and bestow crowns and kingdoms in Heaven? Is it possible for any being, less than the supreme, not only to give a right to enjoy Heaven, but to change the heart, renew the spirit, and to qualify the believer for Heaven? Yet the *Spirit of Adoption* hath this office to perform; an office as much beyond the power of the creatures, as it is beyond the strength of a mite to move a world. It is a *new creation*, and consequently the work of an Almighty Creator; a restoration to the *image of God*, which God only could form at first, and reform when defaced. It is, therefore, said, that *God did predestinate his people to be conformed to the image of his Son*; and then it is added, that such He also called, and justified, and glorified; all which is effected by the internal operation of the Divine Spirit. The fallen Angels, who are great in power and might, cannot recover themselves; nor can all the unfallen spirits round the throne blot out one sin, convert one soul, or confer one grace, upon this polluted globe. *The good, that is done upon earth, Jehovah doeth himself*; and certainly, then, that Holy Spirit can be no other than *Jehovah*, who doeth the greatest good, which ever can be done upon it, in leading souls by his grace to eternal salvation.

Thus it appears, that the great spiritual Adopter, or *Spirit of Adoption*, is an almighty, free, and sovereign Agent; that, accordingly, he bestoweth his Adoption, *on whom He will*, his will being agreeable to the covenant of grace which was framed by himself and the other divine persons; that those, whom he adopts, have his influence upon their souls, renewing, guiding, and inspiring them to call upon God as their *Father*; that they, therefore, are led in this way from the love of sin to a thirst after more and more righteousness, as an *earnest of their inheritance*; and that, finally, they are brought, by the same *Spirit*, to the full enjoyment of that inheritance in his everlasting kingdom, where they reign triumphant *kings* and holy *priests* in unutterable glory. From this view, we may perceive, that *God the Spirit's* Adoption is not a matter of hypothesis or speculation, but of life, reality, and power; and that they, who are blessed with it are privileged

even here, in some degree, to know it, to feel it, and enjoy it. An unknown *earnest* could be no earnest at all, and can answer no end for which any earnest could be given, namely, the assurance or testimony of a *future* inheritance. A *speculative* earnest (admitting there could be any sense in the term) would be much the same; for whatever floats only in the fancy, without renewing the soul, may indeed be finely fanciful and extremely curious, and so are many romances; but it could have no effect, but what romances have—corrupt and puff up the mind and render the man not one tittle the better for it. On the contrary, God's *Spirit* fills the soul, at times, with the sense and impression of his adoption, makes the man alive to God, serious, devout, and thankful, gives him a taste of Heaven in his affections, opens the evidence and truth of his own word to the mind, and yields him that faith and hope of glory, by which he hates sin, overcomes the world, and at last is a conqueror and more than a conqueror over Hell and death itself. Now as Christians are men like others, endued with the same senses and appetites, carrying the same corrupt hearts and affections, and naturally loving ease, and pleasure, and honor, and riches, like all the rest of the world: Can it be a mere notion or idea, which enables them, in any degree, to turn from these things, to consider them as *lying vanities*, to desire that these inbred corruptions should be subdued, to deny the flesh and its lusts, and to pant for (what will crucify them entirely) the enjoyment of a spiritual good beyond the reach of all animal gratification? Is it a mere whim, a fond chimera, by which they rise and have risen superior to the world, and long for the presence of *Christ* and the communion of his *Spirit*?—Surely, there must be something more in the case, strengthened as it is by a wonderful *uniformity* of this principle in all ages, against the current maxims and sentiments of the world: And it might seem a matter of surprise (were the reason unknown,) that our inquisitive philosophers, who compass the world in search of plants and butterflies; our acute naturalists and chemists, who attempt to dive into the depths of nature; and our enlarged astronomers, who are for measuring and exploring worlds upon worlds; that all these knowing and ingenious people never enter into a due investigation of this far more interesting phenomenon in that little great world, called man. Till this be done, it is absurd and unworthy of them, as men of science, to call it by an *ill name*, and so get rid of the matter by writing *enthusiasm* upon the back of it. The refuge of ignorance in *occult qualities* has been so much and so justly ex-



ploded, that it is rather extraordinary that philosophers, at this time of day, can venture to contradict their own principle, by making use of it. For if they be asked, *what* this enthusiasm is, which has been so long exemplified in prophets, apostles, martyrs, and believers in every age, they are generally honest enough to confess, that they never *felt* or *experienced* or *knew* this *strange thing*, this *occult quality*, in themselves. Will they term it *madness*? Madness is a deviation from all *rule*: And if we prove what they venture to call *enthusiasm* to be strictly agreeable to the *rule* of God in his word; what must that principle be called (let it be adorned with the name of *reason* or any other fine title) which not only deviates from this perfect rule, but dares to oppose and contradict it? Either the rule *revealed* is *no* rule; or theirs is the *madness*, who wander from it. And if we ask, how it can possibly be *rational* in these great *masters* of reason to call by *any* name a subject, with the properties of which they are confessedly *unacquainted*, and whether, without ground, they may not sooner impose a *wrong* name than a *right*: their ratiocination is, to justify themselves by holding up their knowledge in *other things*, and bearing us down with them. But is this more correct than the conduct of Phidias's cobbler, who, because he knew how to cover a man's foot, would presume to know the anatomical structure of a man himself?—We will only add, that it may be honest for a person to *confess* what he doth not know, though not quite so wise to *condemn* it: And, therefore, Phidias's proverb may be applied to these *reasoners*, and to *reason* itself upon spiritual things—*ne sutor ultra crepidam*. When it pleases God to impart the knowledge of his truth, as in mercy he hath sometimes done, to the great and learned of this world: they first feel that they must *become fools* in order *to be wise*; and they soon after know, that the wisdom and grace of God are not to be called by hard and opprobrious names, without a very high measure of *spiritual* presumption and folly. They then perceive and are ready enough to own, that, as *the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God*, a man may reckon himself and be esteemed by the world for very wise and knowing, and yet, after all, be a magnificent fool, or elevated madman, fond of mere tinsel, and satisfied with mere sounds.

But leaving these, hath *God the Spirit*, O believer, been graciously pleased to communicate his blessed *Adoption* to thee: and what is thy language and frame? The Psalmist will describe it exactly, and with a divine pathos, which it is thy privilege like-

wise to feel : “ *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me ?* ” What shall I offer to him, who hath had such *pity*, such *tender* love and *pity*, on so poor and despicable a worm as *me*?—Render ! Thou like David, canst render *nothing*. Do, then, as he did—*receive* more ; *take the cup of salvation*, that full cup of grace and truth, *and call upon the name of the Lord*, that he may enable thee to take still more and more from it. Thou hast not grace of thine own so much as to thank him for grace given ; and, therefore, *he giveth more grace* to grace received, that thou mayest praise and bless his holy name for thy free reception of it. O what a gracious *Spirit of Adoption* is this ! He not only confers a blessing, but suffers it not to be lost upon us, nor sunk into the corruption and unthankfulness of our nature : He works the praise in our hearts, which is due to him for his Adoption bestowed upon our souls. Thus all “ our works,” every thing exerted in us, and carried on by our instrumentality, “ are begun, continued, and ended in him.” He gives both will and power, defends us in all operations, and crowns them with eventual success by his effectual blessing.

How deeply, how inconceivably, art thou indebted to this *Almighty Spirit*, O thou, who art one of his *first-born* and *first-fruits* for glory ! Know, as much as thou mayest, of his grace ; taste, as much as thou canst, of his love ; enjoy, as much as thou art able, of his power ; thou mayest say more strictly than the queen of Sheba said to Solomon, that not only *not the half*, but not the ten thousandth part of his wisdom and goodness hath ever been told thee. And it never can be told thee. Angels pry into this unsearchable love, but, still finding it unsearchable, cannot express it : and when thou hast enjoyed it for myriads of ages, and comprehended worlds after worlds of his communicable glories ; thy finite faculties must yet view an infinite profound of ineffable love, wisdom, and truth ; ever to be dived into, but *never* to be fathomed or explored. In Heaven, thou wilt see, *as much* as thou canst bear and enjoy ; but thou wilt not see *all* : thy God will comprehend thee, and all the blest, with happiness and splendor ; while he himself can be comprehended of none.

And while thou art a prisoner in the body, remember, dear Christian, that thou art an *heir of God* by adoption, and a *co-heir* with Christ Jesus in love. Walk worthy of this *high vocation*, with which thou art called : walk, like the king’s son, and not like a slave of the Devil. The eyes of *all* are upon *thee* : the

eye of the world, to censure thee ; the eye of Satan, to distress thee ; the eye of the Church, to be edified by thee ; the eye of Angels to glorify God for thee ; the eye of Christ to intercede in thy behalf ; and the all-seeing eye of Jehorah, to whom thou criest *Abba, Father*, to protect and bless thee. Walk and speak among men, as in the presence of God ;\* and the presence of God will be known in thy closet, and in thy soul. Say to thyself ; “ I am adopted into God’s family, and from being an execrable slave, am made his *freeman*, his *son*, and his *heir*. I am entitled, through my redeeming *Lord*, my *friends*, and my *brother*, to all the privileges of grace, set forth in his declared will ; I have tasted some of these privileges, as an unperishing *earnest* of an unperishable *inheritance* ; and I am assured, that I shall have *full possession* in the best time, and for evermore. What then becomes me ? What ought such a person to do ? How ought he to *think*, and *speak*, and *live* ?——Lord ! I am ashamed of myself ; I am covered with confusion and abasement, that I, for whom thou hast done so much, am living and doing so little for thee ! I bow my soul before thee, in deep contrition ; and acknowledge, with all compunction of spirit, that I am vile and ungrateful, and that, if thy *mercy* did not *endure for ever*, it could not have endured to put up with so base a worm as I, with such long suffering and grace. I own, that if thy goodness had lasted no longer than my deserts ; I should have lost thy goodness, in the moment thou didst bestow it upon me ! O pity my weakness, which thou knewest from my birth, and which thou understandest better than I do myself ; and suit all the mercies of thy holy adoption, to my various occasions and thine own glory. I only know and feel, that I *would be thine* and *none but thine* for ever : and this sense and knowledge thy grace alone conveyed to my heart ; for by nature I never found them there. Cause me therefore to live *as becometh thy gospel*, my own happiness, and my everlasting, my unchangeable relation to thee. Cause me to live more and more like one, who hath a title and a hope to live, with an *innumerable company* of holy beings, with an holy Jesus, and with thee my holy and my heavenly Father, for ever and ever. O let it never be said, that my tongue and my life are at variance ; lest I conclude against

\* An Heathen could say: *Sic loquendum est cum hominibus tanquam Deū audiant.* “ Men ought to speak with men, as though God were to hear.” Macrob. *Sat.* l. i. c. 7. To the same purpose Tertullian *Ita fabulantur* (sc. Christiani) *ut qui sciant Dominum quærit*.

“ myself, that thou and I never were agreed, that I am not thine  
 “ adopted child, but only a presumptuous pretender to an inheri-  
 “ tance entirely unmeet for me.—I fall down before thy throne :  
 “ O make me to be, what thou wouldest have me to be ; and let  
 “ me be *that* to all eternity !

Whoever thou art, that canst utter this cry, take courage and peace : it is the voice of the *Spirit of Adoption* within thee. O go on, and prosper : the Lord enlighten thee, and give thee peace ; give thee every *earnest* of his blessing, every *first-fruit* of his glory below, and in his own time, which is the *best time* for thee. *an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom ! Amen.*

That God should lift an *holy* creature  
 From earth to reign with him above,  
 Would shew, were such in human nature,  
 A vast transcendency of love.

But when his grace a *traitor* blesses,  
 With the full title of an heir,  
 To his own kingdom and caresses—  
 O who can tell, what love is there !



## SPIRIT OF FAITH.

FAITH is supposed to have various acceptations in the word of God, which may easily be reduced to one plain definition. But faith, emphatically so called, or saving faith, wrought in the heart by the regeneration of the Spirit of God, is what we mean to treat of in this essay, and what we understand to be particularly designed for the character of its divine agent, in this title of *Spirit of Faith*.

To understand with precision the terms used in scripture, we must recur to that sacred language, in which they were originally delivered. It is held fair and just in all other books to take the author's own words ; but it is of the greatest importance, in reading the book of God, to see the exactness and force with which all things are expressed.

The word *faith* is derived from the root  $\pi\alpha\sigma$  *amen*, which signifies, to *fix* or *rest*, as upon a foundation, to *confide* that a thing is according to a representation given, *firmly to trust* and *desire*, that a matter is and shall be agreeable to the promise and assu-

rance proposed concerning it. When the prayers were ended to God, or the promises given from God, the ancient Church used to say *amen* to them; that is, we *believe* that these things are gracious and true, and we desire their fulfilment. The Christian Church in all countries, has retained this Hebrew word for the same use: and the primitive Christian Church, who spoke the Greek language, employed the nearest word they had to express the same idea. *Πισις* *faith* infers the persuasion and agreement of the mind and will, that a thing is to be received and desired as true: and the Latin *Fides* is taken from two words, which nearly express the sense of *amen*, *fiet dictum*, i. e. "be it so, according as it is spoken."

We see then that *faith* regards *truth*, and cannot exist without it, any more than a house can stand without a foundation. And truth is that *existing substance* which agrees or is correlative with the *idea* or *persuasion* of its existence, named faith. When we say, a thing *is*; we mean the truth of its being: the *belief*, that it *is*, arises from the agreement of the mind with that truth, when the mind is exercised upon it. Thus *he that cometh to God, must believe that he is*. That God exists, is the *truth*; and the agreement or persuasion of the mind is the *faith*, which influences the man to *come unto God*.

*Truth*, then, is the proper foundation of all credibility; and God's truth the only foundation of Christian credibility, or *faith*. There can be no foundation without *truth*; and, consequently, no *faith* without this foundation.

But the foundation must be laid; that is, the truth must be *published*, or faith cannot rest upon it. God, therefore, hath *revealed* and *published* his truth, which, before his revelation of it, must have been *hid in himself* as its proper *essence*.

When this truth *is* published, it is not absolutely essential to the agreement of the mind, or to the concurrence of faith, that the truth should be fully *comprehended*, either in the *extent* or in the *manner* of its existence; because, in such a case, the mind of a man could properly believe little or nothing. We know not the *mode* of being in any natural substances! and if full *comprehension* were essential to faith, we could not receive much of the revelation of God, because we cannot explain some of its mysteries; such, for instance, as the revealed account of God's existence, the doctrine of the incarnation, and some other points which, at least in this world, will ever be the *mysteries of faith*. Nay, we could not believe much concerning our own nature, and

very little indeed, or rather nothing, concerning the state of our future being.\*

As all truth proceeds from God; he is, and he calls himself, *the Truth* emphatically: he is the source of all reality. What therefore proceeds from him, must be *true*; and thus the matters, which he hath *declared* or *done*, are *manifestations* or *revelations* of his truth *ad extra*, or to his people, and as such are to be received by them. What is communicable (even though it be not fully comprehensible) of this truth belongs to them to whom he extends it. This extension, in spiritual things, is now given through his *written* word; as formerly (in the wisest arrangement) it was by *vocal* prophecy, or other *sensible* communication. In both, however, it was only understood, as well in order as degree, according to the will of the *giver*. John xvi. 12. Mark iv. 33. Prov. iv. 18.

Hence these *manifestations* or *revelations*, in the word, are real and immoveable *Truths* from him, by him, and to him; and also *Truths* necessary and credible, for us, with us, and in us.

They proceed from him, as their *cause*; are effected by him as their *agent*; and tend to him as their *end*.

They descend for us, as grounds of our *faith*; are with us, for strengthening our *hope*; and remain experimentally in us, as the means or earnest used for our *salvation*.

When we say *us*, we mean "all the elect people of God." In this view, the Apostle says, that *the house of God* is the church of the living God, *συλος και εδριωρα* which some translate, *pillar and ground*, others better, *the station and seat of the truth*.† 1 Tim. iii. 15. God is the *truth*; and so subordinately are the

\* Dr. Jonathan Edwards, in his valuable *preservative against Socinianism*, justly observes, "That in matters of faith we must be content with God's affirmation, whether we do or do not comprehend those divine truths, which He hath revealed. Which *comprehension* ought to be of no regard in these matters; it being extrinsical to the true and *formal reason* of believing; which is not resolved into the evidence of the *thing* [i. e. as it exists in itself,] but into the *authority of God*, and the *truth and certainty* of his revelations." Part ii. p. 56.

† Dr. Guise upon the place, takes the *pillar and ground of the truth* here to mean the *truth of the gospel*, or *Christ* in it. But this supposition seems to destroy the present allusion of the Apostle, and is not warranted by the construction of the language. 'Tis probable, if the Apostle had written in *Hebrew*, he would have used, for the *Greek* words above-mentioned, *הה-אמנה וסמנה*, the *column* [viewing the mental sense] and *place* of all God's truth among men. For this reason, the Psalmist desired, as the *one thing needful*, to dwell in the house of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. Ps. xxvii. 4.—Christ is certainly the foundation. but these words appear to mean something upon it.

revelations from him : The Church is the *column* raised upon this truth as upon its proper foundation, and is also the *seat* or *place* where all these revelations concentrate, and where only, as to application, they will ever be found. There is no *column* or *pillar* which will be acknowledged out of the *temple* of the living God ; because this temple is the only edifice upon earth which is founded upon the *truth* of God. His testimonies are now, and always were, *within* the sanctuary, and in *the tabernacle, which God pitched and not man*. The Apostle alluded to the structure of the outward temple, and of those *columns* in it, which bear the very name of *faith* in the original language, and are no unapt symbols of it. For, as the material columns rested upon the rock *Moriah*, or *holy mountain* ; so the faith of the Church collectively, and of every individual in it, stands upon that truth, which God hath revealed in Christ, who hath framed them as a spiritual temple for his glory. Eph. ii. 22. Rev. iii. 12.

From this *ground* of faith, and from its *name*, both imparted by God ; we may be able to form a just idea of *faith* itself, and to consider it, as *that gift of grace to the soul, by which it stands upon the truth of God, for the attainment of those blessings, which that truth promises and reveals*.

If God hath threatened ; faith believes, that the threat shall be accomplished : If he hath promised ; it is persuaded also, that the promise shall be fulfilled. Hence, it turns away from the evil which is the ground of the threat, and appropriates the good which the promise discovers. Faith credits the blessings upon the foundation of God's word and promise, and claims those blessings for its own, only because God hath engaged to bestow them. As this grace of faith cannot build upon mere notions, or upon any thing imperfect as to its certainty, but requires a sure foundation ; so God hath provided this foundation in himself. He hath given his *word*, as so much communicable truth from himself, on which faith may ground itself ; and thus ultimately it reaches up to and rests upon God himself. The word reveals Christ, declares the grace of the Spirit and the love of the Father, and discovers so much of their covenant-engagements for *sinners*, as is necessary for the knowledge of their salvation. Accordingly, the word contains the promises of an happy and eternal life, and points out the means and manner of its attainment. And, as this whole world is established in the hand of a personal mediator ; so this mediator is frequently called the *Word* itself, in whom all the covenant and its promises are framed, and through

whom they are carried forth unto his people. Christ, therefore, this mediator, hath taken also the name of *truth*, (Rev. iii. 14.) and, as such, is become the *basis* or *foundation* of his people. He was appointed to this purpose by Jehovah: And, therefore, Jehovah hath said, *Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: He that believeth, shall not make haste.* Isa. xxviii. 16.

From this *ground* of faith, we may see further into the *nature* of faith itself. Consistent with what it proceeds from, and on what it stands, faith must be *certitude* in respect to its object, as *that is certainty*; and *certitude* also, in respect to the nature of its *apprehension*, because it is a grace arising from a divine power, and not the accidental impulse of a fallen creature. It takes for an infallible position, *that God is true*, and, for a position equally infallible, that his *promises*, or the *things promised* by him, are also *true* and *real*; though *the things* cannot be the objects of *immediate science* to the mind, nor of *present sense* to the body. Hence, we see, that faith is not *opinion*; because opinion implies *doubt*: And doubt is contrary to the nature of faith, which is founded upon the certainty of God in his word. Nor is it *perfect knowledge*; because knowledge infers the *presence* or *enjoyment* of a thing at some *certain time*. To *know* Christ himself, is not merely to *believe* in him; but is the *reflection* of that belief, and is properly understood by the word *experience* in this life, and the *consummation* of that belief in *enjoyment* hereafter. But faith is certitude respecting things, not *yet* seen or possessed, but only *doctrinally promised* and *revealed*; which is the high encomium given of it in all the examples, recited in the xi chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. See Luth. on Gal. ii. 16. fol. 61.

Faith is certitude in itself; but there is as great a difference in its proportions, as between the grain of mustard seed when cast into the ground, and afterwards when it becomes a great tree. The seed had the tree in embryo; but the tree did not *then* discover itself. So there is a distinction between *faith* and the *full assurance*\* of faith; or they would not have been distinguished in scripture by different names. Faith, given to the soul, in regeneration, is the grain, which can scarce be discerned at first

\* Witsius has collected several excellent judgments of learned divines upon this point: Perhaps none of them is more clear and pious, than the following from Perkins. *Nam licet omnis fides ex natura sua sit persuasio solum tamen perfecta persuasio est firma & consummata fides. Proinde debebat fides describi, non solum in genere & gradibus summis; sed etiam varii ejus gradus & mensura declarari, ut et qui infirmi sunt vere et recte de suo statu possint edoceri.* Iren. c. vii. See also Spanh. *Opera*. Vol. iii. p. 173.



by the soul itself, and still less by any body else. Full assurance is *radically* in that grain, and in due time may grow out of it to the size of a tree; but it cannot properly be called a tree, till it be grown up to one. Their *nature* is one; but the difference consists in the *degree*. True faith may exist in the soul without the height of full assurance, and trembling may catch hold of the promises, as a little child doth its nurse's hand. The defect is not in the *principle* itself, because it is true and spiritual life; but in the *exercise* of that principle of life in our nature, which is full of weakness and frailty, not to say hostility against its very being in us.\* If all this were not true; it would have been idle in the disciples to pray for *the increase of faith*, or useless for us, that our faith may be *strengthened*. Nor can we otherwise understand, what the Apostle meant by the *weak in faith*, or those distinctions of *babes, young men, and fathers in Christ*.

In the strongest believers there may be doubts and fears; because they have mortal and sinful bodies: But they do not conquer and prevail. In the weakest believers, for the same reason, there are also the same doubts and fears; but without the like strength of faith to repel them. God *carries these lambs in his bosom*, and therefore their faith doth not fail.

It seems a paradox to say, that he never believed, who never doubted: But it is as real a truth as it is to say, that *I had not known sin, but by the law*, sin and the law are not more opposites, than faith and unbelief: Yet unbelief had never been known, but for the grace of faith.

These *distinctions* are necessary to be observed, on the one hand, against those who (with the Papists) affirm that there is *no certitude* in faith, and, on the other, in behalf of those who are oppressed, because their faith is not arisen to the *full assurance* of certitude.

This *full assurance* is, however, to be desired and pursued, as the happy privilege of *every* believer; though (as it hath been said) it can only be employed and exercised by those who are *strong*. These only can *firmly* say with St. Paul, *I am persuaded*,

\* "The graces of the Spirit, as they come from the hand of God that infuses them, are nothing but *purity*; but being put into a heart where sin dwells (which, till the body be dissolved and taken to pieces, cannot be fully purged out), there they are mixed with *corruption* and *dross*: And particularly *faith* is mixed with unbelief, and love of earthly things, and dependence upon the creature; if not more than God, yet together with him; and for this the furnace is needful, that the soul may be purified from this dross, and made more sublime and spiritual in believing." Leighton. Com. on St. Peter. Ch. i. 5, 7.

that neither death, nor life, &c. shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord : But the others should aspire to say it ; and those who do not aspire, may very well doubt of one thing, whether they be in the faith or not.

And here again to the high commendation of faith, it may be said, with the Apostle, that it is the substance of things hoped for, because it substantiates what is not yet enjoyed ; and the evidence of things not seen, because its own very being in the soul is a demonstration from God, that, what he hath promised, he will assuredly perform.\* Thus, he that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself. 1 John v. 10. And the author of that witness confirms the testimony : The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. Rom viii. 16.

Thus much for the Nature and Foundation of Faith : Let us now consider its Efficient Cause.

All natural men think, that they themselves can produce and exercise faith, whenever they please : And they think so, because they are natural men, not having the experience of this faith, and therefore not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God.

Faith, it is true, is an act in and with the mind, but no more an act of the mind, or from and by itself, than the gushing of the waters from the rock was actually wrought by the little stroke of Moses's rod, or the resurrection of Lazarus from the grave was a mere act of his own. If faith were an act simply of the mind, or the mere production of its natural powers ; then, perhaps, men might believe, as they please, and when they please. But then we must presently reject the ground of faith, the Bible, which most positively contradicts this opinion ; and, consequently, this sort of faith, having no foundation, must sink into confusion or nothing. We must give up the notion of the self-producing cause of faith, if we follow the scripture, which says, that faith is the gift of God : that to Christians, it is given to believe ; and that no man can come unto Christ [i. e. believe on him to salvation] except the Father draw him. Many other passages occur to the same purport.†

\* It is a truth, though uttered by schoolmen, *Fidem esse substantiam rerum sperandarum ; quia scilicet prima inchoatis rerum sperandarum in nobis est per ascensum fidei, quæ virtute continet omnes res sperandas.* Aquin. *Sec. sec. quest. iv. art. 1.*—*Certum est enim fidem, quæ est cognitio quædam justitiæ et veritatis Dei, esse radicem immortalitatis, quia ex fide nascitur, & origo salutis & beatitudinis nostræ.* Estius in lib. *Sap. c. 15.*

† See Luth Gal. iv. 6 i. 11, 12. ii. 4 5

When God *commands* to believe, he *bestows power* to obey that command; for if faith be his *gift*, and no inherent principle (which it could not be if a gift of *grace*;) men cannot obey without it. So then he enjoins the action of a power only where the power is given. In like manner, Christ said to the Apostle St. Matthew, *Follow me*: But if at the same time, he had not granted him the power of faith, the Apostle could not have yielded the obedience of faith at one single word. The call of God is not in vain; nor *doth his word return void*, or without its accomplishment.

This is to be understood of God's own *particular* call to the soul. There is a *general* call made to the outward ears of men by his ministers, and to their outward eyes by the word itself, but this call is *effectual*, only where seconded by the immediate grace of God; and then to all intents and purposes, it becomes a *particular* call to every object of its success. The call of ministers is and must be general; they are to call *all nations*, and consequently the rich and mighty in them: But these are rarely the object of God's *particular* call; for we read, that *not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called*. Without this obvious distinction, it is impossible to reconcile or understand many important texts upon this subject.

The improper consideration of this matter, and the not attending to these necessary distinctions, seem to have occasioned the presumptuous error of the Arminians, Antinomians, Socinians, Pelagians, Papists, &c. who generally lay it for a foundation, "either that faith exists in the mind of man, as one of its natural powers, or that it can be induced and exercised by him at his will." Hence, they all speak very slightly and superficially of faith; and, indeed, according to their notion, it is so common an affair that it really deserves no more notice than they take of it. They evidently understand no more in the term *faith*, than what can really be meant in the act of *assent* to a history.

The Arminians indeed do say, that it is the gift of God;\* but

\* *Deus statuit illis dare fidem & pœnitentiam per gratiam sufficientem: hoc est ita dare ut illi possint accipere, per vires ipsas a Deo datas, necessarias & sufficientes ad accipiendum.* Armin. opera. p. 666. But he means that this sufficient grace is *common* to every man and resident in all: so that it amounts to nothing more than *natural powers*, which, to be sure, are the gift of God, but not a special gift in the redemption of Christ. The great Du Moulin hath well observed upon the concession of the Arminians, "that faith is the gift of God," *hæc verba non accipiunt eo sensu, quem præ se ferunt. Eorum mens est (ut ipsi futentur) Deum dare omnibus hominibus vires credendi: At non dare τὸ credere, sive, actum ipsum credendi, contra Apostolum, qui dicit, Deum dare ipsum credere.* Phil. i. 29. *Et Deum dare velle & perficere.* cap. ii. 13. *Quæ voces designant ipsum volendi & credendi actum. Sandè posse*

they also say, that it wholly depends upon us, whether we will receive it, or act it when received. In this case, they can only mean, that faith is a *common* gift put into the power of all men; and, therefore, not a *particular* grace specially conferred. This is but saying, in other words, that it is at *their option*, whether faith shall be a *gift* or not. For, if they chuse to have it; then it exists in them only as they chuse, and so virtually they give to themselves God's gift, which is absurd: But, if they chuse to *reject* it; then it becomes no gift at all, or it is wholly annihilated with respect to them. Either way it is a rash usurpation of God's wisdom and power to pretend to effectuate or frustrate the first great object of both in the world, and that too by the puny efforts of human strength or pleasure. By a bold perversion, it is saying: *God works, but man can let.* It is throwing the beautiful arrangement of grace and providence into confusion, introducing chance into the world instead of foresight, and subjecting the Creator of all things to one of the worst and most helpless of his creatures.

The very notion of a *gift* implies, that it is a matter which the receiver *had not before*, and consequently, that it was at one time, *out of himself*, and, at *another*, brought to himself. 'Tis strange to say, that God confers a gift upon a man, which he either could have elsewhere, or already possesses within him. Upon such a plan, *grace* and nature would be one and the same.

But, if faith be the proper gift of God, and, as such, a gracious gift not inherent in human nature: Man can derive it wholly and entirely from him. And if it be a principle to be acted from, *in*, and with his mind, respecting spiritual objects; then his mind could never have acted for those objects, *without* this principle. Otherwise, this new faculty of grace would be given *idly* or *unnecessarily*; which it must be blasphemous to affirm concerning its giver. *The life* (the spiritual and active principle) *I live in the flesh* (said the Apostle,) that by which I move and exercise in the body, towards the things which are above the body, *I live by the faith of the Son of God.*

It appears, therefore, that as a man can only *possess* faith by the *gift* of God; so he can only *act* this faith when possessed, by the *power* of God. Hence, Christ says, *Without me ye can do nothing*; and the Apostle, *It is God that worketh*, energizeth in

*credere, non est fides: Ergo, si Deus dat tantum vires credendi, non dat fidem. Quomodo autem Deus dat vires credendi in Christum, quibus Christus non innotuit, dei non poterit.* Molin. Thes. p. 119

soul, both to will and to do. Faith is a spiritual life, which the children of God enjoy through their union with Christ, and are enabled to employ according to the will of God by Christ. It is not a detached principle put in them, and held by themselves; but a life conjunct with the Mediator's life, and supplied continually by him.

Here, then, we may conclude; that the sole efficient cause of Faith is God; and that the exercise of this faith, with all opportunities found for that exercise, is induced and occasioned only by the power of God.

What can declare this conclusion more positively than the following words? *We are his [God's] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.* Eph. ii. 10. Believers are here represented, as a spiritual creation in Christ, and not less unable to effect this creation in grace, than they were to create or beget themselves in nature. Nor can they obtain the end of this creation by themselves; but God is stated as wholly providing and præordaining that end.

He so doeth all *in them*, and all *for them*, with respect to the life and acts of grace, that they are even his entire *workmanship*; they are as much so, at least, as the vessel of clay can be the perfect formation of the potter's hand. In becoming the *members* of Christ, they can do nothing without their *head*.\* He is solely *the author and the finisher of their faith*.

Faith, then is *the gift of God*. This proposition cannot be denied, but by a denial of the scriptures themselves. But faith is also *the gift of the Spirit*. 1 Cor. xii. 9. and therefore called *the fruit of the Spirit*. Gal. v. 2.—Consequently, *the Spirit* is, truly and properly, God.—The *conclusion* is equally infallible with the *premises*, and can only be refuted with *them*.

This irrefragable argument evinces the propriety of the *name*, which entitles this essay. The *Holy Ghost* may well be called *THE SPIRIT OF FAITH*; because, as the great agent from the Godhead, he creates this divine principle of *faith* in the soul, which is in fact *spiritual life* by another name; and ever after

\* The elder Spanheim excellently says; *Qui enim per veram fidem Christum apprehendit & suam facit, ille Christo inseritur & fit membrum illius, adeoque ut tale non tantum jus habet ad satisfactionem & merita sui capitis, sed et Spiritu illius magis magisque renovatur et gubernatur, quam absurdum sit membrum alio præterquam capitis sui spiritu & infusa veri & novi. Dub. Evang. Vol. ii. p. 754.*

yields every support to this principle, till it arrives to its end in the eternal fruition of God.

Upon this ground, we cannot wonder at the constant reference, made in the scriptures, to the presence, power, love, and consolation, of God the Holy Ghost. Believers are privileged, upon the warrant of his own word, to look to him through Christ, as the *energy* of their spiritual life, the blissful *companion* of their souls, and the kind *preparer* of their hearts and of their ways to the mansions above.

Now, their *life*, as well as their creation, is altogether *new*. If they obey the voice of God (and him they must obey, or they could not be believers,) their obedience being excited and invigorated by this *Spirit of Faith*, it is called *the obedience of faith*. Without him, they perceive, they have neither will nor power, and much less the faith, to obey. It is *the work of God* the Spirit, *that they believe in Christ, or understand* any thing indeed of the curse of sin or their own sinfulness, as the preparation to this belief. It is by him, that they *know*, and, knowing, are constrained to *love* his holy word. 'Tis truly said, that "the assent of the mind to heavenly things, because revealed by supreme truth itself, doth not so much arise from the natural conclusions of reason, as from the humble subjection of the soul, tamed into obedience, under the word of God."\* All this is effected by the internal operation of this almighty agent. In short; *It is the same God, who worketh all in all*; or, as the Apostle reciprocates almost immediately the same phrase, *all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing, or distributing, to every man severally as he will.* 1 Cor. xii. 6, 11.

Hence it further appears, that *the obedience of faith* cannot possibly be the *condition* of obtaining it; because, without faith men cannot properly obey at all. The fruit of the tree did not plant the tree, nor give it life: but the fruit is produced, because the tree is already planted and lives. The fact is not more real in nature, than this principle is true in grace.

It also appears, that *this* obedience cannot be our *justifying righteousness* with God: not only because it proceeds with some mixture of corruption by passing through us, but because faith itself, which is the ground or instrument of that obedience, is enjoined to embrace the righteousness of *another*, called the *righteousness or obedience of ONE, by whom many shall be made righteous.* Rom. v. 19.

\* Wits. Misc. Vol. II. p. 747

All opinions, therefore, which tend to *dignify* the natural powers of man in spiritual things, or to *nullify* the necessity and operation of divine grace in all things, are impious violations of the *law of Faith*, and consequently are not less odious to God than injurious to man.

As faith rests upon truth, its proper basis; it must *continue* there by this *law of Faith*. It has no motion beyond it; but rises upwards upon it, as a house necessarily rises in its whole frame from the foundation. The same terms, for the signification of this doctrine, are employed in scripture. Believers are *edified*, or *built up in their most holy faith*: and they are built according to *rule*; and this rule is the same *law of faith*, which arranges them as individuals, and collectively as the whole temple of God.

Believers, therefore, are not to *wander* into the regions of enthusiasm, but to *stand fast* with respect to the word as their ground, and to *grow upwards* in the Lord by his divine power, which acts according to the word. The book of God is the *written law* of faith, that document or statute which faith must recur to at all times, and which, by the power of the *Spirit of Faith* who gave that word, is the *lively oracle* of truth for this purpose. But, as some men are slow to hear, as others have different states and capacities in spiritual things, and as none are without need of assistance; God hath enjoined the *constant publication* of this word, enabled some to explain it to others, and established an unity of *occasion*, as well as of faith, among all his people. He makes use of sensible instruments to convey spiritual blessings: and his word becomes *living* and *lively* in their mouths by his spirit. Thus, the law of faith, by being extended to dead and enslaved sinners, becomes the *law of liberty* for their deliverance, and then also the *law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus* for their life eternal.

From hence we see the *necessity, design, and use* of an evangelic ministry, the members of which are to make *constant proclamations* according to the *law of faith* and to present it at all times, to the eyes and ears of men. *Faith cometh by hearing: but how shall they hear, without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?* Their business is to preach: and it is the office of the Holy Spirit to convert, which he usually doth by their preaching. Those are to be mistrusted, therefore, or, rather, they ought to mistrust themselves, who either despise the faithful ministers of Christ, or neglect their ministra-

tions. These are *ordained* by God, as means of his grace: and those men presume to be wiser than God, who undervalue his ordinations.

When, by all these aids, *the Spirit of Faith* hath imparted his grace of faith to the soul, he doth not suffer it to remain there torpid and inactive,\* but he constantly breathes in it and works upon it, that by *exercise* it may be strengthened, and by his *nourishment* it may grow. So far from permitting their own faculties to lie rusty (as it were) and useless; often their *whole body, soul, and spirit*, are engaged by him in operation, affection, and understanding: or, if not *so* engaged, *then* they appear lifeless and listless, are employed to no valuable end, and usually feel all this, sooner or later, with bitter experience. And yet, to shew *himself* in them, at times, *above* these faculties, that *his* operations may not be mistaken for *their own*; he *maketh intercession* for them with groanings, which cannot be uttered. Nature feels his power, without the capacity to express it.

By these exercises, the soul is prepared and matured for that glorious *progression* of faith, which is called the *plerophory*, or *full assurance*, of it; and thus attains the *substance* and substantiation of *the things hoped for, liberty of speech, and access* unto God, *confidence, triumph, and hope to the end*. The building is now raised above the ground, and tends upwards to the skies. It waits only for *the tofstone of grace* to be completed for glory.

If we now collect the *whole* of what hath been considered, it seems fairly reducible to this plain and scriptural conclusion — that faith is a principle of grace and divine life in the soul; that it is the free and unmerited gift of *Jehovah, in Christ, and by the Spirit*; that it enables the soul to believe whatever God hath said and done, generally, as an invincible declaration or demonstration of his eternal truth; that it appropriates, particularly, according to its strength, all the promises and mercies of God; that it is the principle by which the Spirit, acts to produce hope, love, joy, peace, and all his other graces in the soul; and, lastly, that the Spirit, thus the author and agent of all this supernatural

\* The admirable *Belgic* confession of faith professes, *credimus veram hanc fidem per auditum verbi Dei & Spiritus sancti operationem unicuique nostrorum inditam nos regenerare, atque veluti novos homines efficere, ut quos ad novam vitam vivendum excitet, et à peccati servitute liberos reddat. Tantam abest igitur ut fides hæc justificans homines à recta sanctaque vivendi ratione avocet, aut tepidiores efficiat, ut contra absque illi nemo unquam quicquam boni propter Deum (sed omnia vel propter seipsum, vel ob metum justæ condemnationis) agere atque operari possit. Fieri itaque non potest, ut hæc fides sancta in homine otiosa sit.* Syntagma Confess. Fid. p. 174.



good, proves himself to be true and very GOD, and the almighty JEHOVAH, who only doeth wondrous things.

In this view, (which, for its importance, we have the more largely considered) faith appears to be a mighty grace, building and built upon a strong foundation. Having an omnipotent cause, it is carried on also with omnipotence and fixing itself upon the faithfulness, wisdom, love, and power of God, cannot possibly be destroyed. It is a *covenanted* grace, and therefore indefectible; unless it can be supposed, that the covenant of God can be broken, or the promises of it can fail. From hence it is we perceive, what sure ground faith stands upon, what sure mercies it expects, what a blessed end it may certainly contemplate! They, who treat of faith, as a mere vapor of the brain, or an exertion of natural strength, do not more dishonor God, than take away every ray of comfort from the souls of men.

The *end of faith* is a united object, and as happy as it is sublime. Faith aims at nothing less than connecting the *glory of God* with the final *salvation of the soul*. Christ, for his people, hath joined these two together; and these neither men nor devils, from his people shall be able to put asunder.

Doth not this raise a cry in some solicitous heart; LORD, *I believe; O help mine unbelief!*—'Tis a good cry, and the cry of faith. No *unconvinced* sinner ever poured it forth, in deed and in truth: No *convinced* sinner ever uttered it, without a gracious aid. LORD, *save; or I perish!* was a word of faith, though extorted by unbelief. Peter *feared*, and therefore he *doubted*: He *cried* to Jesus because he *believed*. If he had not believed, he would have perished; and if he had not feared to perish, he would have had no unbelief. He had but little faith, yet enough in Christ to keep him from sinking: He felt himself just upon sinking; and his little faith cried out for more help, which Christ never denied to any who asked it of him.

What a gentle, though just, reproach! *O thou of little faith; wherefore didst thou doubt?*

Imitate Peter, thou troubled, because doubting, believer; cry, as he cried; and the stormy sea of trial, and the furious waves of the world, shall never destroy thee. Thou art walking upon this sea every day of thy life: And thou wilt never enter into the ship, till thou enter into Heaven. Faith and patience, like oil upon the billows, shall smooth much of the boisterous turmoil without thee, and often quiet thy spirit within thee through all thy course to glory.

When *carnal faith* (if it deserve the name) encounters these trials, it presently succumbs, and shews its base original. It began with the flesh; and it will end there. "If the faith, that thou hast, (said the gracious Archbishop Leighton) grew out of thy natural heart of itself; be assured, it is but a weed. The right plant of faith is always set by God's own hand; and it is watered and preserved by him because exposed to many hazards: He watches it night and day. Isa. xxvii. 3. *I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.*"

O what comfort must this afford to the *tossed and afflicted* soul! What nourishment to its faith! What encouragement to its hopes!—*If God be for us, who can be against us?—Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?—Shall tribulation? Through much tribulation, and in despite of tribulation, we shall enter into the kingdom.—Shall distress? We may be troubled on every side, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair.—Shall persecution? Men have no power, but of God; and God will give them none to drive us from Christ: So that, if we are persecuted, we are not forsaken.—Shall famine; shall nakedness; shall peril or sword? Nay, says the apostle, so far from it, that in all these things we are, not only more conquerors, but, more than conquerors through him that loved us. Rom. viii. 31—37. This is the victory, which overcometh the world even our faith. 1 John v. 4.—Why then dost not thou add with the Apostle, as thou art privileged to add; I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me, weak and worthless as I am, from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus my Lord?*

Pray, then, for the *increase* of faith. If faith do not grow; there can be no growth in any other grace: Because this is the hand which receives every thing spiritual, or the channel through which all heavenly blessings flow. According to faith, so is the measure of all advancement, both in true knowledge and real experience. A man cannot have *the full assurance of understanding*, which consists in a strong and undoubted perception of the correspondence and relation of all heavenly truths to God and to each other, without *the full assurance of faith*; because out of this *last*, and not out of the man's own head, the *other* proceeds; and proceeds by its exercise on the word, and through the illumination of the Spirit upon it. Then from the conjunction of *faith* with the *understanding*, and in the advancement of both, arises that

most comfortable grace, which the apostle styles, *the full assurance of hope to the end*. This sort of *hope* is not like that poor vapid principle of the natural heart, which hath nothing certain to expect, and longs for distant objects as matters of mere chance. No; it is a hope, which *never yet made a man ashamed*, and which, grounding itself upon what faith discovers in the word concerning the sureness and truth of salvation, looks out for and expects it, as a great estate which it is heir to, which it shall soon enjoy, and which nothing can take away from it. Thus the man's *faith, understanding, and hope*; or, in other words, faith as a divine principle, acting upon the other two, and enduing them with its own full persuasion, carries all the faculties of the soul and body (allowing for their infirmities) into the sweetest communion with Christ, and through him with the Spirit and the Father. The whole Trinity is glorified, in one poor creature; and, thus glorified, elevates that creature to a dignity, which (according to the apostle) no thought can conceive. God is first glorified in him; for man of himself can give no glory to God; and then man reflects the rays of this heavenly splendor, confessing that they all came from Jehovah, and belong only to him. Like the moon, the redeemed have no true light of their own; but derive all that deserves the name from their self-existent *Sun of righteousness*.

The trial of faith is appointed for this end. God suffers, and even ordains, that the things *evil* shall *prove* those which are *good*. It is an evil thing, which attempts to debauch or destroy our faith: And Christ calls those matters by the name of *offences*, which are to come, and *must come*, for the trial of this faith that it may *appear to be wrought in God*. But this is a precious trial, and a precious end, whatever be the means which God permits and which the world and the devil may use upon the occasion. *These* are indeed evil, and intend nothing beside evil: But the *Spirit of Faith* shews his own sovereignty in all, by establishing righteousness itself from the very opposition of iniquity, and by constraining the powers of darkness to drive his people into higher degrees of light and glory.

Upon occasions of this kind, the word of God becomes doubly precious to the believer's heart and understanding. He looks upon it as a *pledge* of God's faithfulness, and is happy in the assurance, that *Heaven and earth may pass away*, but that *not one tittle* of this word shall *fail*. He consults the word for information and instruction, that his *understanding* may be found in the truth; and for comfort and support, that his *hope* may increase

in the truth: and he prays to the *Spirit of Faith* over his faithful word, that he may be enabled to act faith upon it, and that a full persuasion of the divine truth may flow into his soul, in order that he may go through his warfare, like a faithful priest and soldier of Christ Jesus. Nothing endears the *Bible* more to a Christian, than his trials; and these are made to prove, that indeed the Bible belongs to him, and that he belongs to God.—Flights and fancies may amuse those, who are at ease; but, *in the great fight of afflictions*, one plain word in God's book is worth ten thousand times ten thousand of them all. They are but husks and trash, which can never satisfy the soul, who hungers and thirsts for the living God. The heart in trial doth not want *words* only, but *things* in the words: and no word but God's can pretend to this, which hath more *matter* than *language*, nay, implies infinitely more than language can express. It is, therefore, called *the word of God*, not only because it proceeded from *him*, but because he *fills* it with his power, and *uses* it as the proper instrument for the happiness and salvation of his people.

In matters of faith and practice, the real Christian makes his whole reference and appeal to the word, and suffers no guide to direct his mind, but this. A truly excellent and evangelical writer hath observed, "that scripture is the only rule of right and wrong, and that conscience has no direction but this rule. Neither ethics, nor metaphysics, no fancied light of dark nature, no lawless law of rebel nature, no human science, whether pretended to be implanted, or by the use of reason to be acquired, have any right to guide the conscience. These are blind leaders of the blind. They undertake, what they are not only unfit, but what they have no warrant for."\*—Nothing needs to be added to this, but the exhortation of the Apostle, upon another occasion; that Christians should *hold fast the faithful word as they have been taught, that they may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.* Tit. i. 9.

And if men are exhorted to *hold fast the faithful word*; shall we suppose, that the *God of all faithfulness* will not hold fast *his own word*? Can we imagine, that he, who restores men from death unto life, and who hath promised that this life is and shall be *eternal*, will disappoint his own purpose, and break his own promise, by suffering that life to be *temporary* only, or by permitting any wretched creatures to controul his will? What can be a more horrid or blasphemous position than this, against the

\* Walk of Faith. Vol. i. p. 40.

very power, honor and truth of God?—Blessed be his holy name, he doth not cure like a Paracelsus, to make the relapse worse than the disease; but he heals all diseases of sin, and prevents all relapses to ruin. *He is faithful, that hath promised*; is a word for a Christian's heart, which will administer more comfort, even in the time of his trial, than the contrary tenet possibly can to its espousers, in the moments of their greatest ease. Our God is a *Rock*; and his work must be *perfect*; and surely then the works of his grace, so much more costly and sublime, as they are, than all his works of nature, can never be uncertain or incomplete.

Come then, humble Christian; while others contend for *doubting* (a poor prize, not worth their pain!) do thou pray and intreat for the firmest acts of *believing*. In this way, thou wilt be enabled to glorify God; and, in this course, he will, one day, glorify thee. Faith is the death of sin, as well as the life of righteousness. Faith makes a treasure of God's word, and treasures up, as the choicest jewels, the *exceeding great and precious promises* found therein. Faith lifts up the soul above the busy bustling troubles of a thorny world, or wafts it over a sea of cares with safety to the haven of bliss. Faith leads the spirit of a man to communion with Christ, and, through him, to an *access with confidence* to the *eternal Three*. In a word; faith teaches, purifies, and comforts the heart living and dying; inspires it with a holy longing for unalterable bliss; and, at length, dissolves into love when the believer is arrived in that place, where he will be found to the praise, and honor, and glory of his God, without interruption and without end.

Lastly: contemplate the *triumphs of faith*, and pray, that, according to the occasion, these triumphs may be thine. What a golden legend, indeed, is the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews! What a noble army of martyrs, and other confessors of Christ, may be found there, and in ancient ecclesiastical histories! Filled with this *Spirit of Faith*, they despised all the malice of men, and looked down upon their cruel tormentors, with contempt for their rage, and with pity for their souls. One cannot read those magnanimous words of Lactantius, without being moved. "With God before our eyes, with God in our hearts, we can triumph by his aid over all the torments which men can inflict upon our bodies. At those times of trial, we are able to think of nothing else, but the blessings of the life immortal. Though torn in pieces, or consuming in the fire, we are assisted to sustain, with-

out difficulty, whatever the madness of tyranny can contrive to lay upon us. Nor do we meet death itself with regret or fear, but court it freely and with joy; knowing what glory is just ready to be put upon us, and that we are only hastening to enjoy the promises.\* This was not an empty boast, uttered when no danger was near, but professed about the time of one of the bitterest and most severe persecutions, which ever tried the Church of God.

'Tis not probable, believer, that thou shouldst be called to this sort of trial for thy faith: but, if thou wert, the same God, who filled thine ancient brethren with courage and joy, could give thee the same triumph in the end. There is, however, one trial, which thou and all men must in a very short time endure. The hour and trial of *death* is near to thee, and far from nobody in the world. Thou art graciously privileged to triumph over the *last*, as well as other *enemies* of thy soul. Victory over death is the infallible blessing to every believer; and sometimes transport in death. He will ere long open his eyes and mouth in Heaven, though disease may have stopped them below. And can that be death, which ends in life? Can that be an evil which lasts for a moment, and then conducts to everlasting good?—Who can read, without encouragement, the noble confession of the gracious Rivet, just before his translation to glory? “Lord, come and receive me—I long for thee, O my God! *My soul looketh for thee, as the parched earth for moisture.* Come, Lord; come, Jesus; take me into thy bosom. I am ready whensoever it shall please thee.—I long for his coming; yet do I not fret myself. Through the help of God, I am not troubled. I wait; I believe; I persevere. Though he delay my joy, yet I am in my way; and the sense of his favor grows in me every moment. My pain is sufferable; and my joy is beyond value. I have no more earthly cares, nor any desires, but of the things that are above.” Then laying his hand upon his breast, he added; “Here is inward joy, by the spirit of God dwelling in me. What am I, O gracious God, that thou deignest to dwell under my poor roof? It is thy will, O Lord; and it is mine also. Let thy good spirit dwell in me to the end!” Some of his very last words were; “I am going to *your* God, my friends, and to *my* God. We have gained all: Amen:”—Doubtless, one of his first words, soon after these, was *Hallelujah!*—Reader; pray that it may also be *thine!*

\* *Inst. Epit. Sec. 8.*

## LAW.

WHEN man fell from God, the world, which was made for him, was thrown into disorder ; and he himself, like a *wandering star* removed from its proper course, began to slide from darkness to darkness, and naturally tended onward to *the blackness of darkness for ever*. A law had been given him, as the test of his obedience, calculated both for body and mind ; and this law required nothing, but what it was both his duty and his happiness to observe. He had a superiority over all creatures in the world, which was then his pleasant though not perpetual home ; and he was subject to none but to Him, who afforded him both life and love, and who only claimed *that* from him, which he well was able to pay, and in the payment of which he was to receive new and new incomes of joy. All his blessedness consisted in *looking upwards* to God ; and therefore, as a picture of the state of his mind, his maker gave him a sublime countenance\* and an erect posture of body. Thus while his natural eyes might easily view the Heavens ; the eyes of his mind could behold Him, whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain, but yet who vouchsafed to set up his throne in the heart of his humble creature *man*. By the very figure of his body was he taught, *where* lay the fundamental happiness of his soul : His face, then the true index of his mind, pointed *upwards* and continually to God. The beasts were created otherwise ; that he might learn from their prone and downward aspect, that they had no end beyond the earth ; and that he alone was privileged, as well as enabled, to hold intercourse with Heaven and the God of Heaven. And concerning the test of his obedience, as an excellent man hath well observed ; “ the fair tree, of which he was forbidden to eat, taught him the same lesson, that his happiness lay not in enjoyment of the *creatures* ; for there was a want even in Paradise : So that the forbidden tree was, in effect, the *hand* of all the creatures, *pointing* man away from themselves to God for happiness. It was a sign of *emptiness* hung before the door of the creation, with that inscription, “ *This is not your Rest.*”†

\* Boston's Fourfold State. p. 13.

† *Os homini sublime dedit celumq. videre  
Jussit, & erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.*

Ovid. Met. l. i. f. 2.

Lactantius frequently dwells upon this thought, with his usual elegance of expression, in his *Institutions* : And Boethius in his *Cons. Phil. l. v.*

When man, for his disobedience, was thrust out of this Paradise, he lost the *instruction*, which the objects existing in it were created to give him, as well as the *capacity* to understand any thing, but a part of his own wretchedness. He felt misery and death in his body, beyond the possibility of denial, and his soul became, as our souls are from him, exceedingly dark and ignorant concerning the great objects of his being. He was not only without the knowledge of God, but without a desire to know him. He burst forth from Paradise an *Outlaw* in every sense of the term: liable to divine vengeance, and without title to divine mercy. In this forlorn condition, without light from God, because void of all spiritual communion with him; he must ever have wandered and *groped* in mental darkness, if Jehovah himself had not deigned to provide a recovery. For this end, it was necessary, that there should be a manifestation of some enlightening Law, by which the divine purity might be known and man compare his own lapsed and miserable condition. Accordingly an exhibition was made of one grand *spiritual* decree, the truth of which was to be attested by several particulars that reach the *animal* sense of both sexes; namely, that *enmity should be put* between the Devil and human nature, instead of their then present league, and between his adherents and the woman's offspring; and that, though this fallen spirit might attack and distress the inferior part of the promised seed called his *heel*, this promised seed by his divine power should at length trample upon and *bruise his head* for ever.

This was the first ray of spiritual light which broke through the darkness of our fallen world: And it became a ray of hope to all succeeding generations. That *Spirit of God*, which in the first creation, moved upon the face of the troubled deep, now began to brood with the warmth of his love upon the troubled soul of man. *The Law of this Spirit of Life* here began to free the unhappy mind, fettered and brought into captivity to *the law of sin and death*. It is our privilege, then, to consider, *what this law is in its essence and effects*, and what relation these bear to us.

There are many acceptations of this word Law, all of them just and true, and all of them important likewise to salvation; or, they had never been revealed.

The word Law, as it stands in the Bible connected with spiritual things, includes these various senses. 1. It is taken for the law which God hath planted in the frame and constitution of the world, which is preserved and conducted according to his ordinance. Ps. cxix. 91.—2. Sometimes it implies the *fiery Law* delivered



to Moses, which, because of its extreme purity and our sinfulness, seems clothed with all the fire of God's vengeance. And this is frequently called the *moral law*, the *letter* of which is in the Ten Commandments. 3. The term is also used for the *ceremonial law*, which was a *doctrinal exemplar* of the *gospel* of grace. 4. The *scriptures* are sometimes called by this name, John x. 34. possibly because they contain the whole revealed law and mind of God. 5. The *gospel* likewise, in distinction from the law of Moses, is called the *law of faith*. Rom. iii. 27. 6. The *covenant of grace* itself, of which every iota must be fulfilled and shall never pass away, is thus named. 1 Chron. xvi. 17. *et al.* 7. And sometimes it is used personally for the *Spirit of God*: In which view it will be considered in this essay; because He is the *spring* or *foundation* of the *whole*.

If we look at the radical sense of the original term which seems to be the only true way of studying the Bible, we shall find it derived from a root, which signifies to *cast* or *throw*, or *shoot* any thing like a dart, and which, in the conjugation *Hiphil*, means to *teach*, to *throw instruction* upon the mind, to *inject* or *shower down* doctrine, like the *rain* cast down from Heaven. The term, therefore, teaches us, that we not only *need* this instruction naturally, but also that it can only be given us from above, or that by a superior agent it must be injected into our minds. And because our capacities are dull in heavenly things, and our corruptions make great opposition to them within; this tuition is applied under the image of force and strong impression, and this being effected by an Almighty hand, the instruction becomes *a word quick and powerful, and sharper* (or more penetrating) *than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner* (or critic) *of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* Heb. iv. 12.

It may also be observed, that as rain in nature descends freely from the skies, this rain of instruction also comes down as freely from the God of the skies. This doctrine, therefore, whether it be called *Law*, *Ordinances*, *Statutes*, *Testimonies*, *Commandments*, or the like, means neither more nor less in its primary sense, than *a divine Revelation*, branched out into these various particulars according to some peculiar and necessary application to the state of the children of men. All these particulars were delivered, or (according to the root) *poured down*, from Heaven by the inspiration of God, and indeed, when collected, compose but one great aggregate, arising from one great cause, and answering one

great end. This *end* is God's glory in his people's salvation. And the *cause* we shall consider presently. Upon this plan, was the first revelation of God thrown into the aching bosoms of our first parents. For this purpose, did Abraham *obey* Jehovah's *voice, and keep his charge, his commandments, his statutes, and his laws*, under the *patriarchal* dispensation. Gen. xxvi. 5. In this view, the *moral and ceremonial law*, accompanied with *rites, ceremonies, statutes, testimonies, &c.* into which those laws were distributed and distinguished, were delivered to Moses for the Jewish Economy. And to fulfil this great object, was the *gospel* itself, and all its *written word*, delivered to man; as the consummate revelation of God's eternal will, mind, or law, concerning his redemption.

This word *Law*, then, in its broad and glorious sense, signifies all or any instruction and revelation of the mind of Jehovah; and though expressed by different names, in order to shew its different purposes, it still is in perfect harmony in all its parts, and results only from one grand idea in the *mind* of God. The law delivered to Moses is generally understood to be a law of death and condemnation; and so it truly is to every sinner out of Christ: and it was given to teach sinners that most important instruction. But yet that law in itself is confessedly *holy, just, and good*, and to every believer in Jesus, the atoner and fulfiller, is really a part or manifestation of that *perfect law of liberty*, which opens to him ten thousand promises, and at length introduces him to glory. The matter of death is in the *sinner*, not in the *law*; and though damnation itself arise from the pure goodness of God, which cannot endure sin, it is not to be imputed to him, as the *cause*, but to iniquity, which is averse to his being, and being separated from it necessarily becomes *misery*. This law, so far from quarrelling with the *gospel*, is the *gospel in Christ*, and another branch, or appearance only, of the same unalterable and holy will. The *gospel* could not be the *gospel* without this perfect law; which points out the just requirements of God, on the one hand, full of truth and majesty; and which, in conjunction with the *gospel*, exhibits, on the other, a complete satisfaction of all those requirements by one, who was able to pay them. The law and the *gospel* are two branches of *one divine revelation*; the former, when *alone*, shewing the heinousness of sin and the condemnation of sinners; and the latter, without the least derogation from the absolute perfection of the law, explaining the purification of sin, and the salvation of sinners by a mediator,

Both unite in displaying God's purity and justice glorified by means, which at the same time illustrate his kindness and love : And, in this union, it is, that *mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other* ; or, in the language of the New Testament, that *God is just, and the justifier of him, that believeth in Jesus*.

We are now come to the main object in view, and may perceive, that as all God's *revelation* is but *one*, though diversified by several names and parts ; so the Great Revealer is one and the same, who spake by patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, and who hath rained down all the true instruction from heaven, which ever renewed men upon the face of the earth.

In some other papers, we have considered, *who* this great instructor, teacher, and revealer is ; and have proved, that He is no other than God the Spirit. *Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost* : and the Holy Ghost is to *teach* his people and to *dwell* in them, to the end of time, and thereby to prepare them for his eternal inhabitation. Eph. ii. 22. " But can he, therefore, be called the *Law of the Lord* ?"—Let his own *revealed* law determine ; only premising, that *law, mind, and will*, with relation to God, are terms, in their broad extent, perfectly synonymous. His *law* is, respecting *us*, the expression of his *mind*, and the declaration of his *will* ; all which are terms rather adapted to our conceptions and feelings, than definitions *how* God thinks, wills, or commands, of which it is impossible we should form any proper idea. We know not even the *mode* of our own understandings. Augustine calls Christ himself *the eternal Law* ;\*

\* *De verâ Rel.* Each person in the Godhead, and consequently the whole Godhead, is this law, *eternal* and *essential* which is also called the *law of liberty* ; because it removes that force and oppression of sin, which confines from holiness, and liberates the soul to the exercise of all goodness. *If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed* ; was the voice of the Son himself, who, with the Father and Spirit hath a right to this title. It is remarkable, that Luther, in his comment upon the Galatians, in which he speaks with great vehemence against the moral law as a covenant of works, and justly reprehends them who so far pervert it from the design of its revelation, as to aim at salvation by it ; has these striking words upon the *eternal law* of which we are speaking : " I hear thee murmuring, O law [law of Moses], that thou wilt accuse and condemn me : but this doth not trouble me. Thou art to me, as the grave was unto Christ ; for I see that thou art fast bound : And this hath *my law* done. What law is that ? *Liberty*, which is called the law, not because it bindeth me, but because it bindeth the law [i. e. as to its condemning power] which bound me, even the law of the ten commandments. But against that law, I have another law, even the law of grace, which however, is to me no law, because it doth not bind, but set me at liberty. And this is a law against that accusing and condemning law, which is so bound by this law, that it hath no power to hurt me.—Thus Christ, with most sweet names, is called *my law*, &c." *Com on Gal. ii. 18* .

and very justly, because the scriptures represent him as *that Eternal Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto man*, 1 John i. 2. and as *that author of eternal salvation, in whom was purposed the eternal purpose of God*, for that end. Eph. iii. 11. In short, whatever can be predicated of God is God himself; and as the cause and end of the divine law and government is God's own existence, his *law* cannot be any thing different from himself, as to its *essence*; for otherwise something will exist in God, which is *not* God, and so oppose the simplicity and purity of his nature. The intellect of man is the subordinate rule and measure of man's capacity, and is the grand constituent of his being. The intellect of God likewise (humbly speaking after the manner of man, who is *erected in his likeness*) is the rule and law of his own being, and cannot be any thing but himself. We know concerning his intellect only by his *communication* or *publication*, which is now a rule and law to us, it being the *manifestation* of his own will, applying itself to such and such objects as fall under our apprehensions. Farther than this publication, we can know nothing of God: And this, so far as we truly know it, is (as it were) God's speaking to us, or the rule, mode, or law, by which we are to have our intercourse and communion with him.

If the *essence* of God, then, be his own *law*, the original and "primitive reason," and the *cause* of all *laws* planted in or delivered down to the creatures; the Holy Spirit, as a subsistent in that essence, participates whatever can be predicated of it, and is personally, therefore, this *essential law*. Thus, He who says, *I am understanding*, immediately adds, *By me kings reign, and princes decree justice: By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth*. Prov. viii. 15, 16. Through this *Eternal Spirit*, or *law*, or *counsel*, or *divine essence* (which in this view are one and the same), Christ offered himself without spot to God, that he might fulfil the *revealed law* of God, which sprung from that *eternal law* just mentioned. Thus the *secret of the Lord is with them, that fear him*; i. e. his *Holy Spirit* or *secret law*, confirming the mind and law of God *revealed*. Thus believers are *led by the Spirit* (who becomes the *law of their minds*) to be the children, and the *obedient children, of God*. Rom. viii. 14. with vii. 23. Thus *the law of the Spirit of life, makes these believers free from*

See also Lactantius, who calls Christ, as to his Godhead *vivam presentemque legem*. *De vera Sap.* l. iv. sec. 17. To the same purpose see Thom. Aq. *Finis divina gubernationis est ipse Deus, nec ejus lex est aliud ab ipso*. *Primi Sec. Q.* xci. A. 1.

*the law of sin and death.* Rom. viii. 2.\* and to *this law* the carnal mind is not subject, neither indeed can be, because the carnal mind is enmity against God who is the law. Rom. viii. 7. Thus *where the Spirit of the law is, there is liberty*; because the Spirit is that *perfect law of liberty*, which is not only free himself, but makes his people free by his energetic grace. Thus the Spirit, under this name of *Law*, as well as Christ under the title of *word*, spake unto the fathers by the prophets. Isaiah i. 10. Thus *the law was in the Psalmist's heart*; not surely the written, the moral, the ceremonial, law, for *these* of themselves could not profit the heart; but that *great law*, which enlightened to him the object and use of those revealed laws, and which was *the understanding* he prayed for, by whom alone he should be enabled to keep or observe them. Ps. xl. 8. cxix. 34. This law was his *delight*, because this law is the *truth*; which is as much as to say, God or the Spirit himself. And thus man can yield no true obedience to the *written and revealed law*, but by the power of that *essential and secret Law, who helpeth his people's infirmities, and maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.*

From this consideration of the Holy Spirit, under the name of *Law in essence*, or *Lawgiver in fact*; we draw another incontestable argument for his *divinity and equality in the Godhead.* For, if He be the *essential law*, He must be essentially God:† Or, if He be the *great revealer* of the communicated law, in all or in any of its branches; He must be God, who only could in the first

\* In this view of the word *law*, considering it as the *Spirit of life* himself; the difficulty, which Dr. Guyse complains of, in his note upon the passage, seems to vanish; and a very considerable light is also thrown upon the context.

† The Stoics and other Heathens had some faint notions of this truth upon the principles of reason, which led them far enough to see, that there must be some supreme and universal law pervading all that exists; as, without it nothing *could* exist, and much less in *order and perfection.* But their dark and blind *fate*, their *soul of the world* or *natural force*, is founded upon a very different idea from what revelation affords; for, examined to the bottom, their *fate, law, &c.* is neither uncompounded with *matter*, nor purely abstracted from it. Not even Seneca's notion is clear in this respect, though he had the advantage of living later in the world, and possibly had some information of the Christian religion, but certainly not *that* information which his pretended correspondence with St. Paul would insinuate to us. According to the gospel, God is *the law* because of his perfection and omniscience, and of consequence is the *eternal rule* of rectitude and truth both to himself and his creatures. Yet this law or rule, doth not imply *confinement* to him, because this law is the unlimited exercise of unbounded goodness and perfection in the divine nature; but, with respect to us, it forms a *boundary* only because we are *sinners*, limiting our exercise of *evil and corruption*; for, after we are regenerated, and especially when we enter Heaven, we possess the *glorious liberty* of God through his *perfect law of liberty*, and are not other ways *confined* in the activity of holiness but by the exten-

instance reveal his own mind and will: Or, if He explain the mind of the Father, and give to believers the mind of Christ or the Son; He must be *equal* to the Father and the Son, unless it can be presumed, that God revealed to his Spirit, what the Spirit did not know before; which is a presumption, supported neither by reason nor scripture. Not by *reason*; because it would be asserting, that there is something in God, called the Spirit of God, which is heterogeneous to the divine nature; and this consequently would destroy the simplicity and perfection of his being. Not by *scripture*; because the Spirit *searcheth all things*, yea, the very *profound or deep things of God*, whose infinite and eternal being he must fully know, and to which for that end he must be perfectly equal; or there would be an infinitude of things ever beyond him, which, *as a creature* he could not possibly search, and which, if *unsearched* by him, the scripture could not possibly be true.

Being the *law or mind of God himself*, the *Holy Spirit* is certainly able to teach it, to impress it, and to effectuate it, in the redeemed. His doctrine, therefore, according to this gracious name, descends as the *rain* (one of his emblems,) and orders as the law, spirit, or power (for these are his names,) throughout the universe of the faithful. He is the fulfiller of that glorious promise in Is. ii. 2, &c. and in Micah iv. 1, 2, &c.\* *In the last*

of our faculties. Absolute purity is all liberty: Sin only is bondage, both *in itself* as to its connection with nothing but evil, and with respect to God, who bounds and limits its encroachments upon the visible and invisible parts of his creation.

Of the Heathen opinions concerning this subject, the reader may see more in Cic. *de natura Deor.* and especially in Lactant. *de falsa Rel.* lib. i. § 5. and *de vita beat.* l. vii. § 3.

\* This mountain of the Lord's house is named Meriah, the spot where Abraham offered up his son, and where the Temple was afterwards built. The word *Meriah* seems to be derived from the same root, with the word *law*, and plainly denotes, that *upon this mountain*, the *doctrine, instruction*, and representation of grace, should descend and be revealed. Upon this mountain, Abraham received instruction, through the type of his son, concerning the *mode* of Christ's redemption: so did the Jews, in the constant sacrifices and services of the temple, as well as by the immediate revelations of God's will often delivered there. Here God made his *doctrine descend as the dew*, and upon this holy mountain, typifying Christ himself (Zech. viii. 3.) God would alone be worshipped with his prescribed services; and concerning this mountain, under the symbol of our Redeemer, very glorious things are spoken in Isaiah xxv. 6. &c.—All this, in plainer language, signifies, that the *spirit* would descend upon Christ alone for the purpose of effecting salvation, and that *God was in Christ* reconciling the world to himself; so that "without Christ, there is no grace given, nor sin forgiven," but that *in him* all our communion with God is obtained and continued for ever. It may further be observed, that part of this mountain with part of the Temple stood in Judah, and the other part of both in Benjamin; which partition

*says, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established—and all nations shall flow unto it : and many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and HE will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths ; for out of Zion, [not from Horeb] shall go forth the LAW, and the WORD of the Lord from Jerusalem.—O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord. And what is this light, but the divine nature itself, of which believers are made partakers ? And what is this law, which proceeds from Zion, but this very light ? This essential law is that essential light, from which all statutes, testimonies, ordinances, revelations internal and external, were ever but so many rays sent down to man, in order to lead him up to his God. Believers here are in a dark wilderness ; and the word of God is given as the lanthorn, and the spirit of God as the light therein, to conduct their otherwise undirected feet to their Father's house. This spirit is the perfect law, converting the soul : and all his statutes, testimonies, and commandments, were revealed for the work of his salvation. The redeemed, in all ages, like the rest of the world, were ignorant sinners, without rule, and without law (1 Cor. ix. 21.) by nature : this spirit of truth comes, in the appointed time, takes his written rule and applies it to their hearts, and so makes that to be the measure and ground of his own conduct towards them. He explains to their minds, how his own revealed law, when expressive of the absolute perfection of the divine nature (as in the case of the law called moral) is necessarily against them as sinners ; and how, on the other hand, it graciously becomes a part of the covenant of life itself in Christ Jesus, who hath fulfilled it for his people and entitled them to be Saints ; and not only Saints, imperfect as they are in this life, but holy and immaculate beings. Thus, hereafter, they are represented as walking in (emblematic) white, or purity, and crowned with the utmost perfection and bliss. All the revealed word, will, law, and promise of God, are shewn by this spirit to be all yea, and all amen, in the great Redeemer ; all full of positive mercy and blessing, and all confirmed by the faithfulness and truth of an omnipotent God. As the written word is a revelation of the unwritten mind and law of God ; so the spirit convin-*

may possibly be intended to mean, that Christ was not the Saviour only of one class of men, i. e. the Jews, but of Jews and Gentiles, who are privileged to look upon him as their common Lord, and to have an equal claim to him as their holy Temple and mountain of holiness.

ces the believer's soul, that it is all fulfilled in Christ Jesus, and all brought into effect and applied to salvation by *his own* quickening power, in a manner, of which, though a carnal (and in other respects sensible) mind may consider the words and their grammatical construction, no carnal mind can form a *true*, because *not experimental*, conception.\* And this some of the most able and sensible men have confessed of their own capacities, after their conversion by the grace of God:—Men, who could not easily have been deceived themselves in such a matter, and who could have no interest to *combine* in the same testimony, from age to age, for the deception of others:—Men, who confirmed by their latest breath, the principles and doctrines, which they had maintained, and who *loved not even their lives*, nor counted *them dear*, so that they might *witness this good*, this important *confession*.

From the whole, it seems to appear, with how great propriety, God is called by the name of *Law*; how, with the same propriety, the *Holy Spirit*, as God, is so entitled; and how, in communion with God and longing after him, every believer is privileged to pray, *open thou mine eyes, and I shall behold wonderful things out of thy law: O how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day: and unless it had been my delight, I should have perished in my trouble. I have longed for thy salvation, and thy law is my delight. Grant me thy law graciously: how sweet are thy words to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth.*

This *living law* in the heart is the death of all *legality*, or what is usually called by that name. It leads a man to Christ, and to Christ *alone*. It strips him of himself, lowers the pride in the flesh, and all *confidence in the flesh*: for this spirit testifies of

\* Bishop Stillingfleet, in his *Origines Sacre*, has quoted the translation of a sentiment from Dante the Italian poet, which is very applicable to this point.

————— *larga pluvia*  
*Spiritus Sancti, quæ est diffusa*  
*Super veteres & super novus membranas,*  
*Est syllogismus ille qui eam nihil conclusit*  
*Idcirco acuti, ut præ illa demonstratione*  
*Omnis demonstratio alia mihi videatur obtusa.*

Which may be thus rendered;

“ God’s holy spirit hath so amply fill’d  
 With gracious wisdom all the world reveal’d,  
 That *this alone* an argument appears,  
 And to my soul such demonstration bears,  
 As makes all reasonings, which the mind can frame,  
 Seem shadows of the truth, or flat and lame.”



Christ in the sinner, and shews to the sinner his need of Christ. He opens his understanding to know and regard what the scriptures say of Jesus, and concerning the means, the promises, the hope, the joy, the assurance of salvation; and then applies all these things to the soul, and makes a glorious feast within. In this act, the convinced sinner, so far from depending upon *self-righteousness*, sees it to be much rather *unrighteousness*, and therefore cannot trust to what he must look upon as sin, for any part of his salvation.—He sees too much impurity in himself, and in every thing he is capable of doing, and beholds too much of the perfection of God, to imagine any of his performances can be acceptable without his Redeemer. And though he knows there is a *reward*, yet he hears also that it is a reward of grace; and though men are saved *according to their works*, he is divinely taught, that it is not according to the *merit* of their works. He reads in the book of God, and he feels by the grace of God, that his works cannot *merit* in any sense, and that grace itself, by which he works and delights to work, is not given him to *merit by* and so *deserve* of God, but to *live by* and so *receive* from God. The law of the spirit of life doth not send him to the law of works, but to the law-fulfiller, for *meritorious* righteousness and then enables him, according to measure, to love and to do (however imperfectly) an *evangelical* righteousness, in proof of his interest in the other. He aims to *follow* Christ, but not to *supplant* him. Instead of so ignorant a conduct, which the Pharisees and their successors (learned as they may be in *other* things) uniformly patronize; the believer flies to Jesus Christ, in the power of his *Holy Spirit*, and cries with the Psalmist; *my mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness, and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof. I will go, (not in my own strength, for that is weakness, but) in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention (not of my own righteousness, for alas! that is mere sin and defilement, but) of thy righteousness, even of thine only.* Ps. lxxi. 15, 16.

And this *law of the Spirit of Life* is the death of all self-righteousness, which is sin in its most inviting form, and which often looks so much like the innocence of Angels, as to be mistaken for it; so is he the utter death, and the most determined foe, of all barefaced ungodliness and iniquity. If he cannot endure sin in the specious guise of holiness, and set off with painted beauties; surely, he utterly loaths and abhors it in its open deformity,

or in that audacious hue with which it stalks abroad in the world. This spirit teaches his people also to hate sin in their very thoughts, and to fight against its power, not only without them, but within them; to follow it with a drawn sword, (the word of God); and to give it no quarter wherever they can fasten upon it. And the heart which doth not this, in the strength of grace; but which can indulge inward sins, the sins of the thought, of the passions, and of the mind, with complacency; may have the greatest reason to examine itself, whether it be in the faith or not. Certainly, if this be formed into any thing like a habit, the person is without one great and indispensable evidence of the spirit of Christ within him: for he, who is *a discerner of the thoughts* hath declared by his Apostle, that *sin shall not have dominion over his people*, but that the *thoughts* and *every thought* as far as possible, are to be *brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*. The sincere Christian is grieved at his imperfections, and certainly can never delight in them.

The victory, which this LAW of the Lord gains for the believer over these two evil principles of *self-righteousness* and *sin*, both clears his way for, and adds strength to enjoy the *triumph of holiness*. This almighty LAW works holiness in him by uniting him to Christ as the great head of influence, through whom all his sanctification must proceed: And this was typified by the sacred oil, which was poured upon Aaron's head, and which from the head ran down to the skirts of his clothing. The unction from the Spirit is all through the head, from whom it descends to the meanest of its members. Christians have no consecration or separation to God from the world and sin, but in this way; and they enjoy all real and vital *holiness* with its *power*, and the several and particular *acts* of that power, only by this great mean. It is as much beyond a poor helpless sinner, for such the strongest believer upon earth is *in himself* (and the strongest believer is the most sensible of his weakness,) to perform any act in God's sight intrinsically holy by his own strength; as it is for him, by the same strength, to wrest the earth from its orbit, or to pluck the sun from the sky. Now, what is the effect of this knowledge in his soul? And what doth the consciousness of all this infirmity produce in him?—Not laziness, or inaction; not despair of doing good, nor yet of pleasing God by attempting it; but a firm and more entire reliance upon this all-quickening Law, that he, by his energy, may *work in him both to will and to do*. In this way, like the Apostle, he finds, that *when he is weak, then he is*

*strong*; that is, when he is most sensible of his natural weakness, he lays the faster hold by faith upon this spiritual helper, who is not only strong, but *strength* itself, and even *everlasting strength*. And in this mode too he perceives his experience to be parallel with the Apostle's, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me:—through Christ*, because the Spirit (as was before observed) works all in the believer *through* his divine head and Saviour, which is another proof *to him*, and upon *fact* too, that there subsists an eternal and inseparable union between the divine persons, and that his own enjoyment of communion with one, is the enjoyment of communion with the other *two*, rendering him a worshipper “of one God in Trinity, and of the Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons (with the Sabellians, &c.) nor (with the Arians, &c.) dividing the substance.”

Thus, believer, art thou privileged to *consider* and *afly* to the GREAT and GLORIOUS LAW, of which we have been treating. In Him all manifestative or revealed laws concentrate, and from Him alone did they proceed. They were all given to lead his people into a right way, all calculated according to their state and condition, all designed to introduce them to holiness and heaven. Rightly understood, the several branches are seen perfectly to coalesce; the moral, the ceremonial, and the evangelical, forming one great and beautiful whole. They extend, like *radii* or rays to the different points of a vast circumference; but, as they issued from one centre, they all unite in the same. Like the several parts of a mighty arch, they give reciprocal aid to each other, constitute one grand design, and perform one common end. The *moral law* curses indeed, but, in Christ, it only curses to bless; by shewing the sinner to himself, and by driving him out of himself to his Redeemer for refuge. The *ceremonial law*, with pointed and most expressive emblems, shews *how* this refuge and salvation are to be effected, and leads the faith of believers to Jesus the sum and substance of all its speaking and lively shadows.\* The *evangelic law* (if such it may be called) is the consummation of the other two, and records, that all the *statutes* of external rites, all the *precepts* which denoted God's

\* Abarbanel the famous Rabbi could call the apparatus of the Jewish ceremonial “a book of the most sublime wisdom to the glorious substance of which all those rites refer.” Nor is there any wonder in this case, since we are expressly informed, (1 Chron. xxviii. 12.) that *David had the pattern*, the model, the revelation, *by the Spirit*, concerning these things, and that he was *made to understand them* (v. 19.) *by the hand* or Spirit of the Lord upon him. 2 Kings iii. 15. See Wits. Ægypt l. iii. c. 10.

presence, all the *testimonies* which shewed the coming of the Messiah, all the *judgments* or *decrees* of God concerning him and his people, all the *commandments* or *general duties*, all the *word revealed* whether of Christ or from Christ, and, in short, all the *mind and will* of God comprehended under the notion of *rule and law*; were one grand efflux from this Holy Spirit of truth, in conjunction with the Father and Son; were designed to signify their respective offices of grace; and do now, as they ever have done, lead up the hearts of his faithful people to communion with him in those offices; the end of all which is glory to God and life everlasting to them.

Dear Christian! what is here before thine eyes!—Canst thou view thyself any longer that despicable worm, which sin hath rendered thee, or which the miseries and infirmities of thy nature seem to proclaim? Can all this expense of salvation be laid out for *nobody*, or *nothing*; or for *thee*, if thou wert considered by thy God, as *not worth* the saving? Did Christ die for a wretch, a miserable apostate, and a slave; only to leave him in the same condition, in which he was found? Doth he set no higher value upon thee, after thou hast cost him so many cares, and such reiterated sufferings, than to leave thee to thyself; or to permit thee to sink into original nothing; or to perish into endless misery, which is worse than that nothing? Is it possible for thee to believe all this concerning *Him*, and concerning that *loving Spirit*, which led thee, as a living law, to this Jesus for his promised salvation?—O the depth of *unbelief*; that bitterest root of sin! Prone to credit any thing but the truth, unbelief would inspire thee to contradict every result of God's eternal counsel, and to question the reality, certainty and wisdom of his *everlasting covenant*, which (being *such*) can never be broken. But "Thou art a *worm*!—Well, be it so: Yet *fear not*, worm Jacob: *I will help thee*, saith Jehovah. Is. xli. 10.—14.—But "Thou art a *sin-ner*!" Harken again; *Come now, and let us reason together*, saith Jehovah, *though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool*. Is. i. 18. Only *Come*!—But "Thou art a *backslider*!"—Perhaps, a very great one; but see if thou art, or ever canst be greater than *those*, to whom these words are addressed; *Return thou backsliding Israel, saith Jehovah, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith Jehovah; I will not keep anger for ever*. Jer. iii. read the whole chapter.—But "these were Israelites (it may be urged) and thou art a *Gentile*!"

—God doth not stop here; for *thus saith the Adonai Jehovah, Behold I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people. Wherefore? That the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. There is no difference between Jew or Greek (or Gentile), for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.* O that this Spirit may quicken these words to thy soul, that the power of unbelief, that principal sinew of all other sin and corruption, may be weakened within thee! Learn to consider unbelief, as a most heinous treason against the truth of God, and a most impudent presumption (with all its affected modesty) against the omnipotence of God; and then pray against it in this view: Like the Devil himself, its abettor, thus resisted, it shall be put under thy feet. If it rise up again and harass, do not trifle with it in thy own strength, nor hold parley for a minute: Buckle on thy Christian *armour*, and fall on with the *sword of the Spirit*. Often one blow, with a *Thus it is written*, shall bring the monster prostrate to the ground. Reasoning with sins, like coaxing with rebels, only tends to give them confidence, and to make them tenfold more rebellious.

And O what a privilege, thou more confirmed Christian, art thou entitled to enjoy! This great *living Law*, who reigns in Heaven, descends to reign and dwell within thy breast. He is *thy Law*: and thou desirest his dominion for evermore. He is also the *Law of Love*, and brings peace, joy, and righteousness to thy troubled mind. When *he* appears, sorrow dies away. His absence, or the sense of his absence, is the presence of misery, and the occasion of all evil. “O for his continual, his more abiding presence!”—is thy daily cry: and thou shalt not cry in vain. Remember, he is *the Law of Faith* for thee to trust in and to work by, a *spiritual law* to suit his doctrine to thy spiritual ignorance,\* and the law of *the Spirit of life* to bring thee from the death of sin to life everlasting. This was one great end, why he would be known as the Law of life, and why he revealed all other laws to erring man: and this object and purpose can never be lost by him, either through want of wisdom, power, or love; for these attributes are all spirit and life in him. As Christ is the *Lord thy righteousness*, so the Spirit is the *Lord thy Law*, writing himself upon thy heart, and witnessing for himself in thy life; enabling thee to embrace Christ as thy righteousness for Heaven, and exciting thee to bring forth works of righteousness all the way to Heaven. How happy, then, art thou privileged to be, in full

\* *Remoto Des, caelestique doctrinâ, omnia erroribus plena sunt.* Lact.

recumbence on his *faithfulness* and *truth*, and upon *those counsels of old*, which sprung from *both*. Did ever man fail, that trusted in the Lord? Search, and inquire. Did *he* publish himself as the ground of the unerring law and the everlasting covenant, on purpose to break the one and to render the other void? Stop and consider.—*Men* may act foolishly or ineffectually, which is almost the same; but *thy God* cannot. Lean, therefore, upon his strength; and he will bear thee *on*, and bear thee *out*, to thy journey's end: and, when *mortality is swallowed up of life*, and thy *corruptible shall put on incorruption*; O with what joy, what unutterable joy, shalt thou enter the mansions of the blest, and sing, with eternal liberty, the praises of that *perfect Law of Life*, which shall fill them, and fill thee, with his own fulness, without end!—After a little more *faith and patience thou shalt inherit the promises*, and possess those perfections, which thou canst not even guess at or *conceive* below: and then,—O then what remains?—Surely, nothing, nothing but praise upon praise; the great, the universal, the everlasting *Hallelu-Jah!*

Come, thou *universal Law*,  
 And with thy sweet power draw  
 All my soul from Satan's wiles,  
 And from sin's delusive smiles,  
 And from what, devoid of thee,  
 Only death or Hell can be!

Then my soul, with wisdom fraught,  
 Such as thou hast ever taught,  
 Shall to heights of truth aspire,  
 With no languid dull desire,  
 And with liberty shall rove  
 O'er thy vast expanse of love.

Come, thou *living Law*, to me:  
 O translate my soul to thee!



## VOICE.

BY the word *voice* is generally understood that vibration of the air, performed by the mouth of man, which excites the sensation, called *sound*, in the auditory nerves of his own and other species of creatures about him. The elastic nature of the air,

which returns a vast variety of impressions with the utmost speed and exactness; and the organs of speech, which, minute as they are, affect so powerful and fleeting a body to a great and wide degree; are truly astonishing circumstances in themselves, and might justly raise astonishment in men at the Creator's wisdom and power, could these operations be less common, or more considered, than they are. 'Tis an old debate, that we have no exact idea of *motion*; but certainly we have much less idea of the rapidity of the motion of *sound*, which, according to the experimental calculations of Dr. Derham, passes at the rate of 1142 feet in one second of time. We know, by experience, that the lips, teeth, and tongue, which modulate the sound of our voice into distinct articulations, can no sooner perform their office; than the words, which are sounds articulated, are at the same instant in the ears of those we speak to. Our voice is the means, by which we convey the ideas of our own spirits to the spirits of others; and our organs strike the spring of air, as the only medium in this world of matter, for the communion of souls, which are inclosed in that matter, and which, but for a substance of this rarified exility, must be more locked up in prisons, than at present we find them.

Thunder, and other agitations of the air, which surpass the art and power of man to accomplish, or, which are confessedly accomplished by God in the elementary world, are usually called in scripture, for that reason, the voice of God. They are vibrations of, or sounds in the air, and thus become a *voice*: and they are effected and ordained by the power of God alone, and, therefore, are properly *his* Voice.

But this word *voice*, in its application to God, has a much higher sense than this, and is used to express the *agency* or *communications* of his blessed Spirit. He takes his name *Spirit* from the *air* we breathe, signifying to us under that emblem, that whatever the air is to the respiration, life, and well-being of the material world; he, the Holy Spirit, in a superior though similar manner, is to the existence, enjoyment, and support of the spiritual world. And as the voice is air moved or in motion, as to natural things; so the voice of Jehovah is the spirit in motion, with respect to heavenly things. When, therefore, the *voice of the Lord* is said to do such and such wonders, as are ascribed to it in the Bible; we are to understand, that it is *the Lord the Spirit* in act and exercise, accomplishing some particular object. God uses this mode of speaking according to natural em-

blems, in condescension to our capacities ; for had any other mode of speaking been used, with relation to spiritual concerns, our present faculties could not have conceived them.\* They conceive but too little of them even in this way, and constantly need superior aid for instruction : how then must we have been puzzled, if even language could have borne it ; had God delivered his sublime truths, as they are *in se*, or as they really exist in themselves ?

Two or three scriptures may serve to shew, with what propriety, the *Holy Spirit* is revealed under the title of Voice of the Lord.

At the creation of the world, it is revealed, *the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*, as an agent in that glorious work. In the xxixth Psalm, which celebrates the mighty acts of the Voice of the Lord, we shall find, that this *voice was*, or *is upon the waters*, ruling and governing the great depths of nature and of grace ; and that the same Voice is no other than Jehovah himself, because it is presently added, by way of describing this voice, that Jehovah is *upon many, or great, waters*. From the comparison of these two scriptures, it is evident, that the *voice upon the waters* in the one text is not a mere sound, but that divine person who is called the *Spirit of God* in the other text, and both the one and the other name, *i. e.* of *Voice* and *Spirit*, refer ultimately, as the grand titles of the same divine person, to Jehovah upon *the waters*. The whole Psalm is a noble testimony concerning this *Spirit*, under the name of *Voice* ; and there is a remarkable interchanging of that title with the name Jehovah which is a convincing proof, that the *Voice* and *Jehovah* are *one*, and consequently, that the *Spirit* is *Jehovah* himself, or a *person in Jehovah*.†

In Isaiah vi. 8. we read, that *the voice of the Lord said, whom shall I send? proving the personality of that Voice : and who will go for us? declaring the plurality of that personality, in the Godhead. In the next verse, it is added, and he said, &c. If we turn to Acts xxviii. 25, &c. we shall find that this Voice,*

\* It is an old and true maxim, *Quicquid recipitur, recipitur secundum modum recipientis*. We can receive nothing *above*, but only *according to our capacity* ; and as our ideas usually pass through the medium of our senses, God in his gracious wisdom hath given his revelation accordingly, and raises up the mind through objects of sense to those things, at which sense ends and faith begins.

† The Romish commentators have tortured this glorious Psalm into a mere panegyric upon their seven sacraments, but with how much absurdity it may be easily seen in one of the best of them, the learned Estius upon the Place.



mentioned by the Prophet, is, according to the Apostle, identically the Holy Ghost, who spake by Isaiah to the fathers, *saying, go unto this people, &c.*—From these texts (and others might be added) it appears, that the *voice* of Jehovah is the *Spirit* of Jehovah, and that the *Spirit* is a *person* in Jehovah himself.

God's Voice, therefore, is not (like the voice of the creatures) a vibratory motion only of the air or mere sound, but that *person* the divine *Spirit*, who is all life, activity, and omnipotence. Accordingly it is said of him, that when God *uttered his voice*, i. e. sent forth his Spirit *ad extra*, to effect the divine purpose, *the earth melted*; it sunk beneath his power in a moment. Ps. xlv. 6. Again; in Ps. lxxviii. 33. it is said, that God *sendeth out his voice, and that a mighty voice*; a voice of Power. This *Spirit* of power concurred in the whole work of creation; for when God *said*, or gave forth his voice, *let there be light*; that voice effected what was said, and fulfilled, outwardly, God's inward mind and decree. When God spake to the fathers; he sent forth his voice or spirit to them for the revelation of his will; and accordingly it is said, that it was the *Holy Ghost*, who *spake* to them. He was the voice both in them and to them. When the law was given by Moses; it was the voice of the Lord who spake to him, and gave instruction by him to the people. Deut. iv. 36. When the Spirit came down at the day of Pentecost upon the Apostles; they spake indeed the words of God, but it was the voice or spirit of God in them, *who gave them utterance*. In a word, he is the almighty Voice of thunder and dismay to his adversaries, breaking in pieces the *tallest cedars*, the loftiest of the creatures; but a *still small voice* to his people, constantly giving to their ears an instructive word, *this is the way, walk ye in it.*—is of equal power in both, though to different ends; in the *one* for the terror of destruction, and in the *other* for the peace of salvation.

From all this it seems plain, that the voice of God is God speaking by his Spirit, and that therefore, the Spirit hath taken the name of voice, in order to declare his swiftness, life, and energy. It is also plain, that God hath used this emblem of voice, to convey further to our minds, by natural effects which are constantly with us, such notices, as we are able to conceive, of that sublime and supernatural agency, which his holy Spirit is performing for us. It becomes our duty and our interest, to consider the name and the sign, with frequency and attention, as we would wish to

have, the more frequently in our minds, the important end signified.

God sent forth his Spirit, who, together with the other divine persons, made the world, and whatever we can see or conceive upon it and beyond it. He *spake and all things were made*. Omnipotence was in this voice; or, rather, this voice was omnipotence itself. Words and deeds are the same with him: And his will, wisdom, and power, though employed by the different persons in the divine essence and for distinct ends, are all essentially the same, are alike in each person, and common to all. The *voice* is both the *expression* and the act of that will: It is the Spirit performing outwardly from the essence in creation. When God said *let it be done*; it *was done* as soon as it was said, and done *in and by* the saying. It would be blasphemy to affirm, that he *wills* any thing, which doth not ensue; or that his voice commands, without a consequent obedience to his command. He said, *live*, to beings, which had no being till that word was pronounced; and by the voice of his power, all the universe of beings exist and are maintained. If he withdraw himself, they die, are discomposed, and turned again to their dust? for, *in him alone they live, and move, and have the continuance of their being*.

This voice not only spake all things into being, but preserves them in the enjoyment of that being. The world and all the creatures are supported by the same divine power which created them; or they could either not subsist at all, or must rush into confusion. This voice is both in providence and grace, and banishes the absurdity of mere chance into chaos, if such a region can be found. The sun, for instance, doth not rise of itself: God *maketh the sun to rise*, as well as the *rain to fall*. Matth. v. 45. This text "shews (said a good man) the continual concurrence and power of God with natural causes. It is not like a *clock*, which, when it is once wound up, will go itself by the weight of the plummets; but like a *pen*, which writes not a letter nor a tittle, without the continual guidance of the writer.\*"

When man fell from his original rectitude, he no longer received the *voice* of God as at the first, a voice of peace and instruction in which he delighted; but, immediately, upon hearing *the voice*, the very voice, of Jehovah Alchim, *walking*,† or moving עָנַן הָיָה לְפָנָיו

\* White's Πανθεολογία, p. 100.

† The participle is yet stronger for the *personality* of this voice in the original, being in Hitpacl, which signifies an agent acting upon himself; so that the words might have been rendered, *the voice caused himself to move*, &c.

The idea of the voice's walking in the *cool* of the day, like a man about

*the Spirit of the day*, i. e. (probably) to carry on that spiritual and natural life for which the day of this system was created; both Adam and his wife hid themselves *from his presence*, for they felt their souls to be more naked of truth and uprightness, than their bodies were of raiment. He *heard* the divine voice, and was afraid, because he found himself a *sinner*. He *hid* himself, in the foolishness of sin, from an all-seeing eye, to whom he could no longer look up with confidence for protection, favor and delight. And had God's voice left him, as he left the voice of God; he had been undone for ever. But this gracious voice spake a promise, which, as God, he only could make or perform, and carried the faith of it to poor Adam's heart. Thus, the first sinners became the first believers, and gave a lesson to their fallen offspring, both of the unavoidable curse of sin, and the free salvation of grace.

This blessed voice hath, in all ages since, communicated the mind of God to men. He gave forth the precepts to patriarchs, the law to Israelites, the gospel to all. He gave all in Christ, and for Christ, who was appointed to be the *head of all things to his church*. This voice came in perfect communion with the Father and Son, and hath ever illustrated the transcendant glory of the three undivided persons in one Godhead.

When he gave the precepts to patriarchs, he gave with those precepts the everlasting gospel. Abel, Seth, Noah, Abraham, and the rest of the holy ancients, *believed*, had *faith*, rested upon the *truth* of God, and found him at all times the God of truth. This mighty voice carried peace, and every requisite grace into their souls. He appointed some ordinances to them, as witnesses of himself; and he witnessed for himself, in those ordinances, by his own divine power to their hearts. What lessons of grace, love, and promise, did Abraham receive for instance, when he had devoted his only son to God, under an appointed figure, which was to shew him, how God had devoted his only Son for him? If one could have seen the good old patriarch's heart, in

his garden in the evening to avoid the heat, according to our own and some other translations; or, in the *afternoon of the day*, according to the Septuagint; seems neither agreeable to the *words* or the *sense* of the original. The purport of the passage may be conveyed by the following paraphrase; "As the wind passes over the earth for the life of the creatures upon it; so the Spirit of God moved through this perfect spot, thence called a garden, for the life and support of the souls, he had placed in it. The *mode* of this motion, in the Spirit or in its symbol the wind, is not to be understood by us; though the *effect* of both will be always evident enough. See John iii. 8. Eccles. xi. 5.

the close of this transaction upon the mount; one might also have seen, with what justness he is called, *the father of the faithful* and *the friend of God*.

When this voice uttered the law, and enjoined the ceremonial institutes, to the Jews; he clothed the one with power, to shew men their sin and departure from truth; and the other with grace, to declare his own righteousness and their salvation by the Messiah. Without his energy in both, both were ineffectual; and, therefore, thousands, who came out of Egypt and had seen his *mighty acts*, were afterwards destroyed, because they *believed not*. His mighty acts, and his loudest thunders, carried no voice of grace and life to the soul, but by that spiritual and almighty voice, who spake them all into being. How few of that vast multitude in the wilderness are recorded for their faith? Rather, almost the whole multitude itself were punished for unbelief. The way of life and the way of destruction had the same limits *then*, as *now*; the one, *narrow* for a *few*; and the other, *broad* for the *many*.

When this holy voice spake by the prophets, his revelations came with the power of saving life to some, and to others with the force, or *savor of death, unto death*. The hardness of man's heart by fallen nature is shewn, by the constant, unintermitted and obstinate resistance, it has at all times made to the mind of God, the threatenings of God, and the witnesses of God. Facts and examples in every age may convince us, that no power, but the divine, can meliorate the obduracy within, and impart the tender *flesh* for the callous or impenetrable *stone*. This voice gives, and ever gave, the *hearing ear*, the *seeing eye*, and the *believing mind*: And, if *he* command not these blessed gifts, men have *ears and hear not, eyes and see not* and *hearts without understanding*, or power to believe. To prove this, is to quote the whole bible: To exemplify this, is to point to the world.

When Jesus *spake as never man spake*, this voice was with him, and in him. God was in Christ, the Spirit was in Christ; and, therefore, Christ spake not his own words, as the God-man, but the words of the Father, and of God. The manhood of Jesus was inhabited by the Son, and was witnessed to by the Father and the Spirit, at his baptism and at his transfiguration; by all which this very manhood became the Son of God with power, and was qualified to be the great High Priest to mediate between God and man. And as the Spirit witnessed for Jesus; so Jesus witnessed for the Spirit, as the comforter, the promise of the Father, the infallible guide into all truth. When Christ commanded, this Spi-

rit went forth and effectuated his command. He was the voice of God in the Messiah, and performed, in him, by him, and for him, all the miracles which men saw in nature, and those which only his people felt in grace.

This voice attended the Apostles, gave them utterance, filled their mouths with right words, and clothed those words with a glorious force. Acts iv. 33. He spake in them, and by them. *It is not ye that speak* (said Jesus,) *but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* They did not go forth into the world, like philosophers, or like the learned ignorants of the age, with the unmeaning or inefficacious words of man's wisdom, but with the words of the Holy Ghost and with power; that it might be seen, that the conversion of sinners is not to be effected by human arguments or artifice, nor the faith of God's people by eloquence or moral suasion, but only by him, who gave the word, and the company of preachers to declare it. What was there in St. Peter's first sermons, for instance, which could create such amazing effects in changing and piercing hearts, as we find they did in the conversion of three thousand souls at one time, and of five thousand at another! They were plain, unstudied, and unadorned narrations of some simple matters of fact, with an obvious inference or two, which arose from them. The Apostle had no skill to fence with words, and desired none. 2 Peter i. 16. He knew his own strength to be nothing, and that all good consequences must proceed from a much higher cause. Nor was it in him to give the Holy Ghost to whom he would, as Simon Magus thought, and as some besides him have seemed to think; but it depended entirely upon the sovereign power of the voice by whom he spake, to bestow the life and grace of the gospel, and, in some sad instances, to seal up to death and condemnation by the law. Acts xi. 17. v. l. xxviii. 27. All the Apostles acknowledged this grand truth; and so, more or less, have all the witnesses for God in every age of the world.

This voice of majesty accompanies his own revealed and written word, even now. When his ministers preach it, or according to it; the blessing is imparted by him, and doth not stand upon the propriety, the arrangement, the elegance, or force of their style, manner, or matter; but upon his own will and activity. *His* word by them, not *their* word by themselves, is to be considered by the people; and *as* his word, it is conveyed by himself to the hearts of the people. He honors his ministers, while they honor him; and though he could convert souls without their instrumen-

tality, yet he very rarely operates but by it. The Eunuch might have been taught by his grace to understand his word without Philip; but he so regarded the means of his own appointment, that he rather chose to send Philip a journey into the desert. The Eunuch also might have had the help of the Apostles at Jerusalem; but the Spirit suffered him to depart, in order to shew, that he would work by whatever means he pleased, without any confinement of time or place. The Angel likewise might have taught Cornelius the same truths with St. Peter; but the Spirit chose to declare, in a contrary appointment, that a feeble reed, as the Apostle was in himself, trembling at every wind, and once at the mean breath of a servant-maid, should by this superadded strength work such miracles in men's souls, as all the Angels in Heaven united could not perform. Those blessed Spirits would say aloud, if permitted, *'Tis not in us*: and, if not in them, surely not in the children of men, nor in all the ministers of God. 'Tis true; *God hath in due times manifested his word through preaching*; but 'tis equally true, that *none can preach that word except they be sent*, nor impart success, in preaching, by themselves. They might as well take a bell, as the Romish Priests do to scare away the Devil, and ring it in the pulpit to bring up the dead; as expect the salvation of men should arise from their fleeting breath. 'Tis possible for them (as, with too many it is to be feared is the case) to tinkle like a cymbal and afford a pretty tune; and 'tis equally possible for people to go away vastly delighted with the jingle of their sound or the cadence of their words: but follow them home, examine the influence of all upon their lives, and there it will be perceived, whether or not the sense expired with the sound, and whether they only remember (what people remember of oratorios) that it was all very fine, elegant and charming. There is a deal of this sort of *diversion* in modern profession; and too many appear to estimate the state of their souls, only by the quantity of religious amusement, which they can procure for them. But, with respect to the life of God, or any experimental knowledge of his word; they know no more of it, upon examination, than their horses; nay, will do, what their horses cannot, revile and blaspheme it. This is no novel, though plain comparison: it is as old at least as Isaiah, who gives it even in blunter terms. Is. i. 3.

As it would be a wonder indeed, if men by their voice could raise the *dead in sin*; so the wonder ceases, when we find that it is the voice of God, which causeth sinners to arise, and walk, and

live. This voice, being the power of the Godhead carried forth into external act, is an omnipotent or irresistible voice. He no sooner reached the auditory nerves of Lazarus in the grave, and he reached them (far surpassing the velocity of material sound) in less than a moment, than those nerves felt and heard in that individual instant, though but, in the moment before, they were actually dead. He was not the mere sound of the words, *come forth*; but the vivid life and energy, under the emblem or medium of that sound. In like manner, his written word, though given from him and agreeable to his will, is not *himself*, as some heretics have imagined; but plain letters and symbols of sound, expressing sacred truths, which then have their force, when this Holy Spirit breathes into them, carries them like a shaft into a sinner's heart, and clothes them, with his living power. A man might read the Bible from morning to night, and from January to December; but, unless this Spirit enlighten it, be the man as learned in other respects as he may, it will be a *book sealed*, and in its most important matters, really unintelligible to him.\* It hath been so to learned Rabbies, as well ancient as modern, in whose tongue it was written, and who have had some outward helps, which the present learned among the Gentiles have not. And what was the Gospel to them? Nothing, but a mere *stumbling-block*; all wood and nothing good. To the learned Greeks, who were the most acute, ingenious, and scientific of all men, it was altogether *foolishness*, or (in polished modern phrase) "cant, enthusiasm, nonsense." They sagaciously thought, for instance, that the *resurrection*, which St. Paul preached, was (like *fear* and *falseness* among the Romans) a new or strange God; and as to the doctrine of a crucified Saviour, they scouted it as the most ridiculous *babbling* or stupidity. It was, and is, an *hidden wisdom*, which, as man is by nature too blind to see it, and yet too conceited to own this blindness, he profoundly calls it by the name of *folly*, that he may run it down, if possible, by an ill name. He succeeds in this attempt, perhaps, in the present world; but loses himself by it, for the world to come.

To the people of God, in all ages and nations, this *voice* of God is full of life and energy. He calls them from the night of nature and the death of sin: and his *calling* is *effectual* for this end. He emits, not only word, but power in the word, which the dead hear and feel, and, by feeling and hearing it, live. This voice, imparting life, collects all the heirs of life, and gathers them into one, under one head, Christ Jesus. They are *the called accord-*

\* See Witsius's *Melot. Leqd* p. 323.

ding to his purpose. Hence they derive their general name of  $\epsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\alpha$ , in the Old and New Testaments; *i. e.* the Church, which consists of "the whole company of faithful people," who are called together in one body by this glorious voice. The Spirit called, the Spirit gathered them all, and will do so, till the number of those be complete, whose names are written in Heaven. This shews, that the calling of God, originating both as to purpose and exercise in himself, is both unfrustrable and without repentance: and that the salvation of the called depends upon the effectual working of his power, and not upon their own.

As this Voice speaks life into the people of Christ; so it bears continual witness for him in their hearts and lives. He keeps their hearts, that they might not fail: he orders their lives, that they may not depart from him; and he gives them all the holiness they have. This Voice explains the worth of Christ in all things, draws the affections after him, keeps faith alive and active upon him, preserves from wrong apprehensions of him, discovers more and more of his glory, and finally brings the soul to everlasting communion with him.

This blessed Voice teaches the children of God to cry, *Abba, Father*: he gives them utterance, and adds power to the sound. This voice speaks in them, when they pray and praise; not in the clatter of mere words, but in the deep and fervent devotions of their souls. He also speaks for them before the throne; and is their advocate, in conjunction with the Saviour, in the holiest of all.

This Voice opens to them the mysteries of the kingdom, and enables their souls to rejoice in the glories of the world above. He speaks understanding to their minds, affording them a right conception and a true experience of his holy word. This word, without him, is a lock without a key; an unintelligible cyphering for the most part, which the unassisted wit of man can never explain.\* He yields the rich sense, rather than the nicety of words, to the soul; and enables it, not only to read a naked account, but to

\* The word of God was ever an *enigma*, or *parable*, to the world, and to carnal professors who are but of the world. There is a spiritual sense, which runs through the whole law, the Prophets, and the New Testament itself, which only is truly explained by the Holy Spirit, and which he does explain, in various measures, to the meanest believers; while the learned and great (in their own eyes) are sent empty away.—This is a grating truth to human pride; but a truth notwithstanding. Peter, the fisherman, knew this sense; when Gamaliel, the most learned doctor of the Jewish law, could not comprehend it. See more to this effect in Bishop Stillingfleet's *Orig. Sacre.* Book vii c. 7. and also very excellently, in Spanh. *Dub. Evang.* Vol. 3. p. 466



taste the sweet savor of eternal life revealed in his book. Nor does he teach them to *impose* a sense, or to *make allegories*, for the word is fixed and the prophecy sealed; but explains the sense *already* laid down, and the allegories *before* established, to their believing minds. Hence, they see an analogy in the book of God, which others do not; and discover, by degrees, that it is not a "rude and indigested mass" of various matters, but a complete and beautiful arrangement of grace, love, and peace, from beginning to end. It flows from one great fountain of truth, and, in its several streams, rolls the water of life through the whole city of God.

This Voice condescends in all his tuition to our capacities, and speaks the things of God in the language of man. He descends to the poverty of our ideas, and enriches them from the everlasting treasures of his grace. When his people look to him for instruction, he is not a *Bath-Kol*,\* or *daughter of a voice*, as the Jewish dreamers have asserted; but he speaks to their hearts by his word; he enlightens their eyes to read it: and (as that word is made for all their possible circumstances) he enables them to read his answer in the sacred code. By his aid, this book becomes a true *Encyclopædia*, a circle of all spiritual science, a *lively oracle*, to answer all the wants, longings, and ignorances of their souls.

And, if any word or words in these essays, O reader, find a way to thy heart, and render thy soul the least aid or advantage; this glorious Voice, of whom they treat, and according to whose word, 'tis hoped, they are framed, hath alone spoken that aid or advantage to thee. Ten thousand volumes, all penned according to truth, and containing nothing but the truth, would not impart one ray of light, nor afford one drop of comfort, to thy spirit, without this *effectual* help. How should this teach thee, then, to pray over what thou mayest hear or read; that thy time may not be lost in the exercise, nor thy soul go away dry without a blessing? For want of this, we hear such constant complaints among religious people of their *frames*, their *preachers*, or *themselves*. There is no wonder in the case, that ordinances, prayers, sermons, &c. should not profit; because they are not *mixed with faith* in those who use them. They look up to men; who, as

\* The reader may see a very satisfactory account of this pretended oracle, and of the *sortes Virgiliæ*, with other stupid divinations, in Pridaux's *Connect.* Vol. II. B. 5. To which might be added, *Wits. Misc. Sac.* Vol. I. p. 18.

men, are barren trees. And what right have they, then, to grieve, that God doth not hear them, when they themselves do not listen to God? Can they expect, that he should comfort them on earth, while they do not look up to him in Heaven? Ought they to complain, that the Lord slights their desires, who attend not to his word in the nature or expression of those desires? If Abraham, Moses, or St. Paul, were on earth; neither of them could give a spark of grace from themselves; and all of them would peremptorily point men to the Spirit and his word for that end. In vain do rainisters preach even *the truth as it is in Jesus* to people, who are not taught by the Spirit of Jesus to look up to him alone for his gracious power and instruction. They may run from ordinance to ordinance, and yet *go lean* all the day long. They may be *diverted* (according to a strange fashion grown up in the professing world) under a sermon; their ears may be tickled with the wit, or the eloquence, and sometimes perhaps with something *less* than these; but their minds not savingly enlightened, their hearts not edified, nor the life of grace more established within them. O what deceits of sin and sinfulness have we in us, and about us! How *little* communion do we hold with our God, even in places devoted to that communion; and how *much less*, every where else! Might not Christ ask again that awful question; *When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*—Reader, ask thyself, “shall he find faith in ME?”

Attendance upon ordinances, uttering prayers, singing praises, or any other acts which the *body* can perform, considered in themselves, are not *religion*, though proper and appointed means, by which the Holy Spirit works to beget and support it. They are, therefore, rightly called *means*; for they are no more the *end*, than the scaffold is the building itself, which it is only constructed to raise. But true religion is that *inwrought* grace of God, which shews itself in *faith* towards *him*, and *goodness* towards *man*; which enables the Christian to lean upon God as his only stay, to enjoy communion with him, and to give up body, soul, and all things, to his wise disposal; which invigorates his heart against the power of the world and sin, and which enlightens his mind to follow truth and to renounce every delusion and error, which may effect his salvation. In *this* blessed religion, there is life, light, peace, holiness, and all the fruits of the Spirit; because this religion is a creation, not of the animal nature, but of the spirit alone.—When one considers this truth, and looks abroad in the world for some appearances of it; Alas! Where

are they to be found! How many poor souls, under the most evangelical preaching for years, join in the prayers of others and make many long prayers themselves, constantly frequent every holy ordinance, and look with solemn faces on all the solemnities of the gospel; who never knew, and never enjoyed, the secret and divine experience of the religion of Jesus! If they are not ignorant of its form, or not cold and insipid in their manner; yet how many only get heated in their passions, or fervent in their animal frame, either by the affecting energy of a sermon, or upon the relation of some extraordinary occurrences in the world? And how many, when nothing but the *old man* has been stirred up in them, have fancied themselves, only from the violence of his emotions, deeply devout and religious; when, if they would examine the case, they might find perhaps, that the same emotions might be raised upon any other occasion, or at the play-house. The voice of God, in his people's souls, is not thunder and bluster, but a *still small voice*, inducing a calm in our turbulent nature, and lifting us up, above that nature, into his holy rest. Thus, he that truly *believeth*, HATH *entered into rest*, and finds it *within his soul*. 'Tis not grace, but the flesh, which finds *amusement* in profession. Faith doth not go to ordinances to pass away the time, or merely because it is right to go; but enters upon the holy duties with a sacred awe, considers in whose presence it acts, and looks, *through* the duties, for the blessings of strength and wisdom, promised in the use of them. Unbelief, on the contrary, attends ordinances, not to edify but to stun conscience with a form of godliness, to quiet a gnawing worm within, or to appear with a good face in the professing world without.— O the deceitfulness of the heart, which can draw motives of *self-righteousness* and *self-complacency* out of those very duties, which were enjoined for the suppression of those principles within us! And how wonderful a business is it, in the view of so many shipwrecks about us, to be indeed a *Christian*, and at last to get safe into the haven.—Believer, let this awful reflection preach to thy heart, that it is all of *grace*, from beginning to end, *that thou art saved*; for surely, it speaks aloud, that nothing but gracious omnipotence could save thee, so long and so often, from the snares of the world, from the wiles of the Devil, among the falls of professors, and from (what is a more dangerous evil than all the rest)—*thine own self*. O look up to this blessed Spirit, this eternal Voice of heaven, that he may *finish* what he hath *begun* in thee, and that, after *enabling thee* to fight the *good fight*

of faith, he may finally *give thee the crown of righteousness, and bless thee among his chosen for ever and ever!*

The VOICE of God is God alone,  
Speaking his perfect will :  
Angels are dumb before his throne,  
And mortals should be still.

“ Be still and know, that I am God ;”  
This glorious VOICE commands ;  
And swift the universe abroad  
In awful silence stands.

So when this voice divine affords  
The counsels of his grace,  
All Heav'n is mute, because no words  
His mercy can express.



## SPIRIT OF WISDOM, &c.

FOLLY came into the world by *sin* ; and therefore, in the language of divine revelation, it is called by the same name. Moral turpitude and spiritual ignorance arose from one source ; and, though we may distinguish them into acts of the body and acts of the mind, they are as closely allied as cause and effect, or even, in our present state, as the body and mind from which they proceed. The wickedness of folly, and the folly of wickedness, are terms perfectly convertible : They *mean* the same thing, and in fact *are* the same. No *wicked* man is a *wise* man. The world may possibly consider him as such, because he may have craft and cunning ; and so have the Devils : But like them he is indeed a very fool, and will be found so to all eternity. He may possibly delude and bubble his fellow-creatures ; but while he is doing it, he is labouring to cheat *himself* into everlasting ruin : And the man, who commits this cunning folly, denies also the very being of God, in the strongest manner he can deny it, for which impudence and absurdity God calls him a *stupid sinner*, or a *sinful fool*, for his pains. Psalms xiv. and liii. If he could get *the whole world* by his industry in this way, our Saviour says, (in almost so many words) that he would be an eternal loser : And what a wretched mistake, then, must *he* commit, who throws away his soul for *less* than the *ten thousandth* part of that world ?—Yet every man commits this very mistake, who, leaving God, hunts

after the earth as his portion, and becomes the identical person of whom the Lord speaks in the text just mentioned; because his *heart* and *life*, which are stronger evidences than his *tongue*, agree to say.—*There is no God.*

The original word חל, from whence the words for *folly*, &c. are derived, is very expressive, and plainly points out how this evil came into man, and how odious it is, both as to cause and effect, in the sight of God. It signifies to *fall away*, *slide*, or *flow off*, and alludes to the woeful fall of Adam. It means, likewise, as a consequence of that fall, to be *weak*, *languid*, *cut off from nourishment*, as leaves are by falling from their tree. Nor does the fulness of the word stop here, but carries on its idea into the *effect* of all this, viz. to make or esteem *vile* and *loathsome*, as a putrid substance is to the outward sense. Hence, a *dead carcase*, which every body knows was unclean and abhorred among the Jews, receives its name. Lev. v. 2. This very name for the corrupt carcase is also the word which God hath used for the expression of *vileness* and *abomination*. The very same word likewise is employed to convey the true notion of *folly*, which at best is *insipidity* and so opposed to *wisdom* which is derived from *tasting*, and in conclusion becomes (like all insipid and unsalted matters) *filth*, *rottenness*, and *corruption*. By all this, as well as by express phrases and passages of scripture, we may perceive, how *senseless* and *abominable* at once all *sin* and *corruption* are in the sight of an holy and all-wise God.

By man came *sin* and *folly*, and *death* or the *dead carcase*, into the world; all expressed by one word, which imports whatever is stupid, and insipid, and hateful, and loathsome. In opposition to this, God hath used another word, חכמה, *wisdom*, which does not mean mere naked intellect, but that capacity of the soul, employed and engaged upon mental objects, which *perceives*, *tastes*, *relishes*, and consequently *knows assuredly*; as the faculty of *sensation*, which our palates have, tastes and distinguishes with certainty the sweet or bitter qualities of food, or other substances.\* By the fall, our nature was cut off from the *life of God*, became *insipid*, *foolish*, *sinful*, and, in one word, *spiritually dead* and *loathsome*, without capacity to taste, without wish for that capacity, and without any emotions of *hunger* and *thirst after righteousness* or spiritual wisdom, which might discover the least true symptom of life. For creatures in this state, divine mercy,

\* Even Cicero could say; *Non enim paranda nobis solim, sed fruenda sapientia est.* De finil. l. i.

with equal love and power, contrived the means of recovery. A person in the Trinity would assume the human nature, to make a satisfaction for sin, to remove every cause of separation between God and man, to give a title to man for the heirship of God, and to render to God the glory, which his justice required from man. Another person in the Trinity *promised*, and so became the *Spirit of promise*, to renew the spiritual life in the heirs of salvation; to endue them, in consequence, with the mental capacities of *tasting*, and *seeing, how good the Lord is*; to carry on and support this gracious life through their pilgrimage here; and to fit, ripen, and introduce them, for and into the kingdom of glory. This operation of the Spirit proceeds in a mode analogous to the animal nature; and gives the first symptom of its quickening power in the soul, by creating *hunger* and *thirst* for spiritual food, (which food is the *sincere* or unadulterated *milk of the word*;) by bestowing a faculty to *taste* and *delight* in this food; by imparting strength to *concoct* and *digest* it, so that growth may be attained thereby; and, finally, by carrying on the whole œconomy of grace, till the soul hath obtained its proper fulness of stature in Christ. This is the great work of the Spirit. Its leading effect in us is this *wisdom* or *tasting*: And, because he is the cause and operator of it, he hath revealed himself under the name of the *Spirit of Wisdom*. Hence, every one, whose soul is convinced of the *lack of wisdom* (James i. 5.), which is spiritual hunger and thirst, and one of the truest signs of real life, may know where to apply for it. He is to ask of God, *who giveth liberally and upbraideth not*; and, by obeying this precept, he grows to the full and experimental conviction that this Spirit of Wisdom is the God of all wisdom, and that, according to his name, it is his office to give and grant the *wisdom* of grace, and the *grace* of wisdom to all his people. They obtain the wisdom of grace, which puts them upon seeking salvation; and then they grow in the grace of wisdom, which enables them to discern, what doth or doth not belong to that salvation. By him, they are thus *made wise*, however ignorant or simple in other respects, to the true ends of their being.—That this great agent is God, will more fully appear, by an argument founded on scripture, and by the considerations which follow it.

The *Spirit of wisdom and revelation* was to be given, in or for the knowledge of God or of Christ, that, the eyes of the understanding in believers being enlightened, they might know the hope of his calling, the riches of his glory, and the exceeding greatness of

*his power.* Eph. i. 17, &c. All which is confirmed and expressed in other words, but more at length, by the same apostle, in 1 Cor. ii. 11, &c. 1 Cor. xii. 8, &c.

But it is Jehovah, or God, who *giveth* this wisdom, and who *teacheth to profit* in this understanding; which is proved, among many others, from the following scriptures: Prov. ii. 6. Ps. xciv. 10. Is. xlvi. 17. Dan. ii. 20—23.

Therefore, the Spirit of wisdom is Jehovah, God, the Spirit.

In the former volume, that glorious climax in the prophecy of Isaiah (ix. 6.) was considered in proof of the divinity of the great Redeemer; and a climax equally glorious may now be treated of, which the same evangelical prophet has delivered to us from God, respecting the Spirit's divinity. The words are in the xith chapter, and 2d verse. Christ was called Christ, because he was *anointed* by the Spirit: And here we shall see the nature and effect of this unction. *The Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and fear of Jehovah.* We will briefly take each of these titles in their order, with some others which have an immediate relation to them, only premising (what has more than once been already observed), that they are all names, assumed by one and the same Spirit, to enable us to conceive the several *effects of his operations* in the soul, and not the *manner of his own existence* which is ineffable. 1 Cor. xii. 11.

He calls himself the Spirit of Jehovah, or the Spirit Jehovah, because he would impart the knowledge of his divinity, and make us know, that his attributes are the attributes of the Godhead, that he is self-existent and eternal, and that, therefore, all his operations being divine must be sure, permanent, and indefeasible. In this view, he has been considered in a former essay; and therefore we shall pass on, and enlarge only in the present attempt upon those names, which may not be treated of more distinctly elsewhere.

*The Spirit of Wisdom or Spirit Wisdom.* We are all rendered *brutish and foolish* by the fall. *The ox knoweth his owner, but we know not ours; and the ass his master's crib, but we are insensible, and walk insensible of our dependence upon God for the gifts of providence and grace: We do not know by nature, nor by nature do we consider or understand.* The Spirit Jehovah in his office of grace is the *Spirit of Wisdom*; the very *power, essence and life of wisdom*; to restore to his people both *life* and those *faculties* which attend upon life. in *hungering, thirsting, tasting,*

and *enjoying* the word of grace, the gospel of the kingdom, and finally life everlasting. This kind of wisdom is not to be raised by the intellect or industry of man or any other creature; for it is *life, strength, a faculty*, which enters into the very composition of the soul, and is the very principle of its spiritual being and welfare. It is *from above*, and leads the mind *to things above*. It delivers the soul from the vanities and fooleries of time and sense, in proportion to the force of its operation; and gives it that true *relish* of *unseen* and *invisible* realities, which causes the possessor to *thirst* for them, as *the hart panteth for the water-brooks*; and to count every thing else, as trash or dirt in the mouth, in comparison of them. Nor is this relish given in vain; for God never creates faculties but for their suitable objects. By having a *flower* to taste, the believer comes to *possess* the spiritual wisdom which is to be tasted; for as men, in the animal sense, *partake* of what they taste according to the quantity received, so Christians are *partakers* of this *divine nature* or wisdom, according to the measure of their several capacities. They do not taste this food, to cast it away; but receive it into their own frame for its very life and sustenance. Hence, this *wisdom* seems placed as the foremost of the Spirit's divine operations; because it is the basis and groundwork of all the rest.

The *Spirit of Understanding* or *Binah*. By this we are to understand a farther progression in the divine life, which the Spirit worketh in the soul. He brings it to a *true judgment* and *discernment*, respecting himself and all necessary truths.

The *Spirit of Counsel*. Christ was called the *Counsellor*; and here we perceive the reason. The Spirit rested upon him *without measure*. He was filled with the fulness of God; and in him it dwells. Through Christ (for the Spirit worketh all *in* and *through* him, and is, therefore among other names, called the *Spirit of Christ*) he is the *Spirit of counsel*, and counsel in essence to ensure his counsel, to all the redeemed. His counsel, with respect to the persons in the divine nature, is the counsel of the everlasting covenant, and is therefore called, in Zech. vi. 13. the *counsel of peace*, its object being to restore peace between God and man. Thus, the covenant and the counsel are alike everlasting. Ps. xxxiv. 11. And, with regard to the redeemed, *his counsel* is the *manifestation* of their interest in that everlasting covenant, and the *demonstration* of their right to all the benefits which it ensures. It seems to be the very same, as to the enjoyment of believers, with the *πληροψοια* or *full assurance*, of the New Tes-



tament: And, accordingly, it enters into all the conclusions and energies of the spiritual life, in its progression and approach to glory. The believer is *led* by the Spirit, under this character, into all truth, not as notion but as reality: And this Spirit, in the use of his word, gives him the evidence of spiritual sense (if the term may be used) respecting divine things, preserves him in consequence from the fallacies of error, and opens to him brighter and brighter views of his everlasting inheritance. This is *energetic* counsel, not mere *naked* advice, which may be taken or left alone: For the Spirit is in it, enlivens, engages, and effectuates the whole, beyond the resistance of the animal corruptions, or all the oppositions of men or devils. Hence, this Spirit may well be styled,

The *Spirit of Might*. He was so in Christ, and, therefore, Christ is called by the same name *וְזָרַח מִיָּמִינוּ* *mighty*, in Isaiah ix. The Spirit is the *Spirit of Might*; because there is no might, but by him. *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Zech. iv. 6. He is the *Spirit of Might* to the redeemed; because sin, in robbing them of their spiritual life, left them *without* any spiritual strength. Rom. v. 6. Throughout the scriptures, in this respect, they are described in the condition of a dead carcass—without sensation—without capacity—without the power even to wish or to will for power. In their regeneration, this Spirit exerts his might, *quicken*ing them *from the death of trespasses and sins*, and enabling them (like the *dry bones* in Ezekiel) to rise, stand up, and walk. Nor is this all. He works *all their works in them*. He gives strength to act grace, to grow in grace, and to put forth the fruits of grace. The believer has no spiritual life or power, *separate* from this Spirit; but being in communion, nay, in union itself, with him, he is invigorated to do all that is truly done for God, by the *effectual working of his power*. Eph. iii. 7. This is an inestimable privilege; because operations, *so* performed, have spirit, life and value in them, cannot be lost or perish, but must be acceptable to God through Christ Jesus for ever. And *these* are the good works, which, the Spirit himself says, *do follow* his people into glory. Rev. xiv. 13. The natural man laughs at all this. He thinks himself mighty enough in his fallen nature to do “works pleasing and acceptable to God;” and, though he cannot keep one single thought in his head without fluctuation for one single minute, he presumes, that he can *fix* for himself an everlasting foundation beyond the skies. But a trial will come upon all these *natural*

*powers*; and then will be fulfilled the words of the Prophet; *the youths shall faint and be weary* (those who promised to hold out the longest,) *and the young men* (the *choicest* and the *strongest* of all) *shall utterly fall.* Is. xl. 30.

The *Spirit of Knowledge*. The word rendered *knowledge*, in this place, has a very full and comprehensive idea, and includes the whole *experience* of the children of God. It consists in knowing, by a sensible enjoyment of the thing known, and it particularly refers to the enjoyment of God and the things of God, by communion with them. By this Spirit, as the Spirit of knowledge, a man is led to know and to estimate *himself* aright, as well as to form a just value upon *all other* things. By this he is led to *know experimentally*, whatever he knows, concerning the objects of salvation. An Apostle, and the most learned of all the Apostles, humbly professed; *Of myself I know nothing*. After such a testimony, it must be no moderate arrogance in any other man to pretend the ability. And yet, there are people at this time, and there have been people at all times, who suppose, that, from first to last, they are the immediate and express agents of their own salvation, and who contradict, by that supposition, the terms, the phrases, the analogy, and agreement, of the whole book of God. Scarce any presumption, for instance, is more common, than that it is in every man's own power to *repent*, when he pleases, as often as he pleases, and as long as he pleases: and accordingly, we have volumes upon volumes written, and sermons after sermons preached, to strengthen that presumption. But *where* is the effect, and *what*? Who is converted by these unscriptural discourses to God? Who learns from them to detest and avoid sin, to be heavenly minded, or to be weaned from the world? Do the writers and preachers themselves?—It is tender ground: Let them ask their own hearts the question. God's word, however, holds out a very different sentiment concerning repentance. The term *μετάνοια* which implies the *repentance* unto life, is used in the New Testament to express a *change of the mind*,\* and points out, by an easy implication, how much the

\* The word *μετάνοια* signifies this *change*; and it also signifies *consolation*: Possibly because this repentance *leads* to all consolation, and is *never to be repented of*. There is another word *μετάνοια*, which is translated to *repent*; but it means rather to be *converted*; as when a person hath gone wrong into a way of trouble and sorrow, he is turned back or restored to a right path of peace and quietness. The Apostle Peter hath used the sense of both words in Acts iii. 19.

The reader may see a just definition of evangelical repentance in that excellent little tract, entitled, *A Sketch of the distinguishing graces of a Christian*; by the Rev. Mr. Curden, p. 44, &c.

mind of man is turned from truth and rectitude. To *change* it from this state of corruption, can only be the work of the Father of spirits. God only could raise a dead *body*: and can any being, inferior to God, quicken with life a perverted and dead *soul*? Repentance is a grace of the Spirit, effected in the soul by his own immediate agency, and carried on to its perfection in life eternal by his almighty power: And they, who imagine this ability in themselves, (though they never found it there, nor saw it in others) only prove, that they *know not the scriptures, nor the power of God*.

The last title, which the Spirit has in the text of the Prophet is, *The Spirit of the Fear of Jehovah*. It has been well observed by a learned author, that “the word ירא [whence יראת or יראתו, translated *fear*] when it is used with relation to God, signifies every kind of religious duty and worship both internal and external.\* Hence he observes, that יראת יהוה means the same with *θεοσεβεια* and *ευσεβεια*† that is, the *adoration of God* and *piety*. The word *reverence* or *veneration*, more aptly conveys the sense of the term used by the Prophet in this view, and well expresses the final office of the Spirit in his people upon earth, which consists in making them meet, by all holiness, for his kingdom of glory. Much of this holiness lies in the religious actings and pious breathings of the soul towards God. It is indeed a careful and circumspect carriage of life *outwards*, and must be so; otherwise, there is nothing *within*, or at least nothing for comfort. But its chief energies are applied to the *inner man*, and are acted in him, very much out of the world’s eye, often out of the eye of even gracious professors, and sometimes (especially in the hours of temptation) out of the believer’s own eye. The purpose of the Spirit, in all seasons, whether light or gloomy, tried or not tried, is to bring the soul to that filial reverence, dependence, adoration, and consciousness of God in Christ, both for time and eternity, which may render it fit for the beatific vision and full fruition of Heaven. He induces all *devotion*, to effect *devoteeness*. This is the Spirit’s finishing work in the soul upon earth; and therefore it is placed last in the above text, that we might, as Christians, see, what the power of the Spirit was in Christ *for us*, and what through Christ his power is to be *in us*. In both respects, there is an inexhaustible fund of hope and joy; because Christ cannot be disappointed of the fruit of his doings:

\* Spanh. *Dub. Evang.* vol. 11, p. 276.

† The LXX have rendered יראת in the text by this word.

in his great work of redemption, nor the Spirit defeated in his purpose of applying that work to our benefit, and of fitting us for its full enjoyment.—O what news is this to the soul in distress, or to a soul going into eternity! Kingdoms, and empires, and a thousand worlds, are not to be mentioned with these superior glories—with glories, which cannot decay (as these do) but which shall grow more and more glorious through all the everlasting ages. O how has this prospect ravished the spirit of many a departing Christian, and given him a taste of the unutterable bliss of Heaven, before he could come there! How intense, yet solid, the delight which he has felt—almost too much at times for the mortal frame, and, with what transport, has he proclaimed victory over death and the grave, and all the fears and apprehensions which swallow up the world!—Reader; canst thou pity the *Christian* in this state? If thou canst; well may he pity *thee*.

There are some other terms, applied to the *Spirit*, which are so immediately connected with this office of being *Wisdom* to his people, and seem to arise as so many branches from it, that they may properly be considered in the same essay. Indeed, they may be looked upon only as farther explanations, or presentations, of his divine agency to the mind; or as different or distinct views of the same magnificent object, in some particular respects or proportions. The object is a *whole*; but, through the minuteness of our capacity, and the narrowness of our apprehension, we can see only one part, or one side, of this object at a time: and, therefore, these various displays should be owned, as so many merciful accommodations from God to our limited understandings.

ONE of the *Spirit's* gracious attentions to his people, is to be found in his title of *GUIDE*. The gracious promise is, that *He shall Guide them into all the truth*. John xvi. 13. But, it may be said, that the same promise is made concerning Christ; and it may be asked if there be no confusion of the office?—If the words are duly considered, it will appear, that there is no confusion, but, on the contrary, the utmost harmony in the case. Christ, as the *day-spring*, was to *visit, give light, and to guide our feet into the way of peace*. Luke i. 79. In this last text, the word is *κατευθυναι* which signifies, “to direct by a right line” to some particular object: and it answers well to the title of the blessed Redeemer, Προδρομος, *Forerunner*, who laid down that right line, and *first walked in it himself*. The Old Testament has a

correspondent word; but more strong and simple. The name  $\gamma\eta\delta$  *Leader, Forerunner, Preceptor*, is formed upon this idea; that  $\alpha$  (the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet) is the *leading* letter of the other letters, and the *first* element of all future science and erudition; so is the name, taken from it, applied to one who *precedes*, or *leads up* a train after him. Christ, therefore, calls himself by this very name, to subserve this important idea of his walking *before* us, and of *entering first* into the holy of holies for us. Rev. i. 8. *I am Alpha*.—But there is another word, used to express the agency of the *Spirit*, in respect to his personal guidance. He is the  $\sigma\delta\eta\gamma\omega\varsigma$ , not merely as a *forerunner*, or as one that points out the way, but as our *Conductor* and *Companion* in it. The Hebrew word for this (as usual) expresses the doctrine more happily. *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel*. Ps. lxxiii. 24. The term  $\text{נָחַם}$  not only signifies simply *to guide*, but to guide *with comfort and complacency*, agreeably to the Spirit's office of *Comforter* and *Spirit of Counsel*. Thus in Isaiah lviii. 11. *Jehovah shall guide thee continually*; and the words, which follow these, express the happy effects of his guidance. There are some other passages, where this word is used to signify Jehovah the Spirit's comfortable guidance and support; one in particular at Exod. xv. 13—18. *Thou in thy mercy hast led forth* [thou hast guided powerfully in Christ] *the people whom thou hast redeemed: thou has guided them* [gently led, as a shepherd his flock] *in thy strength unto thy holy habitation, or habitation of thy holiness.—Fear and dread shall fall upon them* [the enemies,] *by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O Lord, till thy people pass over, which thou hast purchased, or possessed. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, the place O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in* [for thine own rest, in the sense of Eph. ii. 22]: *in the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established: the Lord shall reign for ever and ever.* This glorious passage includes the purport of the Old and New Testaments, the offices of Christ and the Spirit, the object and end of all grace and salvation. The people of God are said to be—*redeemed—in mercy—guided powerfully, and gently led*—not in their own strength, but in *Jehovah's*—to *Heaven*; the earth not being the habitation of his holiness, because it is *polluted* and *cursed*—all opposition to be nothing or in vain against them—while they *pass over*; which is *doubled* for a particular emphasis, and denotes, that they must be *Hebrews in deed*, as

well as in name; and must pass, like *Abraham over the river*, leaving all behind them for God; or, like the *Israelites over the sea*, quitting with Moses the world and its bondage—for they belong to another, being the purchase and possession of God—are to be his habitation through the Spirit—and, then, the Lord will reign in them and over them for ever and ever. According to this gracious promise, the Holy Spirit typically led them through the wilderness, by the pillar of cloud and fire. They moved as he moved, and followed wherever he led. He never left them till he brought them to Canaan.—This is a summary of the gospel and grace of God, and was given to lead up his people's minds, above the consideration of their present deliverance from Pharaoh and Egypt, to what that deliverance typified, and to what would be the end of their faith in him; namely, a present release from the curse and bondage of sin, and finally the consummation of grace in glory. It is a full answer to the miserable cavil, that the people of God in the Old Testament were to have nothing in view but *temporal things*: it is a rich promise to believers in all ages that (Jehovah-Jesus having redeemed and purchased them by his blood and righteousness) *Jehovah the Spirit* will guide them with *comfort* and *safety*, in the face of all their enemies, to his and their holy habitation.—O what a delightful theme is here for meditation and praise!—For meditation without anxiety, and for praise without end! How justly then do they, who have gotten the final *victory* and are entered into *rest*, take up the harps of God, for, even there, they have neither instrument nor skill of their own,) and sing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb, saying great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God, Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints! The song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb, are but two parts of the same glorious Anthem; the one chaunting forth the prediction; the other, the accomplishment of everlasting truth: and they accord in one chorus, in one transporting, universal thundering, *Hallelujah!* The voice from Heaven, the voice as of many waters, the voice as of a vast thunder, and the voice of these innumerable harpers, was only one great resonant voice of that infinite number of God's elect, who sing before the throne one blessed ode of thanksgiving, ever-new, though everlasting. Rev. xv. 3. and xiv. 2, 3. To all this, reader, the *Holy Spirit* is the heavenly Guide. Art thou not ready to turn the Psalmist's words into a prayer; may this God be our God for ever and ever.

for time and eternity : May *He be our guide even unto death*, and beyond it !

CONNECTED with this office of the Spirit, as the *Spirit of Wisdom*, is his title of **TEACHER**. Under this name, the Prophet Joel speaks of him, in ii. 23. *Be glad, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in Jehovah your Alchim, for he hath given you* החיה לצוקה *the Teacher of, or for righteousness ; and he will cause to come down* לל *to you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, in the first, or chief (probably) of their season.* The words cannot be translated into any other language, to carry their spiritual and important sense ; as the original did to true believers, under the Old Testament. Our tongue can convey the notion of *rain*, the Spirit's emblem ; but not, as in Hebrew, *what the rain signifies* in the same word. This is a glorious prophecy, to the end of the chapter, concerning the divine Spirit. He is to teach his people ; and his *doctrine* is to descend like a גשם a copious shower, which shall replenish with grace, or fall in its gentler influences, as the מורה the *early rain at seed-time*, representing the instruction which is first imparted to the mind, and as the מלקש the *latter rain* at harvest maturing the corn, answering to that *subsequent erudition* which ripens and fills the soul for the heavenly garner.—Our translators, by rendering בראשון *in the first month*, seem to have made the text absurd ; as though it said, both the *former rain* and the *latter rain* fell in one month. But the former and the latter rain came down in months as wide asunder as *October* and *March* ; and there is nothing said about *month* in the whole chapter.\* The *natural* image appears to be, that both of these rains shall fall in the prime or chief of the season ; and the *spiritual* sense, that these doctrines and instructions shall all descend in him, and through him, who is the head or chief of Jehovah's way of grace, and the head or chief of his own body the Church ; or that they shall be imparted in the very best time. The next verse, the 24th, treats of the consequent blessedness of the Spirit's descent through Christ upon his people : *The floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil*—there shall be abundance of grace ; and comfort and joy shall super-

\* There is a similar prophecy in Hosea vi. 3. and symbols of the like kind are used in other places, which are to be understood in the same manner. Cocceius reads the above passage in Hosea ; *et veniet ut imber nobis, ut serotina erudiens terram* ; “ and he shall come like a shower to us, like the latter rain teaching the ground,” i. e. preparing it. The learned Hebrew aimed to preserve the double sense of the original, which the Latin and English will scarcely bear. See Psalm lxxii. 6.

abound. The following verse speaks of the triumph over enemies, and the restoration by grace of what was lost by sin; and the two succeeding verses, treat of the happiness, satisfaction, and joy, which shall be to God's people, and of the praise which they shall render him, in consequence of their sense of his presence *in the midst of them*, and of the assurance that they *shall never be ashamed*. After this follows immediately that celebrated prophecy, which St. Peter explains in the Acts, and which, in fact, is only a farther illustration of the verses above mentioned. They all belong to one and the same prophecy, and afford a key to Deut. xi. 11. Lev. xxvi. 4. and several other passages of that nature. The *office*, and *necessity* of the office, assumed by the Holy Spirit, *of the Teacher*, is undeniably set forth in the end of this second chapter of Joel, and set forth in such a manner, and with such dignity of circumstances; as, one would think, could leave no doubt in the mind of any candid and impartial person, concerning the truth of his divinity.

*Behold* (says Elihu) *God exalteth*, raiseth up the mind, *by his power: who teacheth like him?* He teacheth not like man with uncertain effect, but *efficaciously, mightily*, yea (if the word may be permitted) *almightily*. It is the glory of Jehovah, *to give men real knowledge*, and *to teach them*, with the utmost certainty, *to profit*: and it is as expressly the office of *the Comforter, the Holy Ghost whom the Father hath sent in the name of Jesus, to teach his people all things*. John xvi. 26. and *to guide them into all the truth*. v. 13. Consequently, he is the true and very Jehovah, the most mighty and omniscient God.

Let him, who hath *the unction of the Holy One*, look into almost any passage of the Bible; and he will see full and indubitable proofs of his great Teacher's divinity, every where expressed or implied. And he hath the *witness* of his tuition *within himself*. The word and his own experience wrought by him who gave the word, answer, as in a glass, like face to face. He is led more and more to prize *the words not which man's wisdom teacheth, but which this Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual*. By these words, the great Teacher *disciplines and instructs* his mind, and often *darts* his communications of grace and knowledge, like a keen and irresistible arrow, into the inmost soul. He makes his doctrine enter into the very heart; and, therefore, the Apostle calls it ζων, και ενεργητικος, και τομωδες, *living and energetic, and more penetrating*, than even the sharpest weapon, which is all edge and point—a *two-edged sword*.



Heb. iv. 12. God doth not deal in flashy expressions, which have great pomp and little meaning; but uses that internal vigor of sense, which language alone can never impart to the soul.

Sense in each word with power shines  
And truth through all the nervous lines.

In this way, he renders his people (however ignorant in worldly science) truly learned, and deeply wise: not in the jingle and cadence of sounds, (the fribbled dress of literary coxcombs;) not in puny and trifling criticisms upon such supposed elegances and polish of phrase, as are to be met with in human authors, who have, more or less, high words and low sense; not in comparing his holy book with the trifling compositions of heathen poets and philosophers, nor in admiring passages, only because (like them) they charm the weakness of fancy, or the flights of imagination; not in measuring and moulding his revealed will according to the little low rules of human logic, rhetoric, or grammar, the mere efforts of mortal ingenuity: but in planting or imbuing their very spirits into those profound and momentous truths which open the eternal affairs of an approaching immortality, and which are founded on the solemn declarations of a most holy and tremendous God. To a mind thus rightly informed, and preserved thus rightly in frame, which *sees* the glory, and *feels* the worth of these important *things*; how flat and jejune, how barren and poor, do the finest *words* appear, which only play (as it were) about the *surface* of the subject! How puny and insipid all comparisons of the excellencies in scripture, with the tinklings of the classics, or the most labored performances of men! These indeed may serve to amuse, and in *natural things*, may also serve to embellish and inform the mind; but, in the *things of God* either by way of rule or illustration, they are perfectly out of season, order and place. The utmost end they can serve, in this respect, is by way of *foil*, to shew their *ignorance* when opposed to the *wisdom* of Heaven. In the spiritual temple, they are as profane and impertinent; as were, in the outward temple, those bold intruders, Antiochus and Pompey the Great.\* Persons became holy by having a real relation and right to the temple; and they did not expect the knowledge of divine things *out* of it. *When I went in to the sanctuary* (said David) *then understood I*, &c. In like manner; we must find divinity, and the true excellencies of divinity *in* the Bible alone, which is the Christian

\* Macc. v. 15. Joseph. *Ant. Jud.* l. xiv. c. 8.

sanctuary; we cannot *compose* them ourselves, nor *obtain* them elsewhere from others; nor do they require human ornaments to recommend them, but their own native simplicity. "Many (says the learned Mede) would have gold to be gilded, and find want of knowledge in the noblest piece of learning in the world."—What would the men of taste say, if, in a picture of Christ with his Apostles at the last supper, the painter should draw the figures with bags, swords, ruffles, and other trappings of men going to court? Would they admire his judgment? The beauty of God's word consists in its truth and relation to spiritual things; and the best representation of that word, in human language, is what most discovers this relation of eternal truth and draws back the veil from before it. Hence, men must *pray* as well as *read*; or they will find *words* instead of *things*; they may adjust or admire the cadency of the language, discover poetical flights, and respect the strength of the diction; but, with all these exterior circumstances, which are but as tinsel to the gold which it covers, they may know nothing of those divine glories which irradiate and almost animate the book of God. If this method were pursued in studying theology, most of the heresies and errors which obtain among men, through neglect or ignorance of that blessed book, would soon be exploded for futilities, which, under a shew of *reason* contradict *the first great reason* in the world. At present, too many bring sentiments *to* the scripture, instead of receiving truth *from* it; and because these sentiments will ever vary, and those who hold them are glad to catch at any thing which may support their respective opinions; they turn (as far as they can) the Bible into Babel, and try to make it speak all manner of languages. Whereas, it contains but one great truth, whose root is in the God of Truth; and all its several doctrines, phrases, and terms are but so many branches growing out of it, which have a natural relation and resemblance to each other.

There are several other titles, ascribed to the *Holy Spirit*, which have a very near relation to these here considered; but we should carry this essay into a volume, if we attempted to treat of them all: and, therefore, the last which shall be adduced in this connection, is his name of *Maker, Former, Fashioner, or Frammer*. Our translation unhappily uses these terms in an indiscriminate manner, for one and for other words in the original, which, though they have a relative signification, are certainly not *the same*, and are sometimes applied in very different senses. We will take the principal of these which are usually

rendered *Maker* or *Former*; and, by the *natural*, endeavour to explain its *spiritual* idea. A text or two will help us in this. Isaiah xlv. 18. *For thus saith Jehovah, that בורא created (out of nothing) the Heavens, the Alehim himself that יצר (formans) formeth (mouldeth according to his will) the earth, and עשה (faciens) maketh (arranges its perfect frame and order) even he כוננה establishes it (fixes it firmly and unalterably in its whole arrangement :) He created it not in vain; he formed it to be inhabited: I am Jehovah, and אין עתה without end of my duration or power.* Let the verse, preceding this, be considered; and it will appear that all this testimony of God relates to spiritual objects and matters of salvation, and that the present verse, with its illative particles כי-כִּי, *for thus*, is intended for a confirmation of the other verse, which it could not be unless that verse had a spiritual meaning also. The following paraphrase may possibly explain the whole. "Israel hath not been called to my knowledge in order to perish, but shall be saved in Jehovah with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. *For thus* shall it be in your spiritual creation, as it was in the natural; I the Alehim, God in covenant, brought the world and you both out of nothing; I gave you a new creation from amidst the destruction of sin. I have endued you with gracious capacity, as I did the earth with beautiful form. I have arranged all things in you and for you; as I have arranged in perfect order all the universe of matter about you. I, even I, have so fixed all these blessings of salvation, that, like the world itself, they cannot be moved, shaken, or frustrated. Nor have I bestowed all this cost and care in vain; for, as I have formed the earth to be inhabited, so have I formed and fitly framed you to be an habitation of Jehovah through the Spirit. I, who pronounce this mighty promise, am Jehovah himself, to whom there is no bound of will, time, or power."—Another text, which must be understood in the same way, may be cited from the same Prophet to confirm this important testimony. Is. xliii. 7. God's people are to be brought to his salvation from all parts of the world: not one is to be left, but all are to be gathered; even every one (says the Lord) that is called in my name [God's calling is an effectual calling in Christ] and to my glory: *I have created him, I have formed him, (or moulded him to my will,) even I have made him, or disposed him to such a frame of mind, as is necessary for his salvation.* There are several other passages, and particularly in this prophecy, which mention the power and love of God in

forming his people, and which are to be understood in no other than a mental or spiritual sense. See also Zech. xii. 1.

And *wherefore* shall none of these fail? and *why* shall none of the redeemed be left?—*Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: No one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth [Christ] hath himself commanded, and his Spirit himself hath gathered them.* Is. xxxiv. 16. There is an almighty efficacy in Jesus to redeem, who is the *mouth* and *word* of the mouth for Jehovah to his people, and there is an equally omnipotent power in the Spirit to collect and *gather together in one* [that is, Christ] *all the children of God that are scattered abroad.* Compare John xi. 52. with Eph. i. 10.—And who is sufficient for these things, but He who is all-sufficient? Who could do this great work, but that great God, who can do every thing? And if all this be through the operation of the Spirit; what bold creature can presume to question his divinity, or call into doubt the efficacy of his creating power?

How wonderfully *suitéd* are all these offices of grace to the *condition* and *wants* of the redeemed? In this gracious Spirit, through Christ, there is an adequate supply for every possible occasion and circumstance of their souls; and in his holy word there is a full and positive direction, under each of those possible circumstances, to that supply.—They were sunk in sin and folly, and loathsome in the sight of incorruptible holiness: There is the *Spirit of wisdom*, given through Jesus their covenant-head, to renew them to life, and to recover them from ignorance and insensibility.—They are situated in a world of error, and have ten thousand attacks made upon their minds by the sophisms and fallacies of a carnal nature, of carnal men, and of evil spirits: The Holy Ghost is the *Binah*, or Spirit of understanding, to give them a right judgment and true discernment in spiritual things; so that they shall not be *beguiled of their reward by any enticing words.* Col. ii. 4, 18.—When they have obtained faith; it is their privilege and duty to seek the full evidence and comfort of their faith, that they may *hope to the end*: The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Counsel to work this demonstration and clear perception in their souls, so that *believing they may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*—They are naturally without strength, and have no spiritual power of their own; and, when grace is given and an opportunity occurs, they have no ability of themselves to exert it for any just and gracious purpose: The comforter is the Spirit of Might and *worketh mightily in their inner man*, enabling them

*both to will and to do of his good pleasure*: He suffers none of his to be *barren or unfruitful*; and he not only inspires them with readiness to every good word and work, but he ordains even the works themselves, and affords his people strength so to perform them, as to render them good in reality, with respect to God and man: He allows none that belong to him to take up *the form of godliness* in their lips, and to deny the power of it in their lives. They want experience and establishment in the truths of salvation: He is the Spirit of that knowledge and experience, and exercises their minds to *endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ*, that they may conflict with their enemies, and become at length *conquerors and more than conquerors, through him that loved them*.—They ought to be devoted to God in heart and life, should walk as in his presence, and should be prepared for his eternal fruition: This Holy One is the Spirit of the fear of the Lord to effectuate and establish these heavenly principles in their lives and souls.—Further: They were not only *ignorant, but out of the way*: He is the guide, to bring them again *into the right way*, to walk with them in it, and to conduct them safely to their journey's end.—They need constant instruction: He is their sublime Teacher, who will make his doctrine descend as the dew, and his lessons of grace, like the early and the latter rain, in due season: *He will water them every moment*; so that they shall spring and grow, and bear fruit abundantly to his glory.—As they could not create themselves anew; so likewise they cannot frame and prepare their own souls for the everlasting mansions; This blessed Spirit therefore is the former, maker, fashioner, and preparer of all their spirits for glory, as well as glory for them: All his dispensations, providences, teachings, and supports, concentrate in this one great end, that they might be eternally saved, and that *God in all things may be glorified through Christ Jesus*.

From these considerations, the *dignity* of the *person*, who executes these amazing operations in myriads of souls at one and the same time, and at all times as well as in all places, without intermission or end; and the *vast importance* of the operations themselves, in the bliss of such innumerable multitudes and in the glory of God; may evidently appear, and perhaps cannot but appear, to any unprejudiced or awakened mind. But, however, to guard us (as it were), against a contrary conclusion, absurd as the conclusion is even in reason, as well as repugnant to scripture; God hath given such a positive testimony to the divinity of his

Spirit in this case, as ought to silence the most audacious tongue. He himself calls this Spirit, as his first and leading name of nature, the Spirit Jehovah; thereby declaring, that He is *able* to perform all the stipulations and promises of the everlasting covenant revealed to his people, and that they are to look up to him for the performance of them, both in time and eternity. Of whom, beside this Spirit, is the following glorious declaration (to mention no others) given to the church, which contains his particular agencies for her? *Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting Alehim Jehovah, the creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength; even the youths shall faint and be weary; and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.* Is. xl. 28, &c. Compare these operations with the Spirit's titles in Is. xi. above recited; and see whether they do not answer as precisely, as the *name* of any agent, and the *agency* signified in the name, possibly can do.

And now, Reader, what says thy heart to all this? Canst thou receive it, not only as *true*, but (what is almost as important, at least to *thy* state) true to *thee*? Hast thou any savour of these blessings; and are the names and offices of the Spirit, who bestows them, *as ointment poured forth*? Art thou led into the *experience* of these doctrines; and are not the *doctrines* themselves reviving to thy soul?—It must, it will be so, indeed. Thou wilt be ready to break forth with the Psalmist; *how precious are thy thoughts*, the whole counsel of thy revealed will, *unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them?*

If thou hast been truly convinced of thine own ignorance and the want of spiritual wisdom; nay, what is more, of the want of *capacity* to attain it, and the inability of *all the creatures* to confer it upon thee; thou art convinced also, that the Spirit of Wisdom can bestow it upon thy soul, and impart the power to exercise it, when bestowed.—Thou hast seen, that this wisdom is not a wisdom of *words* only; that it doth not consist in *fine sounds*, but *important sense*; that it doth not *speculate* so much upon its proper objects, as *taste* and *enjoy* them;\* that it is an acquaint-

\* The reader may find many gracious and excellent reflections of this kind in that admirable Oration of Witsius, entitled *de vero Theologo*, which cannot be too much or too often read, especially by young professors of di-

ance with *things*, imperceptible indeed in themselves to the animal sense, but open and clear to this wisdom in the very spirit and purpose of them. In a word, they are the things of *God*, and not of *men*: And thou hast been taught the humbling lesson, that God only can bestow them upon thee. Finding, therefore, in the *scripture* the full evidence of this truth, and in *thy own soul* the deep experience of its necessity; thou becomest entirely persuaded, that, because the Spirit is God, he both is, and is qualified to be the *Spirit of Wisdom* to thy soul, and to all the redeemed. He is equally necessary to *thee*, as to them; and a man must be *credulous* with a witness who can believe, that a *creature* is able to extend himself to myriads of *other* creatures; know their very thoughts; supply with perfect exactness, what is requisite for their respective instruction, strength, comfort, and life, through all the ages of time; and at length carry on the whole of their felicity to his own glory throughout eternity. He, that can believe such a monstrous proposition, rather than submit to God's testimony concerning his own Spirit, without whom (as it hath been proved in the course of these Essays) there is not one operation carried on either in the natural or spiritual world, and to whose divinity every doctrine of the gospel has a direct and indissoluble relation; cannot indeed be called an *infidel* in a certain sense, but a very devoted believer in human authority in direct contradiction to the divine. He doubts of God's infallibility; but he swallows, by wholesale, the *infallible omniscience* of that stupendous *reason*, which exalts itself *against all that is called God* and *denies the only Lord God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. "That person can very easily believe men in opposition to God (says Cyprian), who will not believe God in opposition to men." Or, perhaps (as some have done) they will make a merit of doubting upon every thing. It would not be an unfair question to ask these sages, whether they do not doubt of their very doubts, and whether in doubting they are sure if they doubt at all. For, if they doubt not of their very doubts, they become *believers* in *unbelief*: But, if they do doubt of them, they are *unbelievers* of that very *reason*, which they pretend to admire, and by which they have acquired the whole art of doubting. Admirable sophists! who learn the knack of deluding others, by first playing the cheat upon their own selves.—To such mighty

vinity. The elegance of the composition, great as it must be allowed to be, is nothing in comparison to that amiable spirit of evangelical truth and holiness, which breathes in every line.

lengths can man's boasted reason lead him; and, though it be depraved and short-sighted as not to be able to explain any one substance in the world as to the mode of its existence, nor yet to shew how a man's own spirit acts upon his own body, nor how so different a principle should be confined for any period of time to a lump of matter; it can arrogate to comprehend the incomprehensible, to define the indefinable, and to assert that God must be *this* and the *other*, while it knows nothing essentially of any one of his creatures. But this is *reason*, and *sense*, and *wisdom*; and, further, it is *rational religion*, *natural religion*, the religion of very great reasoners; who, above sixteen hundred years after the Apostles, have made a wonderful discovery, that all the first ages of Christianity were involved in fanaticism, and stupidity, without any *rational ideas* of religion or any just conceptions of truth. And yet, without much presumption, it may be credited, that if some of these *immortal rationalists* had lived in those early times, when "the blood of martyrs was the seed of the Church;" their great reasoning faculty would have found out *twenty* arguments, why a man *should not* forsake all and die for Christ, for *one*, why he *should*.—But, when it is considered, that all this respect is paid to *reason*, in order to get rid of the Holy Spirit's agency in the minds of men, and, by that riddance, to prepare the way for *something else*; though one cannot admire the reasoning powers or the arguments which are to effect this, one may be astonished at the effrontery of the artifice, which aims to overthrow all Christianity, and to put men exactly upon the level of the elder Heathens. These certainly had as acute and strong understandings, as perhaps any moderns will pretend to, in the discovery of divine things: yet they had so much modesty as to confess, that God was *unknown* to their faculties, nor was He an object to be discovered by them. But, let these people but once prevail in exploding the necessity of the Holy Spirit's *internal* operations in the souls of men; or (what will finally amount exactly to the same thing) let them once gain credit to their assertions, that he is a *creature*, an *emanation*, a *virtue*, a *name*, or at most an *inferior God*; it is very easy to see, how they may demolish the whole Christian fabric, and put the gospel of Jesus (as some already have had the boldness to do) upon the same footing with the *Koran* of *Mahomet*. As they set out upon a principle, which is diametrically opposite to the first great principle of the Bible, viz. THAT NO MAN CAN KNOW GOD, OR THE THINGS OF GOD, BUT BY HIS OWN REVELATION: it is no sort of wonder, that their



deductions should contradict its sublimest truths. It could not be otherwise; partly because these truths were never the objects of *reason*, but of *faith* only; and partly because the minds of men are fallen and perverted, and consequently different from themselves at different times, as well as contradictory to the minds of others: And this is the surest proof that can be, of the *fallacy* and *imperfection* of human reason, and in divine things especially. Were this duly settled, we should hear but little more of, what the world calls, *rational* religion, *natural* religion, &c. which are just as proper epithets to be joined with the word *religion*, as *idolatrous*, *heathenish*, &c. the notions to which these terms are applied, being alike the *corrupted* offspring of *human* brains. They are altogether but impotent stretches to supersede or get rid of the Bible. But if *the gates of Hell cannot prevail* in such an enterprize; the gates of earth (as often hath been the case) can scarce expect a better fate. "Light of this sort (says Dr. John Edwards) is but the prologue to eternal darkness."

All this, however, may deserve the name of *cunning*, which (as Lord Bacon calls it) is "crooked or left-handed wisdom;" but there is not one grain of *true wisdom* in the whole procedure. For since the Holy Spirit is indeed God, and since Jehovah himself hath declared this for a truth; the blasphemers of his divinity can have but a sorry account to make with him, when they present the sum total of their lives and sayings. There is a fearful text against them, which, it is presumed, "all the copies of the New Testament may have extant;" and which if they really believed to be of divine authority, one cannot call their hardness very *reasonable*, though perhaps it may be very confident and daring. It seems a great stake to venture; and a man must have more courage than becomes a Christian, who, *as* such, dares to hazard any thing, rather than the salvation of his soul. But this sad hazard every man makes, who presumes upon the sufficiency of his own reason, either without or in contradiction to the revelation of God.

Though ignorance is certainly to be avoided, and that man is brutish who desires not to *know*; yet it is much to be lamented, that people of the finest parts, and those who have the greatest compass of human erudition, are most exposed to the infelicity of *thinking highly of themselves*, and of becoming dupes to their own vanity or the splendid fallacies of the human understanding. In proportion, as they can make these fallacies shining and specious (which men of wit and abilities are always capable of ma-

king, upon the wildest paradoxes and reveries;) they are the more liable to be ensnared themselves, as well as more dangerous in deluding others. Most of the arch-heretics were men of undoubted parts and accomplishments, as to the world: But they sought *distinction* by those parts, invented new opinions to create it, and at length became the victims of their own vanity and pride. It was a just remark of the excellent Philip Henry; “a head full of vain and unprofitable notions, meeting with a heart full of pride and self-conceit, disposes a man directly to be an Atheist.” Every body seems delighted with a polished style, the charms of wit, the refinements of knowledge, and that combination of distributed ideas which is the characteristic effort of genius; but every body does not see the danger which attends these illustrious qualities, not even those who possess them, nor how much more mischief they are the more likely to work (without superior guidance) and above all in spiritual concerns. None of these things are *wisdom*, or even *branches* of wisdom; because they are and have been employed by men, whom common sense must condemn, to the most undeniable follies, and for the most miserable ends. A wise man may possibly have them; and so may a fool. The world, it may be, will not *call* him by that name, who is so endowed; but *he* must *be* so, who knows not or neglects his true interest. The famous Lord Rochester, the fineness of whose genius is undisputed, thought thus of himself, when he was brought to consider, with how little wisdom he had used that genius. And graver men than he, men possessed of the most uncommon erudition, have lamented at last the miserable prostitution of their time to pursuits, which did not make them more wise and knowing for eternity, nor dispose them better for the enjoyment of it. Cyprian, a great and a good man, used to say, *Give me the master* meaning his *Tertullian*: He had called more wisely as Selden and some others did in their last days, for *the Bible! the Bible! nothing but the Bible!* Here alone is truth without error, or the danger of error; but fine parts and learning, though in themselves neither one nor the other, have often been engaged in the service of both. Error needs them much, to make itself plausible; but truth appears, most beautiful, when stripped of all ornaments but its own.

The wisest of men, or rather God by him, gives a strong caution, therefore, on this head—*Lean not to thine own understanding; for he that trusteth his own heart is a fool.* Prov. iii. 5. and xxxviii. 26. True wisdom, on the contrary, is simple, pure:

and removed from the appearance of vanity, even in natural things : and the purest wisdom of all, which the spirit of God communicates to believers, is still more so. This flows from God, who is all purity and simplicity ; it is supported by him, to the contempt of that wisdom of fools—*dissimulation* and *guile* ; it is carried on towards the enjoyment of a spiritual and everlasting interest, and it ends, where folly never can end, in the salvation of the soul. The meanest peasant, who can speak his own language but imperfectly, may through this wisdom converse deeply with God ; not by the rules of *grammar* indeed, nor by *rhetorical* flourishes, but by (what is infinitely beyond these poor arts) the language of *Spirits*, which God understands, the heart feels, and all Heaven intimately knows. *The groanings, which cannot be uttered*, have an eloquence, which moves the courts of glory, and the very God of glory. There is a pathos in these, which finds all language poor, and, sometimes, leaving it as such, aims to convey itself by that vehemence of spirit and life, which the God of spirit and of life, both loves and comprehends. Here, the unlettered clown, possessed with this gracious wisdom, soars beyond the learned and the wise of this world, keeps better company than they, talks a more noble language, enjoys more exalted and refined sentiments, feels higher sensations, has more just and generous gratifications, takes more extensive views, estimates life and time with better reason, meets death with more courage, and at length enters into glory (where the comparison ends) with unspeakable triumph. This is *his* wisdom ; not radically, but imparted to him : and is it not the very same wisdom, which the most learned Christians desire, above all things, to obtain ? Most assuredly ; for, in fact, there is *no other*. Nothing can be truly wisdom, which doth not render a man better and happier for eternity. Where, then, shall we find this, except in the *Bible* ? By whom shall we obtain this, but *by the Spirit of Wisdom* ? And *what* are they, then, who despise or reject *both* ?—The answer is a harsh monosyllable in proud ears ; and a man would not venture to utter it, but from something better than man's authority.

These considerations may afford some comfort to ignorant believers, who fancy themselves low in God's favor, because they are low in the reading of men's books : nor can they give any just cause of offence to the most literary Christians. If *these* are truly enlightened, they see, that they must sit upon the same form with the meanest believers, must learn the same lessons from the same divine master, and *become fools*, in the apprehension of

their own sense and capacity, *that they may be wise* indeed. Both the one and the other are brought to be convinced, that there is but one wisdom, and but one way of obtaining it : they have also but one heart, under the divine impression, in the enjoyment of that Wisdom. “ He, who would be much with God (which is the only way of being wise,) let him, says Austin, often pray over and read his Bible ; for when we pray, *we speak with God* ; and when we read, *he speaks with us.*” These are the stated means of obtaining and improving in this wisdom. *The temple of God is in the believer* ; and, be his body wherever it may, his soul may be at Church, (as it were) all the day long, and so *pray without ceasing*. Here he may draw wisdom continually. In like manner outward ordinances become truly refreshing, and (according to their name) *means of grace* : the grace and the means are together with him ; and he glorifies God in both. They consequently increase this wisdom, and establish it to the end, through the blessing of the *Spirit of Wisdom*. For, as the wisdom is but *words without him* ; He is the spirit and life to make his own wisdom *real, and living, and spiritual*, to all his people.

This Spirit will be ever known as *the Spirit of Wisdom*, beyond the grave : when the faithful enter glory, they *shall know even as they are known* ; not by the medium of sense or sensible objects, as in this world, but by an immediate communion with their God. In that pure and exalted state, the faculties of their souls, now fettered and loaded with matter, will doubtless have a manner of perception neither attainable nor conceivable here. They *will see Christ as he is*, which now they cannot ; and *shall be for ever like unto him*, which now they are not. How they will maintain an intercourse with the spirits in eternity, we can at most but faintly imagine ; but certainly by sympathies and attractions, devoid of all gross sensation and its mistakes or interruptions, and probably by that intuitive communication which good men often feel below, in the impressions of grace upon their souls. When they are all spirit, and life, and holiness, it is impossible but that they must perceive and comprehend vastly beyond the most exalted sublimities imaginable here, and enjoy a scope of wisdom, which, however remote from the infinitude of that attribute in God, will possibly be beyond all comparison with the highest measure of it in this life, and even there shall be growing through all the successions of the ages of eternity. The object of knowledge is infinite ; and, therefore, the created faculties of knowing be they ever so immensely extended, will always be infinitely

beneath it.\* How then, may the heirs of salvation rejoice in *this unspeakable gift*, and in the adorable giver! How ought they to worship and glorify him; who sought them, when they wandered out of the right way; who gave them eyes, to see, at once their own error and his rectitude; who guided them constantly by his counsel; and who finally receives them to his glory! And how mayest thou rejoice, dear reader, if God hath had mercy on thee, and made thee one of this happy number! Thou wast, in time past, as a sheep going astray; leaving home for a wilderness, and

\* Though it may seem a digression from the immediate subject of this essay, the serious reader will forgive a short reflection or two upon a point, which has often oppressed, if not depressed, many a serious mind; namely, the apparent insignificance and minuteness of its own being. But the dimensions of the soul (speaking after the manner of corporal existence) are not to be considered merely as commensurate with those of the body; for as the cogitations of the spirit of a man can act, and do exceedingly extend themselves, far beyond the measure and power of that material frame, which is its temporary seat and residence; so it seems highly probable, that, when the spirit is unconfined by gross substance, it shall be dilated and expanded at one time, or contracted and compacted at another, according to the measure and operations, which God in his love may assign it. Yet all this may be ordered as much above the remotest approach to corporeity even in its glorified state, as the mode of our Lord's glorified body confessedly transcends all those present conceptions, which we are at present able to form concerning the mode of our own corruptible bodies. With respect indeed to the Godhead and his infinitude, all measures of being, so far as we are able to conceive of measures, may differ little as to him, however their magnitude or minuteness may strike us. We find however in scripture, that Christ cast out of one individual man a *legion* of devils (Luke viii. 30.); and yet Satan himself, the prince of the devils, is said to *work in the hearts of the children of disobedience*; and, if to work in them, certainly to reside in or act upon them according to the mode and limited force of his being. But if an evil and accursed spirit is capable of so much extension in himself, and of so diversified a capacity with respect to his powers; what have not we to believe concerning the *spirits of just men made perfect*, relative to the greatness of their glorified existence, and the vastness of their abilities to shew forth the praises of their divine Redeemer? What can be said against the enlargement of their powers, even like those of Angels, to utter the wonders of his love, to worlds almost infinite in number and place, and to beings of glory and power beyond all present conceptions of created nature? Who can doubt, but, if all heaven is to wring with the triumphs of *Jesus Immanuel*, that those, who have been the immediate occasion of his assuming that name and character, will be the happy instruments of declaring those triumphs to listening myriads throughout that unbounded region, and of finding new and new myriads to inform and commune with upon the blissful theme throughout eternity?—'Tis indeed a ravishing prospect, and lifts up the mind, above its present narrow scale of being and employment, to an ardent desire for the fulfilment of so much blissfulness in itself, and of so much usefulness in a more exalted and extensive occupation. "O my soul (may the Christian say) though now thou seemest a mere atom or a contemptible littleness in the magnitude and immensity of the creation of God; yet be not dismayed at thine own meanness and insignificance, as though thou couldest be slighted or forgotten; for thy *Redeemer is mighty*, and, as he is the fulness which filleth all in all, so shalt thou be raised up, far above all earthly and contracted measures of existence, to be *filled with him* and *so be like unto him for ever and ever*."

the earth which God hath cursed, for the Hell which God hath damned. Thou mayest truly say, with the ancient Christian poet,

—————*erravi tempore multo,  
Gens & ego fui, perversa mente moratus.\**

Which may be rendered,

Erring from God, and in perverseness strong,  
A Heathen once I was, and erred long.

He brought thee to thy *right mind*. This *Spirit of wisdom* made thee, what thou wast not born,—a Christian! who, contrary to the common notion, is a person not to be known by his *name*, but by his *nature*. He began, by teaching thee thine own ignorance, and thine utter need of his help. He hath bent, not merely thy knees in prayer, but (what none but his power could bend) the stubborn tempers of thy soul. How often hast thou cried in secret; “Lord save, or I perish! I feel myself a wretched, blind, and worthless worm; without *power* to do good when I would, and without *will* to do it when I ought. I commit a thousand mistakes in my apprehensions, which I could not bear that men should know, lest they should esteem me for a fool; but they are all known to thee, even all my straying and my stupid thoughts; and shall I, can I presume myself to be wise in thy sight, or live without dependence upon thee, O thou *Spirit of Wisdom*, for tuition and guidance all my days! Adorable *comforter*, I would renounce myself and all the fancied powers of my nature, and would *roll* all without reserve, upon thy conduct and truth, now and for ever, through my covenant-head Christ Jesus!”—Thou canst look back upon such secret moments as these, and canst remember too, that these longings and resignations of soul did not pass away without *some token for good*. At least thou wast strengthened, if not comforted; and saddened if not lifted up, to *go on thy way rejoicing*. Go on, and prosper, blessed soul: The Lord is with thee. He is the faithful and true witness; and he neither will nor can, consistent with his own word, promise, and oath, suffer so much as one hair of thine head to perish, or the least portion of his own grace to be lost. O with what peace art thou privileged to live; with what hope art thou encouraged to die! Death can make no change to thee, but what is for thy good: Death is not the end of thy nature, but of thy sin: Death doth not destroy the least true life, but consummates that life, which is everlasting, with everlasting glory.

\* *Comedians: and Cæcæ H. 1. 13.*

What a gainer then is the Christian by death! What profit is it for him to die! Say then, "Leap my soul, *beyond the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills*; spring upwards to him that made them; mount to God, *Father, Son, and Spirit*, Jehovah the Almighty! Thou hast said—*look to me and be saved*—I look, and I long: *I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord!* Nor can I look, and long, and wait in vain. Thou hast kindled this holy fire, that the flame might rise upwards to thy glory, and warm my own heart beneath, and enlighten others around me. O pour thy sacred oil upon it, that it may rise higher and burn brighter, that it may illustrate thy praise and increase my joy, throughout eternity." —So be it! Amen!



## POWER.

GOD is pleased to convey to the minds of his people such notices of his divine nature, as they are able to know, or such as are expedient for them to believe, by a variety of names and attributes. No variety, however, exists in God, nor is there any difference in the divine perfections; for, as he himself is a pure, simple and uncompounded being, all his acts and energies do necessarily flow in purity and simplicity, without division or separation. But, as our narrow capacities cannot duly or fully consider him in the mode of *his* existence; he hath vouchsafed to communicate the knowledge of himself, according to the mode of *our* existence, and, by presenting to us the distinctions in his attributes, hath enabled us to reflect upon the attributes themselves, one by one, with that advantage and comfort, which we were not able to receive from an abstract view of the whole together. For though one attribute of God doth inseparably and actually include all the rest: yet we cannot understand it in this respect for our *edification*, which is the end God proposes in all the revelations of himself; nor can we unite the several acts of love, power, wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, &c. (as they appear to us) into one uncompounded act, according to the reality of its existence in the divine nature. We cannot do this even in his creatures. We cannot comprehend, respecting ourselves, how the five senses of the body unite with the reason, memory, will, and other faculties of the soul, to pursue or complete any one action; nor see all the colors, which are occasioned by the refraction of the same ray of light.

without distinction or distribution as they are in themselves, by one application of our sight. When we think of God's *justice*; we are obliged to set it off (as it were) from his *mercy*; because, however the two attributes may exist (as they certainly do) in a perfect unity and without any distinction at all in him, we cannot conceive of their action in this way towards ourselves: We must look upon each apart, or we shall understand neither of them, and perhaps nothing right or clear concerning their importance to us. Our case is the same with all the other attributes; and if we attempt to conceive of them in any other manner, we find our minds bewildered in an inextricable labyrinth, and we feel nothing but amazement instead of knowledge. As our bodily eye cannot take into view all objects at once; so much less can the eye of our minds behold the infinite author of all objects. For this reason, the Lord suits himself to our apprehensions, and reveals the truths concerning *his* sublime nature in a manner, which bears the nearest analogy to *our own*. Man, in this respect, as well as others, might be said to have been *created in the image of God*; because, in his perfect state, he was to survey God after the similitude of himself, and to consider the mode of God's own action to him, according to the mode of his action in the world. He had a noble communion with his Creator for this end; but he lost it by his transgression, and then fell into that spiritual death, which had been threatened, and which involved his nature in darkness, error, and evil. His frame and constitution, however, were radically the same: And, therefore, when God revealed himself for redemption, the mode of his instruction was accommodated, as before, to the natural capacity of the redeemed.

It seems proper to premise this to shew, that, as all God's attributes and perfections are *one* in themselves, or rather *one in him*, so they are not *communicable* to any creatures, nor act *separately* from himself. Wherever any one of God's attributes acts (speaking after the human conception of this sublime truth,) there God acts: he is his own energy; and his energy is himself. He is not simply *power*, as we understand of an attribute carried out into act, but *above power* in himself, and is the being from whom whatever we know or can conceive of power primarily proceeds. The same may be said of all his other perfections. From hence it will follow, that to whomsoever these attributes and perfections are ascribed either by the testimony of God himself, or of those to whom he hath revealed his will; *that being* is and can be no other than God. Otherwise the ascription would not be true: and



God can testify nothing but truth. But these very attributes and perfections are ascribed by God himself, and by men inspired by him, to one person called the *Son of God*, to another person called the *Holy Spirit*, and to a third styled the *Father*; each of whom exercises those attributes, with relation to men, in a mode distinct from the mode of all the others, or with expressions of their distinct and particular action. From whence it unavoidably follows, that these *three persons* are respectively and essentially God; and yet, because of divine revelation and the simplicity of the divine nature, in a manner inconceivable by us, but *one Godhead*.

Among the other attributes, we may consider this of Power: and we shall find that this glory of the divine nature is ascribed as such to each of the divine persons, and that it is not and cannot be so ascribed to any creature. It is applied to *each*, as to an indivisible person in that one Godhead, who is pure act, essential power, and the first mover in all that acts or has power. *There is no power but of God*, is an infallible axiom: and *the times and the seasons the Father hath put in his own power*, is an axiom equally undeniable. The Father, then, hath power, in a manner superior to all creatures. Christ also is *set in the heavenly places far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come*. Eph. i. 21. Now, if Christ be *above*, and *far above* all these, it will follow, that Christ hath a divine nature and so is God; or else, that he is exalted *far above himself*, because he is exalted *above every name*, or idea that can be raised, in the natural and spiritual world. Again, he is styled *the head of all principality and power*. Col. ii. 10. Rise as high as possible in the idea of *rule* and *power*, he is still the head or spring of them; so that there is no power or rule but of him: and, if this be not asserting his divinity, words can never declare it. The Spirit likewise is termed the *Spirit of Might*; because of all power he is the very life and Spirit, its energy, and its act. Hence the Apostle says, that the *mighty signs and wonders* wrought in Christ, or through Christ by his disciples, were wrought *by the power of the spirit of God*. Rom. xv. 19. Acts x. 38. Luke iv. 14. Hence, Jesus himself said, with an asseveration of truth, *he that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also, and greater works than these* [outward miracles] *shall he do; because I go unto my Father*. John xiv. 12. How is this possible? He explains it afterwards to his disciples, by revealing to them the descent of the *Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the promise of*

*the Father*, who could endue them with power, as the *Power from on high*. Luke xxiv. 49. And this power was not only to be exercised in the outward miracles of healing the sick or raising the dead, but in the far greater and more difficult wonders of converting the soul and quickening the dead in trespasses and sins. This was the demonstration of *the Spirit*, who clothed his Apostle's words with a *power*, which they had not in themselves, and which not all the creatures could give them; and from hence he is styled by the Apostle *the Spirit of Power*. 2 Tim i. 7.—Let all this be considered maturely and impartially; and it seems almost impossible, upon the ground of the scripture, for any man to deny, that the *power* so eminently ascribed to each of the three divine persons can be any thing less than the power of God; and that this ascription of it to them is one of the most forcible modes, which could be used, of expressing their proper divinity and glory.

The preachers under the Old Testament, who generally were the Prophets, confessed that their knowledge and strength in their office came from the agency of God's Holy Spirit. *Truly* (says one of them) *I am full of power by the Spirit of Jehovah, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin*. Micah iii. 8. *Thy people* (says another, addressing himself to Christ) *shall be willing in the day of thy power*; the peculiar day of which power was, when *the spirit of God and of Christ* was poured out upon his people after his ascension.

The Apostles, under the New Testament, confessed the same truth with their elder brethren the Prophets. Their hope of success and of salvation *abounded through the power of the Holy Ghost*; and, therefore, they did not preach with the *enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, that their [hearers'] faith might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God*; and hence God committed (as one of them urged) *this treasure to earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us*. 2 Cor. iv. 7. Here the terms God and Spirit are reciprocated, and evidently predicated of the same person. The *power of God* and the *power of the Spirit* are also one and the same thing, proceeding from one and the same source, and concluding to one and the same end. The man, who *will not* see this, shuts his eyes, and then has an excellent cause to complain of the darkness.

An Angel hath confirmed the testimony of Prophets and Apostles, and declared, that the greatest blessing, which was ever

shewed to the world, came by the supreme power of the Spirit of truth. *The Holy Ghost* (says he to the Virgin Mary) *shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* Luke i. 35. The *Power of the Highest* is characteristic of the agency of that divine Spirit, by whom all things were made, and who, as a person in the Godhead, is *essential Power*. This text alone is sufficient to prove the divinity of the Holy Ghost, and is a two-edged sword against the opposers of the Trinity. For, if the Holy Ghost be the power of the Highest, as Christians believe: then is he true and very God, because he possesses the essential attribute of the Godhead; but if the power of the Highest be a being, *different* from the Holy Ghost; then there are either *two persons* mentioned in the text, or a *person* and an *attribute* (as the anti-christians would rather have it,) which is equally against them. If the text speak of *two persons*, then the spirit or power of the highest are distinctly or conjointly God,—or there will be more Gods than one; for that which was to be born, through their agency, was *the Son of God*—of *one* God. But if the text speak of a *person* and an *attribute* (as some folks talk,) then the *Holy Ghost* must be the *person* and the *power of the highest* must be the attribute; and consequently the Holy Ghost is God; because the human nature of Christ was produced by *him* and called the Son of God in the text for that reason; otherwise, to say that Christ's human nature was born of an *attribute* (in the sense of some, as a mere emanation) not only renders the Spirit's presence a matter of nullity, but contradicts the propriety of the expression, which affirms Christ to be the *Son of God*. Will the adversaries say, that the *Holy Ghost* and the *power* are *two names* for the *same attribute* only? They still cut up their cause; for the Holy Ghost, even according to them, can be no *created* attribute in that case, but the essential, underived *act* of the *Most High*: and then it will become them to shew us, how God is so *separable* from his own act, as to render it improper to say, that the *Holy Ghost is God himself*. If they *grant* this; they make a concession, which will rout their opinion presently in the hands of the Christian: if they do *not* grant it, they strip God of his attribute of *Power*, and leave him (one cannot say what kind of) an helpless being, whose energies are in his *emanations*, and not in *himself*. And this futility and obscurity must be embraced by men, who, pretending respect to the scripture, oppose the doctrine of the Trinity. On the other hand, if the text be con-

sidered in the orthodox view, there is an end of all ambiguity at once; because the Holy Ghost being *the person* in the Trinity who for his operations and nature in grace is called *the power of the highest*, and who was the agent to *prepare Christ's body*; the human nature of the Messiah might justly be called the *Son of God*, having no other Father.

Not only in this wonderful operation of producing the body of Christ, was the Spirit expressly the agent; but, in the whole ministration of Christ and his Apostles, the same *Spirit was with him* and with them. *God anointed him with the Spirit and with power.* He was *led by the Spirit into the wilderness* to be tempted; and *he returned from the wilderness by the power of the Spirit.* The Apostles were *endued also with power from on high*; and they *received that power*, it is expressly said, *after the Holy Ghost came upon them.* By this power, they wrought miracles and wonders in the sight of the people; and constantly declared, that they wrought them by the agency of the Holy Spirit. They could not be mistaken in the case; for the *miracles* were intended to prove and testify *truth*: And if this doctrine of the Spirit had not been a truth, it is impossible to believe, that any miracle would have been permitted, or could have been effected, to confirm it.

That this *power* should have been an emanation only, or a naked attribute, seems as preposterous, as it is unscriptural. That a naked attribute should have a *mind* in itself to direct it with infinite precision to certain objects, and so take a name of acting and existing without God in it, is that new creation of human genius, which might do well enough in a Poem or a Fable; but ill accords with the plan of the scripture, which asserts, that God doeth all, and is in all. Or, that an attribute or emanation should act separate from God, or rather be not God himself acting according to the notion of such an attribute, may pass with children, or with those who will own any thing and adopt any absurdity, rather than embrace the truth of revelation.

But, that this *power of God is God in the power*, effecting all whatever is ascribed to it, and that the Holy Ghost is *the power of God* because He is *God the Holy Ghost*, are truths written with a sun-beam throughout the scriptures, and one great point of their harmony from beginning to end. Nor could there have been conceived a more forcible or emphatic mode of asserting the divinity of the Holy Spirit, than that which the scriptures use, by applying to his *person*, in the most abstract sense, the *æ*;

tribute of *power*. In this sense, *power* is not a *principle acted*, but *pure act* itself, which act hath no cause or end out of its own nature, but effects every thing agreeably to it. But as this is or can be predicable only of God; *power*, then, is God himself, and is accordingly used by our Lord to signify the divine nature; *ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of Power*. Mark xiv. 62. To say of him in this view that He is THE POWER, and the power of God, is only calling him God by *another* name, which name properly belongs to God alone. There is no power *but* of God: And where the power of God is displayed, there God is manifestatively in the power. The calling God by the name of any attribute, or the applying any attribute to either of the persons in the Godhead, is ascribing the infinite perfection of that attribute, and a most strong, though indirect, assertion of the essential divinity of him, to whom it is applied. When the Apostle, for instance, pronounces, that God is *love*; no manner of speaking (among men) could glorify that benign attribute with more force of expression on the one hand; nor, on the other, shew, that *love* originally and essentially is God himself, and one with the truth of his being. And if it be said, that God is *power*, or that the Holy Ghost is *power*, in the same essential manner that he is *love*: we may invert the terms, if we please, and affirm, that *the power* is God, that *the power* is the Holy Ghost, that the Holy Ghost, therefore, is God; yet the proposition is still the same, containing, under these reciprocations, one inseparable truth. The power, ascribed in this essential manner, to God and the Holy Spirit, is an invincible argument of divinity. It would be impious to say to a creature, *Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory*: And yet these *two last* attributes in particular, which are the principle of the *first*, are often applied to the Holy Spirit. The word *God* is a name, indeed, in which all the other conceivable attributes unite collectively; but neither this of *power*, nor any other of them, in their *essential form*, can possibly be applied, and never were applied, to a mere creature.

From all this it appears, that the Spirit, and this attribute of power, are so often joined together and reciprocated, on purpose to declare, that as *power belongeth unto God*, the Spirit of God is the God of all power to effect the salvation of his people. Derivative power could not accomplish this task; and this sort of power is carefully exploded in the word by God himself. *This was the word of Jehovah unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, [evidently meaning human might and power] but by*

my SPIRIT, saith Jehovah Sabaoth. Zech. iv. 1. What could more strongly have cut down all the pretended power of the creatures? What could more vehemently assert the divinity of the Spirit, the Creator?

If we consider the effects of power, ascribed to the Spirit, and with the scripture view him as their cause; we must still be further convinced of his divine omnipotence and glory. The *promises* of God concerning these are so many declarations and prophecies, which are confirmed by their fulfilment upon *fact*. He hath *done* whatever was *said* of him, and brought down as much as could be possessed of the truth of God, into the knowledge and experience of man.

*By the Spirit God garnished the heavens.* Job xxvi. 13. The same Spirit *made man*, and was the *breath of the Almighty which gave him life.* Job xxxiii. 4. He, therefore, is called Jehovah Alehim, who *breathed* this life into man. Gen. ii. 7. He was also promised in the Prophets, as the great *renewer* of the spiritual world, as the *free Spirit* to recover from the thralldom of sin, and as the great *teacher* of the house of God: And all this we find him upon fact in the New Testament. The miracles were wrought by him, as the *finger of God*; souls were converted by him, as the *power of God*: and life everlasting is bestowed by him, as the *Spirit of God*. He is the blessed *Paraclete* or *Advocate*, who carries on the cause of Christ upon earth, by various divine operations in the hearts of his people, and who pleads their cause in Heaven before the throne. He enables his ministers to perform, or be the means of performing, far greater works than any outward miracles, by raising the dead in sin at their preaching of his gospel, and edifying his Church through their instrumentality. It is the power of this Spirit, or this Spirit of Power, which breathes in their breath, and goes forth in it and with it to revive the sinner's soul. It was this sublime power, which, in every age, invigorated the redeemed to withstand the rage of the world, and to tread Satan under their feet. He it was, who supported them in that great *light of afflictions*, which mere professors would tremble to view, but which by the "noble army of martyrs" was thought but *light* and *momentary*, and in some cases sought after with perhaps too much avidity. They courted the crown of martyrdom with greater zeal, than the ancient Greeks pursued the crown of triumph at the Olympic games. They *strove for the mastery* in a strength very superior to their own, and, in the same strength, *obtained the prize of their high calling*. To this very day, we see believers

triumphing over death and the grave, and borne up against the evils within and without, unconquered and unconquerable. And what should give this immortal vigor, but that ever living Spirit, who is all power and immortality? What should dissipate the most awful gloom of drooping nature, but this Spirit of the Almighty, who created at first, and who only can replenish or restore? Who is able to do all these things in the world, and in his people throughout the world, but that divine Spirit, who is Jehovah, God over all, blessed for ever?

Thus we see, that the declarations, prophecies, promises, and facts, recorded in scripture concerning the Holy Spirit, uniformly concur in the attestation of his divinity. We find it confirmed also by the people of God in every age, not in opinion only, but in experience and enjoyment; and we are assured, that it is to have this confirmation to the end of time, and that there shall be witnesses of this truth in the world, as long as the world shall endure. *The promise [i. e. of the Spirit] is unto you* (said St. Peter to the Jews) *and to your children, and to All that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* Acts ii. 39.

And what is this *call*, but that effectual word of power, with which the Holy Spirit penetrates the human heart? The soul is *dead* in sin; the word comes from some instrument or other, and says, *live!* There is nothing in such a word, considered as a word, which can produce any effect. A man, a minister, an Angel, might traverse the church-yard, and call up the dead from their graves by saying the word *live* over them, with more ease (because it is a less work) than they, by saying the word *live*, or any other words to that effect, to a congregation of people dead in soul, could induce their conversion. People often think, that it is the multitude of words, or the strength of argument, which converts sinners. But what was the force of argument, when Christ said to Matthew, *Follow me!* Exactly the same, as when he said to the dead son of the widow at Nain, *Arise!* The objects were different, but the power was one. If there was any greater exertion in the one case than in the other, it was shewn towards Matthew; because to change the state of the soul itself, must necessarily be a far superior work, than to return the soul again to occupy its body. Where was the skill, the eloquence, or power, in St. Peter's Sermon at the day of Pentecost? He was an illiterate man, quite unacquainted with the managements of the schools. He had never seen the great world, but only had followed, till about two or three years before, the solitary trade of a

fisherman, and therefore knew not how to address with artifice the passions of men, or to lead a multitude by their eyes and ears. We have the Sermon before us, to this day; and we can see nothing in it of what men admire in orations. It only contains some plain matters of fact, in the plainest and simplest language: And these are delivered with all possible brevity. Though it may be said of the Apostle with more truth than it was of Phocion the Athenian, "that his words were to be estimated like coins, from the intrinsic value of the metal, not from the bulk:" Yet how could such a discourse have such an amazing effect, as to win three thousand souls at once to the faith of Christ; when, it is not impossible, many of them had, but a little while before, importuned Pilate to crucify him? We shall find, in the book of the Acts, where this and many like facts are recorded, that the *power* of the Holy Ghost fell upon the hearers, and that it was *the Lord*, who *added to the Church daily such as should be saved*. It was no more by the Apostle's *own power* or *holiness*, (as he said upon another occasion) that this vast draught of spiritual fishes was taken at one throw of the gospel-net; than that the *lame man*, by his mere speaking, was made whole, or Dorcas raised from the dead. The Apostles well knew *where* the strength of the argument lay, which could convert sinners to God, and declare it to be in the secret power of the Holy Ghost. They, therefore, did not aim to speak their own words, but the words which the Holy Ghost taught them, who only could give *demonstration* of the truth to the mind, and carry it home with *power* to the heart. To have used human skill upon the occasion, they knew well enough would have been that *ignoratio elenchi*, that mistake of the point in hand, which would have concluded in nothing for the hearers, and produced only shame for themselves. They had too much concern for men's souls to tickle their ears, and too deep a sense of their important errand to play with words. They spake as the Spirit gave them utterance; and the power of the Spirit attended all their words, rendering them the means of faith and salvation to as many as He himself had *ordained*.

Though the wonderful effusion of this Holy Comforter has ceased, so far as regards external miracles and the more sensible operations; it is by his power, even now, that souls are awakened to life and called forth from the grave of sin. In proportion as ministers are led to depend upon and acknowledge him, and in proportion as they are truly called and ordained by him and according to his will; is the success of their ministration and



labor.\* Such gracious souls are about playing the orator and descending to the low solicitude of pleasing mortals like themselves: Their great desire is to please God, and to put *themselves*, as much as may be, out of the question. If the work succeed, be it either through them or others, they rejoice; and they will be exceedingly glad, if souls are brought home to Christ by other men, when they themselves (like Peter) *have toiled all the night and caught nothing*. They are sensible of this one truth, that, were they to preach ten thousand years to ten thousand times ten thousand people, with all the eloquence of Demosthenes, or of St. Paul, or of Angels themselves, they should not be able to bring one soul in reality to God, even though all these people should profess to receive their word, and to be delighted in them as their teachers. They are convinced, that they might as soon stop a torrent with one of their fingers, as stop the course of sin in a man's heart by any of their endeavours. They see, that the things of God have a reach far above all the capacity of man, and that though God condescends to use them as his instruments; it is chiefly for the purpose of shewing, *how strong his own grace is*, when he can make it effectual to life eternal in their weak

\* This is one great proof, which faithful ministers alone can venture to offer, concerning the truth of their own mission, or of the certainty that the Holy Ghost hath *not yet forsaken* the earth. In these days of blasphemy, when worldly men and worldly ministers presume with open front to deny the agency of God's Spirit upon the hearts of men, only because they have not felt it upon their own (which certainly is a very wise reason for contradicting the word and church of God upon the subject;) it behoves those, who know their calling, to insist the more strenuously on the necessity of that operation, without which men are and can be no more Christians, than statues of wax or of stone can be creatures of life and consciousness.—“How many souls have been awakened under my ministry to the knowledge of God? How many seals can I shew of my vocation? Who has been quickened from the death of sin to a life of grace and holiness, through my preaching? And who has been edified in the most holy faith of my master Christ, by the blessing of God on my labors?”—These are the questions, which faithful men will ask of their own hearts? And such men only will be most deeply solicitous of the salvation of their hearers, above all considerations of the earthly advantages which may be drawn from them.

In a word; those are very ill qualified to treat upon the corruptions of others, and much less to draw sinister insinuations from any pretended “Corruptions of Christianity,” who either by life or doctrine do demonstrate, that they know but little or nothing of their own. There is a pride of understanding, and a conceit of abilities in all men, if their mental attainments are ever so little above the vulgar, and proportionally increasing with the poor opinion and applause of their fellow-worms, which nothing but divine grace can subdue to the obedience of Christ: But where these corruptions are not subdued, the greater the man's talents are, the more error and spiritual folly will he usually produce; as the richest soils maintain the rankest weeds, when not under due cultivation and restraint.

hands. They feel it their duty to go forth in his name, and to rely upon his strength, persuaded that, without him, they only beat the air, and raise a transient and a dying sound.\* Invigorated by him, they plead from the heart for God; and God usually honors

Neither this doctrine, nor that of election, tends to make those, who are really influenced by it, idle and indifferent, but the contrary. Those, who have been most sensible of the worth of these truths, have, beyond comparison, been most diligent in their work, most earnest with God for the success of it, and most happy in the attendance of that success. The reason is, they are not human truths, or truths of man's invention, but of God and of his revelation. They were maintained by Christ and his Apostles, by the most excellent of the Fathers, by holy men in all ages, and by the Reformed Church (for the most part) in particular down to this age. One is almost astonished, therefore, to find so candid and sensible a man, as Montesquieu, among the herd of rude declaimers, in attacking the doctrines of grace. "From the inactivity of soul (says he) springs the Mahometan doctrine of predestination, and from this doctrine of predestination springs the inactivity of soul. This, they say, is in the decrees of God; they must, therefore, indulge their repose." *Spirit of Laws*. Book xxv. c. 14. It is sufficient to refute his conclusion by a higher authority. *Pe always abundant* (says St. Paul) *in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.* A fair argument for the use of the means, when the end is certain through the use of them. How so masterly a writer could slide into the absurdity of confounding cause and effect, as he does by rendering reciprocally the one principle to be the spring of the other, cannot be accounted for, but by the triumph of prejudice in this case over the understanding. In fact, this truly ingenious man was a better civilian than divine, and understood the spirit of human laws with greater accuracy than the spirit of true Christianity. Otherwise, he had not unhappily jumbled all religions (as they are falsely termed) almost together, and made the true religion itself the tool and creature of human polity. See the xxiv. and xxv. books of the *Spirit of Laws*. To call (as he does) the doctrine of predestination by the odious name of Mahometan, is abusive and unbecoming so great a writer; unless it were a doctrine peculiar to the Mahometans, which he well knew it was not, but that it is as old as revelation itself. It is the more surprizing, after his great approbation of the Stoics, who, with the Mahometans, held the doctrine in that exceptionable manner which Christians do not, to the exclusion of providence. "Never (says he) were any principles more worthy of human nature, and more proper to form the good man, than those of the Stoics: And if I could for a moment cease to think that I am a Christian, I should not be able to hinder myself from ranking the destruction of the sect of Zeno among the misfortunes, that have befallen the human race." The rest of this x chap. of the xxiv. book is little else than a high panegyric upon the virtues of Stoicism, and offers a striking contradiction to the lazy effects, which he supposes in another place must result from predestination. He asserts here, that rank fatalism did not exterminate virtue, but promoted it in the highest degree next to Christianity. How then was it possible for him to think, that the doctrine of predestination deserved to be branded with the word *Mahometan*? How could he avoid believing, that this principle, founded as it is on Providence and not on blind indurate fate, must necessarily be more active and vigorous, than a persuasion, without hope of certainty on the one hand, or full of the ideas of a rigid, dark, and inexorable rule, on the other? If Stoicism could be alert (as he vehemently assures us) in the course of virtue; what reason could he have given; what can any man give; that Christianity should not, at least, be equally so? But it has been infinitely more alert; witness the histories of the two professions, and the conduct of philosophers and Christians.

them by making their words all life and power to the hearts of his people, who truly receive these words, and who were appointed to receive them.

This *power* of the Holy Spirit is a glorious attribute for the true believer. He sees what need there is of it to keep him from falling, and to carry him on from day to day. The promise, that in waiting upon God he shall *renew his strength*, is no idle promise to him; for he constantly feels a necessity for fresh supplies of immortal power, having nothing of his own to oppose against his enemies, or to move one step towards heaven. His heart would faint, and his hopes fail, but for the ever-present help of his powerful Comforter. He sees (what worldly men cannot see) innumerable difficulties and foes to overcome all the way to God; he finds it a constant warfare without, and as constant a fighting within; he surveys his own puny might, and his heart is ready to sink like a stone. It would sink, did not the gracious hand which held up Peter in the sea, hold him up also, and keep him from drowning. Then he takes the last refuge for believers. He cries out with them, in the view of all his corruptions, and snares, and adversaries, *O our God, we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon thee!* 2 Chron. xx. 12. And what is the consequence? He hears the voice of the Spirit in his word, saying, *Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.* When the believer can make God his strength, the battle is as good as won: The great fight is, to keep off corruptions, till the soul can get under the Lord's banner. Here he fights to purpose and assuredly prevails.

In the difficulties of life, we are prone to double them, by taking them all upon ourselves. We are not able in our own might, properly to sustain or master the least trouble; and our usual object, in trying to get rid of it, is merely *our own ease*. Too often we forget *who sent it*, or *for what it was sent*; And, hence, we neither glorify God in it, nor reap, as we ought, any spiritual improvement for ourselves. We never had a sorrow or temptation, but, if we had brought it to our God, we might have been the wiser or the better for it as long as we live. Our very slips and falls, with this management of grace, would have made us stronger and more upon our guard for the time to come. But we too often encounter trials in our own strength, and especially if we think them small; and then our trials, even the least, bring us down

with grief and trouble. The sorrows of a believing soul, in this respect, no unbeliever can know. The troubles of his mind are more, from what the world cannot see, than from what it can. The making God our strength, or reposing ourselves upon his holy arm, is no slight business, but the hardest work in the world. It is easy to believe a matter out of trial; and so it is for people to talk of storms and shipwrecks in a warm room upon shore: But let evil spirits or corruptions blow like the winds; let the floods of ungodly men beat on every side; and then, if faith hath not fixed the house upon the rock, down it will fall. There is but one support in the case, and that support is at the foundation. If *this* be not right, all the rest will soon be found wrong. And even where it is right, the tempest is not pleasant, although the soul be safe. It may be shaken, though it stand; and so shaken, as to put the trembling inhabitant in fear of his life. It is a shrewd sign, that a man doth not know his own heart, who makes light, and talks light of temptations and trials: For, if he saw the weakness within and the strength without, he would shrink within himself at the sense of the danger. Bravoes in common life are usually men of no true spirit, and often cowards: And, in the spiritual life, it is much the same. Young professors, like young recruits, talk bravely about battles: The veteran is silent upon the pleasure of fighting, and recollects the variety of his hardships and dangers. Bring both into the field; and the old soldier will be firm, where the very noise and terrors of the conflict shall make the young one tremble. Our Lord puts it into all his people's mouths to pray—*lead us not into temptation*: And, whether we see it or not, there is a temptation lurking in every thing. It is our duty to pray, in all circumstances, against the temptations which attend them. If we saw sometimes, what temptations lay disguised under our greatest blessings and privileges, and even under our holiest duties; we should almost be afraid to use them. When we are *alone*, as to our own apprehension, we are beset by them; and we are kept from being a prey only by superior power. In *company*, we have these and other snares in our way; and we had need to pray, and pray again, *lead us not into temptation*. In our nearest approaches to God, and when our souls are most enlarged; we are not beyond the reach of a snare, nor able of ourselves to repel it. We are never safe but *in him*, who is our strength, and who alone can *keep us, by his mighty power, through faith unto salvation*.

“ True (says the desponding Christian) I feel and see all this in

myself. I know so much of my own weakness, that I often fear the prevalence of my enemy, and that I shall one day perish by the hands of this Saul."—The man, who feels and fears this in reality, shall never fall. The soul is often brought into this state, that it may be sensible of its entire dependence upon the strength of Almighty grace for its support and continuance. We are beaten very hardly out of ourselves: And all the struggles we endure within arise, in fact, from the want of confidence in God. Flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God, nor quietly submit to the will of God. Could we cast all our care upon him, as we are privileged to cast it, our moments of anxiety would be few, and the natural perturbations of our heart less distracting and strong. 'Tis a heavenly lesson to put every thing into the Lord's hand, to view with calmness the workings of his providence, to abate the impatient forwardness of our earthly nature, and to follow him with resignation of spirit wherever he is pleased to lead.—“Our vows are cruel to ourselves, if they demand nothing but gentle zephyrs, and flowery fields, and calm repose, as the lot of our life; for these pleasant things often prove the most dangerous enemies to our nobler and dearer life.”\* Our unhappiness is, we want all things to be done, in us and for us, according to our own way, and in our own time. We do not *wait the Lord's leisure*, nor his *will*; but often *make haste* to perplexity and sorrow by seeking our own. As God doth not refuse, when he delays; so he doth not delay, without the most sufficient cause. Take, for instance, the case of Abraham. God could have given him Isaac, as soon as or before Ishmael; could have made his promise much earlier than he did, and after he had made it, could have fulfilled it in a very short time. Instead of this, God deferred the promise and the fulfilment for many years, and brought it forward in the extremity of Abraham's old age. But the good Patriarch's faith was not only to be *tried*, which is the general view of the case, but to be *taught*; and the faith of future ages was to be instructed by that teaching: And the lesson was; that from the promise and its fulfilment being deferred to a time of life, when he could not expect much or long enjoyment of any *temporal* blessing, and to *days*, when he might say, *I have no pleasure in them*; he might take notice, and we by him, that the *great and true blessings* promised was not a matter of this world, and that the *earthly* good was a good, principally, in being the symbol or promise of *spiritual* and *eternal* mercies. In like manner, Moses was

\* Archbishop Leighton, Med. on Ps. cxxx.

four-score, when he preached deliverance to the people in Egypt, and could expect no great felicity in the promised land, as a mere *earthly* possession; and especially when he had continued near forty years longer in the wilderness. But he desired this possession, as an instituted sacrament or pledge of a far greater possession, even the inheritance of the spiritual Canaan. He desired a *better country, even a heavenly*, and looked for the earthly one, chiefly as its appointed earnest. If he had not been thus disposed, he might have said, when God ordered him into Egypt at four-score, what Barzillai said to David at the very same age, "*how long have I to live?*" And what is the difference between earthly good and evil to me? But viewing this dispensation by the grace of faith, he saw into the *spiritual and eternal* truth, which that dispensation preached, and gave up his quiet retirement in the wilderness in proof of it; as, before, he had quitted human grandeur for the wilderness, in testimony of his adherence to the gospel and people of God.—After these bright examples, believer, be not thou weary, nor faint in thy mind. God doth not withhold comforts on earth from thee, but to quicken thy desires after, and finally to bestow upon thee, the joys of Heaven. Thou wilt have happiness enough there: And the voice of his afflicting dispensations should tell thee so. He gives the world, as a matter of small account in itself, to wicked men; but *himself* only to his children. And will not such a portion suffice for *thee*?

This attribute of *power* in God is alarming, or will be alarming, to all them, who oppose his truth, or who fight against him in his people. If he be *mighty to save*, he is *Almighty* to destroy.—They who run upon *the thick bosses of his buckler*, can only wound themselves. The Highest, on his everlasting throne, is not to be moved by the weak efforts of dying worms; nor can their silly designs prosper or prevail against his eternal counsel and decree.

As the Holy Spirit hath all power in himself, so he communicates the power of his grace through the gospel of truth. He gives power *to* his word, and power *by* his word. When he bestows light upon the soul, he doth not give "a useless knowledge of useful things;" but imparts a vigor and efficacy with that light, which mould the spirit of a man into the frame and temper of the great pattern, Christ Jesus. A man is not left here to *the form of Godliness*, but possesses the *power* of it. In this state, he sees that all divine truths are not merely to be known as speculations, but enjoyed as realities: And a truth without enjoyment and re-

ish, is to him but as a statue without life. It may be fine marble, perhaps, and highly polished ; but it is nothing but *form*, and very *cold*. Our minds are naturally inclined to soar ; and the more ingenious a man is, the higher he may mount ; but the more dreadful will be his fall. There is a luxury for the head, as well as for the appetite. Fine thoughts and nice speculations shall bloat a soul, which may belong to a man, whose body at the same time may be quite emaciated through abstemiousness. We may know the worth and the kind of our knowledge, by the fruit which it bears. There are many trees *beautiful* to the sight, which are also very *strong* and very *lofty*, but do not produce the least food or fruit : And there are others, which (like the vine) are very feeble and homely in appearance, but yield productions of the greatest value and delight. In like manner, towering thoughts, decorated speculations, unprofitable inquiries, concerning divine things, may amuse the mind ; but one humbling view of ourselves, or one moment's communion of divine grace, is better than a world full of such useless vanities. We may see the evidence of this truth, by the lofty speculatists of the day, who are impatient of the least contradiction, swell with arrogance and insult at the most trifling opposition, and cannot endure the opinion, that other men should not think as well of their vast capacity, as they do themselves. All this is poor indeed ! If such be the object of a man's life, and if all his aim be to live in the opinion of others ; he may well be pronounced miserable, because it is an object never attained, and an aim which no man could ever possibly enjoy. He quits the judgment of God, who is the author of all wisdom and happiness, for the opinion of creatures, who are all folly and misery in themselves, and whose best opinion dies with them, if not before them.

Learn then, believer, to make God thy strength, and thy glory. His trumpet shall not blow an empty or a lying blast, like the trumpet of fame, but, in *pronouncing* thee blessed, shall *make* thee so. It was a faithful resolution, *I will go in the strength of the Lord God* : And it is a wise example for thee to follow, that thou mayest never want power. In Jehovah, one said, *I have everlasting strength* : But not the only *one*, who hath said and found it too. It is *thy* privilege in faith so to say, and so to find. It is the common privilege of all the people of God. O then, let us join in looking up to this *Holy Spirit of Power* for fresh and fresh supplies of immortal strength, that we may proceed in our heavenly way rejoicing, that we may hold on and hold out to the end of that

way, and finally obtain the purpose of all grace in the enjoyment of eternal glory. Then shall we attune harps, hearts, and voices, to rever-dying strains of the purest love; and then, in the view of past and future mercies, which Jehorah hath ordained, shall we triumph when we sing his *praise*, and rejoice to proclaim his *power* &



## SPIRIT OF PROMISE.

UPON the Fall, man was surrounded with every prospect of misery, and needed a *Promise* to keep him from despair. Mercy triumphed over this misery, and supplied that promise, raising up his drooping mind to the expectation of good. This good, and the means by which it was to be introduced, made the *ground* of the promise: The *author* of it could be no less than the author of all good, even God himself.

The promise, at first immediately delivered by God to man, was afterwards renewed upon various occasions, both immediately by himself, and mediately by persons commissioned by him. When the promise came directly from God, it was generally ascribed to his *Voice*; and this *voice* has been proved, in another place, to denote his Spirit. When it has been communicated through men, the same *Voice* spake in them; and therefore it is said, *they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*, or still more directly in the terms of Christ, *it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you*. This voice gave the *word*, which is sometimes translated *promise*, and always implies it; for God's *word declared*, being *predictive* of what shall come to pass, is consequently *prophetical* or *promissory*. It usually means, what we particularly understand by promise, when it predicts *good things*, and hence the *promises* are called *exceeding great and precious*, both on account of their *author* and *subject*; but the *word* itself is *all promise*, even of destruction to sinners, and must to a tittle be accomplished.

As the whole promise of grace and life eternal proceeds from God, because He only hath the right to give or power to fulfil it, and because his *Voice* only can utter his own mind and decree, which voice is his Spirit; therefore the Spirit is termed, sometimes **THE promise** emphatically, as including every other declaration of salvation; and sometimes the *Promise of the Spirit*, and



*the Spirit of Promise*, explicitly, as expressing the great agent who is to fulfil it. He is called the *promise* itself, because he reveals or makes it known; and the *Spirit of Promise*, because he is the very Spirit and Power, by whom it is accomplished.

He gave his promise to his people in the Godman, Christ Jesus as their fœderal or mediatorial head; and no one promise, or the fulfilment of it, flows to them through any other channel. In *him* only the promises are *all yea*, and *all amen*; all positive and full, all established and sure. *The truth is in Jesus*; and so likewise is the promise of truth. The Spirit never gave a promise but what related to Christ, or to his people in Christ.—Christ is, therefore, the *promised seed*; and so are *they*, for his sake. Rom. ix. 8. But the great promiser, and one great branch of the promise itself, is that *eternal Spirit* through whom Christ offered himself without spot unto God, and by whose power the redeemed are gathered and united to Christ, as one body or temple, for his own habitation and glory. Eph. ii. 21, 22. In Christ they have communion with the Spirit; and by the Spirit they are brought to Christ for this communion. In and through both these divine persons, they are led up finally to the Father, as to the consummation of their own bliss, and of Jehovah's glory. Thus the Spirit is the great vivifying agent of all the people of God, who convinces them of sin, leads them to Christ for his atonement and righteousness, keeps them in dependence upon Christ by his almighty power, instructs their souls in the truths of salvation by enlightening his holy word, supplies them with strength against their enemies, affords them comfort in all their tribulations, imparts to them the various degrees of grace and holiness, and at last brings them safely to glory and Heaven. Surely, such a Spirit as this might be well called a *Promise*, in the highest sense and as the greatest blessing that can be conceived; and he may likewise be well styled the *Spirit of Promise*; since none but his omnipotent power could impart or secure it.

But, that we might not mistake in so important a matter as the *nature* of this holy agent, he is called by other names in conjunction with the word *promise*, or with *what* is promised. Thus our Lord styles him, *the promise of my Father*, because the Spirit is *sent by the Father, proceedeth from him*, and is *one with him* in the Godhead. These additions to the name of the Spirit appear designed to prevent a misapprehension of him for some common or created spirit. Hence he is called *the Spirit from on high*, or *from the highest*, Isaiah xxxii. 15. because he descends,

not only from Heaven (for Angels do this,) but from the divine nature or Godhead. The words are framed according to the apprehensions of our sense, and mean, that in descending from the *highest*, he necessarily was *above* all, and as such came as necessarily from Jehovah most High, who only is above all. He was a party in the everlasting covenant [in a manner superior to our conceptions as to the *mode*, but somewhat analogous to what we apprehend from those words in the *sense* or *purport*], which covenant is the *foundation* of the promise; as the promise itself is the *declaration* of God's intention in that covenant. Now, none could make this declaration or promise, but the Godhead who conceived and determined it, or a *person* in the Godhead. No creatures, however exalted, could apprehend the infinite mind and will of Jehovah, but by the communication of Jehovah, and then only according to their limited capacity. The whole matter and manner must spring originally from God alone; and could have been known to any creature only by his inspiration; for creatures depend as much for their knowledge upon God, as for their being. But, as the Spirit is a party in this everlasting covenant, *searcheth all things, even the deep things of God*, hath revealed in all ages (as the *voice* of God) the *will* of God, is the very *promise* itself for the tuition and comfort of the children of God, and the *Spirit of Promise* to effectuate *what* is promised to them, both in time and eternity; the man who, on the one hand, will *grant* these premises, is most absurd, if he doth not also grant, that none but Jehovah could do these mighty acts; and the man who, on the other, will *not* grant them, must deny the Bible itself, and renounce all revelation for ever. There seems, therefore, no refuge in the case; but either the *Spirit of Promise is Jehovah promising*, or there is no promise at all, and consequently no revealed communication between God and man. The one principle is the root and ground of *faith*; and the other of all *infidelity*. To which it may be added; the operation and effect of these two principles *divide* the world, and separate *gracious* souls of all denominations from the *graceless* in every one.

It appears from hence, as well as from some other considerations, how important a matter it is for Christians to be well grounded in the truth of their conductor's *divinity*. Their comfort in the hope of salvation, as well as salvation itself, depends upon it. Remove this doctrine, and what man, who knows his own heart, the warfare he is engaged in, and the power of his foes, would not give up all for lost in a moment? The ignorance of these matters renders men trifling, unpersuaded, and unconcerned

respecting the divinity of the Spirit. They do not see that the Christian religion itself stands upon it, and the very purpose of that religion to man, even life eternal. Denioliſh this principle, and Deism, under cover of Socinianism, and other heterodoxies, come in with full force, upon the citadel of faith. To an awakened or *enlightened* soul (as the ancient Christians used to term the established believer) the divinity of the Holy Spirit appears as essential to his salvation, as the prior existence of God himself was necessary to his natural being. He cannot read a page in his Bible, but he perceives an expression or implication of this truth, which also is the very spring of all providence and grace, resolving the occurrences of the one into the purposes and conclusions of the other. And he possesses a further demonstration of this truth, in conjunction with the Bible, from that experience of it, which the Bible warrants and inculcates, and which it may not be unprofitable to consider.

The Apostle, in mentioning this *Holy Spirit of Promise* in Eph. i. 13. declares also the use and advantage of the Spirit. And it may be noted, by the way, that all the doctrines of the Bible apply to *use*, and are not to be considered as mere notions to swell the brain, without feeding the heart. *After ye believed\* in Christ* (says St. Paul) *ye were SEALED with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, &c.* They believed, which they were enabled to do *by the operation of God*, Col. ii. 12. and thus they were sealed by the Spirit of promise, or according to the promise of God. This sealing is the *earnest*, sure pledge and part of that possession, which is called *our inheritance* because, through Christ we are *born of the Spirit, or of God*, are therefore *children of God*, and, being children, become *heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ* for that inheritance. The admission is through faith, the pledge and security is the seal of God the Spirit, and the end everlasting life. As a naked promise without witness is not obligatory among men, before their courts of law; God takes up a similitude from it, in order to shew the positive certainty of his salvation. He delivers his promise under the name of a *testament*, which he ratifies by his own

\* The words might be rendered, *Believing ye were sealed*; but they amount to the same sense. *Faith*, through a grace of the Spirit as exercised in and by us, is *one* thing; and the *seal* of the Spirit is *another*. Dr. Guyse upon the place, has judiciously distinguished them; and even Mr. Hervey, who corrects our translation, seems to mean by this sealing of the Spirit, "some delightful *joretastes* of life and immortality" *Ther in and Aspasie*. Dial xvi near the end.

oath, which comes into force by the death of that testator in whose name it was made, which is sealed by the Spirit and impleaded by him in the hearts of his people for whose benefit it was made, and which is witnessed to by the Son and Spirit before the court of Heaven. In this way, God delights (as it were) to communicate to the heirs of salvation the *immutability of his counsel*, and their *security* in him. But if the Holy Spirit were not a *person*, he could not seal at all; if not a *divine* person, he could not seal for the conveyance of an inheritance, which only a divine nature could bestow; and much less could he *so* seal, as to be the very *earnest, assurance, and certainty* of an eternal inheritance. His *sealing* obliged the divine nature to perform to man; and it seems not a little incongruous to imagine, that any creature whatever could seal an innumerable multitude of souls, and oblige his own maker to grant salvation to them. On the other hand, admitting the Holy Spirit to be, what indeed he is, *God over all*; there is a beautiful harmony in the above similitude, and (what is better for us than all mere *beauty*) that perfect security from alienation, which every believing soul desires to understand. He sees, in this delightful view, that God contrived the Testament, that God effected the purpose of it, that God sealed and secured the whole, without possibility of failure or disappointment. The covenant or testament now appears *worthy* of God, as well as ordained by him; and most comfortable to man, for whose poor soul it was graciously framed. Here is God planning, effecting, and securing to eternity; and *man* to eternity enjoying, adoring, and praising. This is all brightness and delight at once; while the reverse is altogether gloom and despair.—Judge then, reader, which of the two proffers more honor to God, or more happiness to thee!

In full dependence upon the divinity of the Spirit of promise do all his promises, engagements, and operations proceed. Trace them to their fountain-head, they rise from him, and, rising from him, do thereby prove him to be God. They either spring not from the Spirit, and so the Bible is an imposition; or, springing from him, according to the Bible, they demonstrate his divinity. He could not *give* a promise of grace, if he were not the *God of all grace*; for the nearest Angel to the heavenly throne, the very first which stands in the whole order of creatures, depends absolutely upon the grace and favor of his Creator, and *can* have nothing more, in any respect, than what he is capable of enjoying; and the employment of this whole capacity, or of the grace and

favor bestowed upon him, belongs to the giver, and cannot be communicated by one creature to another. If the Spirit then could not *confer* grace, but *as* God; he likewise could not *seal* or *secure* it, but in the right and power of his divine nature. Were there any being *superior* to his own, the security would be nothing which a *dependent* being could give, but must be ultimately resolved into him, who bears the supreme power. Every promise, seal, or security, which the subordinate being might give, would, in that case, be impertinent and nugatory: What is more, they would arise from one, who had no right, as well as no power, to form such a sort of covenant, as deals out heaven itself to worthless sinners, and parcels eternal life and happiness among a set of rebellious mortals. There would be so much error, arrogance, and presumption in such a case, that no *good* being could be guilty of them; and the attempt itself would be frivolous and contrary to the nature as well as above the powers of an *evil* one.

And why doth God so often claim the epithet of *faithful*: but because he *keepeth promise for ever*? The Spirit, for the same reason, is the *Spirit of Promise*, to make good all those engagements, which he declared to the *holy men of old who were moved by him*, and which filled the sacred volume from beginning to end. He spake the promises to them; and he was well qualified to promise, because he is also *able to perform*. He gave them out, in ancient time, by pertinent symbols; and he taught his redeemed both the sense and the experience of those symbols. This Holy Spirit *signified*; Heb. ix. 8. and then gave his people the *purport* of the sign. Carnal professors and the world at large, *then*, as well as *now*, saw the *types* and *shadows*, but took them for *ends* and *substances*: But the Spirit imparted the *ultimate sense* and *understanding* of them only to the faithful. When the Spirit of Promise held forth the *promised land*, the multitude of mere professors thought of nothing beyond the milk and honey, the worldly ease and worldly comforts, which they might enjoy in it: But the true Jews, or real confessors of God, saw through the veil of time, and were taught to consider Canaan, either as the Church collectively in one body, or the everlasting residence of the Church finally in one place. Concerning Jerusalem itself, they perceived the same, and knew it to be relatively only the *holy city*, in symbol of that *Jerusalem which is above*. This was the Canaan and this the Jerusalem they longed for, and in the hope of which they confessed themselves *strangers and pilgrims upon*

*earth, seeking a better country than Judea, even a heavenly, and a city which hath foundations [solid and perpetual, which Jerusalem had not] whose builder and maker is God.* They knew that the land below was an appointed type of the courts above; and they enjoyed it in this frame. Upon this account, the country itself became (as it were) a sacrament to the faithful Jews, and put them in continual mind, that *this was not their rest, being followed, but that Heaven only was their home, even the holiest of all,* for the *forerunner* into which they ardently waited, even for Jesus, their High-priest, and ours. All the services of the law likewise were promises and prophecies in disguise; yet known well enough by them, *to whom it was given.* They were a veil of flesh; but that veil was *rent in twain*, spiritually, by the divine teacher, when saving life and light were brought into their souls, and when they were instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom. Hence the distinction between the *outward* and the *inward* Jews; the *one* having *the veil upon their heart*, when Moses was read, and the ceremonies given by Moses were exhibited; the *other* having that veil *done away in Christ*, and through faith in him, who was then to come. Christ himself also was promised in this way, and came *veiled with human flesh*; so that the carnal or *outward* Jews knew him not, nor saw what a divine and ineffable *pearl*, far above all price, tabernacled in mortal clay. But those, who were enlightened by the Holy Spirit, were at no loss about Him, but, through all the helpless simplicity of a little babe when he came into the world, beheld him by faith, and acknowledged him to be *their salvation.* What made the difference between good old Simeon, Anna the prophetess, with others who rejoiced in him, and Herod, with all those who received him not but sought to destroy him? The answer is; *that very Spirit alone*, who brought Simeon into the temple, at the time of his circumcision, and led others to testify of him; as may be read at large in the two first chapters of the gospel by St. Luke, and what makes the distinction between the real Christian and the nominal professor in their lives and deaths even now? Why is the one enabled to live and be happy in the things of God, to rejoice in tribulation and death, and to have ardent desires for the blessings of eternity; while the other passes his fleeting hours in the hot pursuit after dying affairs, cares neither for God nor his soul, for Heaven or Hell? It cannot be imputed to mere difference of natural understanding; for, usually, those who are esteemed wisest in the world, accept the worse rather than the better part, and are even prone

to think the others, as Festus did Paul, mad and beside themselves. Nay, some of the very persons themselves, who have turned from what they conceived to be follies and sins bewitching others, have been people of whose learning, sense, and integrity, no reasonable man could possibly doubt, and the difference of whose conversation and conduct have been obvious to all who knew them; and yet they have frankly and seriously owned, that it was no might, wisdom, or capacity of their own, which effected this change upon them. To what then could it be ascribed? Surely to nothing else but that which they ascribe it to, in strict concurrence with the word of God; even the power and wisdom of the divine Spirit operating upon their souls. By this they lived; for this they prayed; and for the same have all the Churches of Christ in all ages of the world prayed most expressly either in liturgies or other solemn addresses to Heaven. The Church of England in particular reiterates the petitions of this kind throughout her service, and, in the deepest sense of human frailty, implores that the "Holy Spirit may in *all things* DIRECT and RULE our hearts, through Jesus Christ."\*

From all this it may appear, that the promises, made in the

\* It seems truly astonishing, how it is possible that a minister of this excellent Church, should venture to nullify the exercise of the Holy Spirit upon men's souls, or (what is thought at present to be the more decent fashion) to assert that this exercise is so secret, so imperceptible, so resistable, and so extinguishable by men, that they either cannot know when they have its power upon them, or can suppress it at their pleasure. That the form of Prayer should express or imply in all its parts the absolute necessity of the Spirit's aid, that men should read over these sound words in the desk and then immediately after deny, reprobate, and even ridicule the whole sense of them in the pulpit, is so very shocking and horrid, that it adds a most dreadful weight to all the other unchristian and unprincipled conduct of the times. The Common Prayer book directs us to *replenish our King with the grace of his Holy Spirit, and the Royal Family with the same spirit.* Where is the loyalty or respect, pretending to ask for a blessing, which is treated by these innovators as a chimera? The congregation is led to ask for *the healthful spirit of grace upon the Bishops and Clergy, that they may truly please God.* Is it not horribly impious to use these words in sound, and to deny them in substance? Or can any Clergyman think he can *truly please* God by so bold a duplicity? The people, immediately after the confession of their sins, are exhorted to *beseech God to grant them true repentance and his Holy Spirit.* Are they then to request a mere imagination, an unfeelt and unknown good, a mere non-entity? And is not the telling them this, in a discourse after such a petition and many more of the same kind, a wicked and audacious abuse of their time, patience, and understanding? But when Jesus Christ has said, in a very strong and particular manner, that, *much more than a father to give good gifts to his children, God is willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him;* who, what, where are they, that will be so wicked and so blasphemous as to assert, that there is no such blessing to be had, or (what is much the same) no such good to be known?—*Fear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.*

word, need the Spirit of Promise to apply and explain them to believing souls; and that he doth seal this instruction, according to that degree of saving truth which is necessary for them or for others by them, proving himself thereby to be true and very God. And it is an argument which cannot be too much remembered and insisted on, that none but God could do this to myriads of creatures at one and the same instant, in various ages, nations, kingdoms, and tongues, and to the whole world of the blest, without intermission and without end.

This Holy Spirit is, therefore, well called *the Promise* itself; because it was often promised under the law, that he should be fully evidenced and manifested to the people of God upon the advent of the Messiah. Huctius, in his *Demonstratio Evangelica* (Prop. ix. c. 149.) has drawn out some of the most remarkable texts of this kind from the Old Testament, and paralleled them with others from the New, which shew their accomplishment. It would take up too much room to copy the texts at length, as he has done, and therefore it may be sufficient to point only to the places which the reader may consult at his leisure.—*Old Testament*. Isaiah xxxii. 15. xlv. 3. lix. 21. Ezekiel xxxvi. 26, 27. xxxix. 29. Joel ii. 28, 29. Zach. xii. 10.—*New Testament*. Luke xxiv. 49. John vii. 37, &c. xiv. 16. &c. xv. 26. xvi. 7, &c. xx. 22. Acts i. 4, &c. ii. 1, &c. viii. 15, &c. ix. 17, x. 44, 45. xi. 15, 16, xiii. 2, 3, 4, 9, 52. xv. 7, 8. xix. 2, 6. Romans v. 5. 1 Cor. iii. 16. Gal. iv. 6. 1 John iv. 13. with several other correspondent texts.

What consolation is held forth in this gracious title of the Spirit for the children of God. What assurance of happiness doth it contain? What a pledge of life eternal? There is not a promise revealed in the book of God, but which the believer may look to the Spirit of Promise for the performance of it. He took this name for that end. He is the Spirit *in* the promise, and becomes inherent with the promise itself, as the very life and essence of it; and he is the Spirit *of* the promise, because he was a party in the divine mind who gave it, and the person in the divine nature who accomplishes it to his people. Looking to him, they can never be disappointed of their hope; for he doth not make promises, nor give his word, according to the little follies of earthly courts, but pledges himself for the performance of them, that his people may rely on him with strong consolation, and entertain a good hope through grace. None of his creatures can charge him with breach of promise: he did not make promises to *break* them, but to *keep* them. Nor did he make their



at any *uncertainty* of issue ; because no promise was ever given out, but according to that *everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure*. So that the promise stands upon the very Godhead itself, and upon all his attributes of wisdom, love, and power : nor can it fail, till this *rock of ages* fails, but must endure like it for evermore. O what comfort may the troubled weary mind draw from this unfailing spring ! Could it but look out from itself, and lay fast hold upon the *word* of promise ; the *Spirit of Promise* would soon witness to his own word, and give the sweetness of it to the *hungry soul*. But the soul too, too often looks *into* itself, where it can find nothing but sorrow and sin : It seeks, in this case, *the living among the dead*. Its hope is *risen* ; and it must rise from the sepulchre of self to follow after, where only it can be found. Let the word be read in faith ; and there the Lord of the word will appear. He will appear to bless in reading, and to carry, from the reading some strength and savor into the heart and life.

“ But (says the troubled Christian) I can see no prospect of health in my case. Providence seems shut up to me. All is darkness and gloom ; and I cannot find one cheerful ray in the whole book to guide me on, nor one argument of comfort to support me from sinking.”—How many gracious souls are in this situation ! They would not be in it, were they not gracious. Their aim would be, if they were *of* the world, to seek relief *in* the world ; and the heavenly record would have stood unopened as to them : and 'tis one good sign of a truly believing soul, when all afflictions or distresses drive it to the Bible, and constrain a longing to receive comfort and support from that quarter. Christian ! hold fast here. Remember thou art privileged to *trust a faithful God* : and when thy heart droops within thee, cry out ; *Lord I believe ; help thou mine unbelief !* Do, as the Father of the faithful did ; *against hope, believe in hope, according to that which is spoken by thy God*. Let go the reeds and the rushes, which float about thee in thy tribulation, and catch hold upon the arm which is stretched out for thine aid. That word, *Lord, save, or I perish*, was never uttered by any one who perished. He will give thee strength for thy temptation, or provide a way for an escape.—And the trial was sent, not for thy distress (for the Lord doth not willingly or causelessly afflict his people,) but to beat thee from thyself, from thy own contrivances, schemes, or power, and to make thee fly for refuge to him. Blessed is that affliction, which endears God to his people ; and blessed are those tongues, which

can thank God *in* the affliction, as well as *for* the affliction. Nor is this too much for faith, when the *Spirit of Promise* enlivens it to embrace a promise; as it appears from the Apostle's case, and from the cases of many others, who *rejoiced in tribulation*, knowing the happy effects of their trial. Rom. v. 3. They did not puzzle themselves about the *means* of deliverance; but sought *first* to glorify God in the present dispensation of his providence; and *then* to embrace those occasions of aid which that Providence put in their way. They wrestled with God, rather than with the world; and, like Jacob, they prevailed. For faith, being of the Spirit, lays hold of the promising word, energizes in the strength of the Spirit, and obtains from God the fulfilment of his promise, and all the happy consequences which result from it. The promises contain full measure, and over measure; and have in them *more than we can ask or think*. Were it not for our own weakness, nothing in the world could disturb us. Winds make no impression upon rocks, but upon loose and unsettled substances. And were we, or could we, be perfectly fixed upon the *rock of ages*, as we shall be hereafter; not all the powers of earth or hell could affect or perplex us. Our wretchedness comes hence, we cannot give up all contentedly or resignedly to God's disposal and management, at the bottom; and this is the true though secret cause of all our trouble. For could we rest upon God, as we are warranted to rest upon him, in *spiritual* things, without disturbing our own minds with those *whys* and *wherefores*, which, for the trial of our faith, are concealed from us; we should then find him an unshaken foundation, and, in the very act of faith, enough to assure us, that we do not trust him in vain. So, in *temporal* matters, did we *cast all our care*, or carefulness, *upon God*, according to his precept, and *commit the times and the seasons entirely to his own power*, as they are indeed, and must be whether we trust him or not; we should find much smoother work within, and abundantly less perplexity from without. The unhappiness rests here; we cannot trust God *nakedly*, without a view or probability of *our own*; and so we carve out to him *our own ways* of relief, instead of following *his* will into the disposals of his providence. We argue for him, as well as for ourselves; and hence come all our fallacies and disappointments. If we left it to *his* wisdom to arrange the argument for us, and only *follow*, as that led, with our own; we should find a most happy and invincible conclusion in our behalf, at the sum. To use a familiar phrase; we want to be masters, when we ought to be journeymen, and are always

setting up for ourselves, before we have learned our trade: and the consequence is, a temporary bankruptcy. Do we not frequently see artificers performing things in their business, which we cannot account for; and do we dispute their conduct because of our own ignorance? They cut down, hew, throw about, mingle, and perplex the various parts of a frame or machine, as it seems to our apprehension; but yet all goes on with a design in their minds, which we are not masters of. At length, when they have put the several particulars into their appointed places, and combined all the parts into a complete whole; we see order, beauty, and use arise out of a very complicated and (to our view) a very confused scene. We could not investigate the *artifice*; but we can perceive the *end*. In like manner, comparing small things with great, God deals with the *individuals* among his people, and with his temple the *Church* in general. He permits the world (as it appears) to fall into a multitude of cross purposes, strange circumstances, and perplexing events, by which his people and Church, together with the world, are disordered and affected. Private affairs and public concerns may seem confused beyond the skill or power of men to unravel or explain them. But when the believer shall reach his home, and much more when the end of all things shall appear; God's design in all will break forth illustrious, and create astonishment, admiration, and praise, at his complications of wisdom and grace, through beholding worlds.—Learn then, believer, to consider his arrangements of providence and mercy in this view; and then nothing in the short scene of things below will trouble thee much or long. Leave God's secrets to himself, and say with good Salvian, "I do not understand them; I dare not investigate them; I even tremble to attempt it." The day will soon appear; and then the shadows of the night shall flee away; while the objects of truth and glory shall arise to view, without number or end.

"But (says the Christian) hath not God promised the seal of the Spirit, in order to assure me of my salvation; and may I not expect this? May I not be deceived, if on the one hand I content myself without it, or if on the other I presume only that I have it?" God hath *promised* this seal in or upon believing; and when thou didst believe thou wast sealed; but not with visions or revelations, but with a conviction of the truth of God, and with gracious comfort flowing from that conviction. The Spirit of promise applies the word of promise to the soul, acts by that word usually as its medium, gives the believer power to rest up-

on it, and in that power conveys a demonstration of his own presence and of the Christian's title to salvation. The seal, however, is not always in comfort immediately, though always in grace, which connects the heart and life by love, and informs the mind with wisdom. The inscription of this seal, to be known and read of thee and of all men, is, *let every one, that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity*. Let thy conscience make thy appeal to this, and carefully read this golden legend every day. It is a true paylactery, or inscribed frontlet; and the plainer it is written, the better. And be assured of this, that if heart, head, and life, be framed according to the word, and depend upon the truth of God, and wait for the salvation of God; it is a further proof *that* the Spirit hath *sealed* thee to his eternal redemption. Thou art not to go on *contented without this testimony*; and much less with a *contrary* testimony: For, believe what thou wilt, unless *this seal* be upon thee; thou hast no proof to thyself of thine own sincerity, nor to others that thou art not an hypocrite. As to visions be contented without them: The prophets, who had them, called them a *burden*; and thousands who have pretended to have them, have followed their own delusion and enthusiasm, to their cost. Pray God to teach thee *by* his word, and *according* to his word: Thou wilt find wisdom in safety *there*, and more wisdom in depth than in this life thou fully canst know. And if a *word*, apparently *in season*, come home to thy heart; there is also a rule, by which thou mayest judge whether its application be from the tuition of God, or from the mere elevation of thy own mind. If the thought humble thee in thy own sight, while it warms thee with love to Christ; and if it fill thee with meekness and submission, as well as complacency and comfort thou mayest be assured, that (as the Devil never deals in this way) *the Lord is thy helper*. But if the idea excite a swelling (as it were) of the mind, a delight in its own excellency for the thing spoken or conceived, a consciousness or desire of superiority in the heart over others, a languid notion of the intervention of God, and especially if it end in high words, and strong passions towards men; thou mayest justly fear, however ingenious or devout the cogitation may be in shew, that it is but the ebullition of the human understanding, unaided and uninfluenced by the grace of God. What God sends to man humbles him in himself and lifts him up in another. What man conceives from within, exalts self, and leaves God out of sight.—If this rule were duly attended to, we should probably

see fewer presumptions of self-importance, and more real concern for the edification of others, in the professing world.

Happy, only happy, are they, who wait on the *Spirit of Promise* to seal and to accomplish all the promises for their souls! Happy they, who meditate on his word for this end, who love his commandments, and delight in his ways. This happiness is the privilege of every believer, the undoubted portion of the children of God. How happy would these be, if they knew their own happiness! How content, if they considered God, as their manager, their friend, their father! How satisfied about worldly things, if they duly lived in expectation of Heaven as their home. Whatever was disordered *about them*, *they* could not be touched; nor, in worlds of ruin, can *these* be lost. Their anchor, cast *within the veil*, cannot fail; because the *promise* is its hold: Their vessel of grace shall never be wrecked, for *the Spirit of promise* is at the helm. This Spirit shall preserve them by day and by night, amidst the storms of life, and the loudest horrors of death: He will carry them safely into the haven of felicity, and *give them an inheritance among them, who, from all past ages, do now through faith and patience inherit the Promises.*



## LOVE.

LOVE, as it exists in human nature, is the inclination or affection of the mind to some object which it conceives to be valuable in itself or proper for its own welfare: And if sin had brought no darkness or error into the mind, this faculty of love would apply itself only to what is truly valuable and good.

In rational creatures, this affection should be directed to God as the only fountain of good, and to created good objects, as they relate to him or may be enjoyed with him.

With respect to God, there can be no cause of his love beyond himself or out of himself; and therefore this affection or attribute exists, independently of all other objects, within himself; for which reason, he is revealed under the name of LOVE, being the true essence or source of all that faculty or disposition, which we can strictly comprehend by this term.

From hence it seems evident, that, as enmity and hatred are diametrically opposite to this benign character of the divine nature, they must proceed from some other cause: And as whate-

ver is thus contrary to God, must be a revolt from him, and a departure from the proper end of its own creation, it is therefore, justly denominated *sin*, which, again, being repugnant as well to the good of the creature, as to the source of all good, bears both the name and the nature of *evil*. Enmity, consequently, as it appears in the creature towards God himself, or to what is of God in other objects, is but another word for *evil* and *sin*.

The revelation of God informs us, how all this depravity came into our nature, which was originally *created upright*. Since that awful event, it is in human experience to say, that the inclinations of the soul have naturally contradicted the mind and will of God, have wandered wide from his love and purity, and so far departed from the pure rectitude of a perfect creature, as to have this character stamped by unerring truth upon the mind from which they flow, that it is *enmity* itself, *enmity* in the abstract, *against God*, Rom. viii. 7.

*God is Love*; pure, perfect, and incorruptible love: But the *carnal mind*, the mind of every man by nature, the mind which is under the dominion of his flesh and makes this flesh his only end, is corrupted, debased, and absorbed with *enmity*.

From this direct opposition of God and man, which is forcibly expressed by these opposite terms, we may perceive the use and design of the bible; for the blessed volume describes this opposition in its *nature* and *effects*, and points out from thence both the *necessity* and the *method* of reconciliation.

The Bible describes the *nature* of this enmity to be rooted in *sin*, and this sin to consist in transgression or disobedience of God's law. The Bible also states, that this holy law was communicated to man, both in precept and sanction. By keeping it, which in his perfect state he was easily able to do, he was to *live*, or (in more extended phrase) to live happy and blessed; but, in transgressing it, he was surely to *die*, or be cut off from the source of all life and happiness in body and soul. He broke this law, and plunged himself into rebellion: and this rebellion (as was before observed) is the principle and ground of all his enmity, or *sin*, against his Maker.

The *effects* of this apostacy are clearly seen in his ruin. As he became opposite to the love of God, he became possessed with enmity; being contrary to the holiness of God, he was filled with sin; repugnant to the goodness of God, he was seized with evil; and cut off from the life of God, he inherited death spiritual, temporal, and eternal. The divine nature could not

be contaminated by nor hold communion with a sinful nature; and therefore there ensued a separation of God from man, which, having every dreadful consequence to the latter, is expressed by the wrath, abhorrence, vengeance, judgment, &c. of God—terms adapted to the workings and capacities of the human mind, and used to mark out its entire alienation (with the sad effects of it) from its maker. There is no wrath in God, *as* wrath; because he is wholly love: but his separation of man from the participation of his love, with all its various blessings, operates upon the human passions, now defiled with enmity, under the notions and impressions of anger and indignation. Thus God's love, being pure and unapproachable by sin, becomes a most dreadful and even horrible attribute to a sinner; because, *as* a sinner, he can never come nigh to God, never hold communion with him, nor receive delight or blessedness from him. And if divine wisdom had not found a method of reconciliation; human nature would and must have sustained whatever can be conceived under the awful idea of damnation, or the state of absolute rejection from the presence of God.

By these considerations it might appear, were it necessary to extend them, that enmity, sin, wrath, and misery, with other words of the like import, are all correlative terms, which only variously express the nature or effects of man's alienation from God. They are all branches of one baleful tree, the fruit of which is the full completion of human wretchedness and woe.

On the other hand, the word *love* is also correlative and entirely connected with every other divine attribute and perfection, or with whatever may be called by those names: it has, and can have, no *difference* from them, however *distinguished*, by a merciful condescension, for the better comprehension of our minds. *Righteousness*, for instance, is only a name for this *love* in *act* and *exercise*: For the love of God in its energies does only what is right or righteous. Love is the motive of all his action, according to the scriptures; and, by communicating this love, he renders it the essential principle of all righteous action in man. John iii. 16. 1 Cor. xiii. 4, &c. Truth, purity, and the like, are also but love in particular forms, actions, or aspects. In short, all the attributes and perfections of the divine nature, have their essence in *love*; and the term *love* is but a glorious title for the grand assemblage of them, denominating (as the Bible hath) the first and supreme nature. *God is Love* then, uniting, as in that *one* attribute, all the other predicaments and glories of his ma-

jesty and goodness; not *per accidens*, but in essentiality: and with respect to his creatures, there is no grace nor act of righteousness, but what is an emanation from the same principle, enlivening, invigorating, and making them happy.

It is hoped, that this kind of deduction will not be thought too metaphysical, as it derives every portion of its weight from the scriptures, and only aims to evince from the nature of all we see and know, in full proof and connection with sacred authority, that divine love is union, and the desire of unity, and can only subsist between objects connatural; because (according to the Apostle) God or *Christ hath no concord with Belial*, nor his works any *fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*.

Now, man's nature, since the fall, being entirely defiled by sin, and consequently unlike that of his Maker; there can be no harmony or communion between them, until the principle of this disagreement be removed. And if this principle be not removed, the enmity or opposition of the creature to God can end in nothing but the creature's misery and ruin. Hence appears, for man's sake, the *necessity* before-mentioned of a new and positive reconciliation.

If the *necessity* of this reconciliation be clear, it is of importance to inquire for the *method* or *means* by which it may be obtained. *How* then shall this be accomplished?—God cannot change his own nature: and can man expel the sinfulness, which is now intermixed with his? It is confessedly beyond his powers either of will or wisdom.\* He might as soon overcome the force of disease and death, as overcome the cause which produced them. He cannot, he would not, in his present unrenewed constitution, exterminate sin. It follows, then, that the enmity must be removed, if removed at all, by a *superior* power.

But, can any superior *created* power perform this great operation? Can any *dependent* being reconcile HIM, on whom he depends for his being, with another creature who is equally dependent with himself? Admitting the inclination, where is the ability? For the *obstacles* to be removed are, the sins innumerable of a vast multitude of human creatures, the natural rebellion of those creatures against God, and their equally natural aversion to righteousness and true holiness: And the *means* to be employed are, the presentation of a complete atonement to God's infi-

\* It is the despairing language of the famous heathen moralist; *Idem semper de nobis pronuntiare debemus, malos esse nos, malos facere, invitum officium, et tuturos esse.* Sen. de Benef. l. i. c. 10.



nite attribute of justice, which *must*, as such, reward an iniquity with its desert; the introduction of a perfect righteousness, which might entitle to everlasting reward; and the transformation of myriads of souls into the image of God and conformity with him.—'Tis as absurd to suppose, that a creature can accomplish a work so transcendent, so infinite and everlasting, both in itself and its effects; as to believe, that a fly could impel the stars to move in their courses by the puny efforts of its wing.

Here appear, in full glory, the wisdom, power, and benevolence of Jehovah, as revealed in the gospel. By it alone we see, how *mercy and truth are met together*, how *righteousness and peace have kissed each other*. What man of himself would not do, and what neither he nor all the creatures can do, it hath pleased infinite benignity to take upon itself. It hath performed the whole in a manner so astonishing and gracious, that, unless the same benignity had revealed the plan as well as undertaken the execution, the most refined intellect of man could not have soared to conceive it.

That Jehovah should appoint a mediator, fitted both by *divinity* and *humanity* to interpose between the Godhead and the creature; that this mediator, as Jehovah, should merit, and impute what he merited, to the creature's account; and as *man*, should suffer, what the creature must otherwise have suffered for its apostacy;\* that so marvellous a constitution should obtain, in which all the attributes and glories of the Godhead are rendered most wonderfully illustrious, while the creature is pardoned, justified, renewed, and saved; all this appears so much above the size of man's understanding, that even to look upon it now it is revealed, and revealed too only *in part*, (1 Cor. xiii. 9. 10) dazzles with such a splendor of grace and glory, as to command a confession of its divine authority from every enlightened mind. Those, who see not this divine goodness and beauty, may indeed boast of enlarged understandings as loud as they please; but they must pardon the Christian, if, in believing God rather than man, he concludes, that every mind, which conceives nothing of God's

\* There hath been a man in the world not ashamed to profess, for himself and his party; *Credimus, etiamsi non semel atque iterum, sed satis crebro et dissertissime scriptum exstaret, Deum esse hominem factum, multo satius esse, quæ hæc res sit absurda, & sanæ rationi plane contraria, Et in Deum blasphema, Modum aliquem dicendi comminisci, quo ista de Deo dici possint, quam ista simpliciter ita ut verba sonant intelligere.* Smalcius apud Wits. Misc. Vol. 2. p. 590. It would be happy, if the boldness and impiety of these sentiments were no more living than the language in which they are written.

liberality in this case, must necessarily be mean, narrow, and darkened. Eph. iv. 18.

In this most interesting way, hath God demonstrated himself to be Love. It is a magnificent attribute of himself, and necessarily essential to his nature. His very existence might as well be denied, as this super-eminent glory and perfection of it.

We know that *God is Love* by the *effects*: For all the effects proclaim, in their method, magnitude, and extension, that their cause must be God alone. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us* (says St. John,) *because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him,* 1 John iv. 9. Here the mention is made of this love existing in the personality of the Deity; and here, in particular, appears the Love of the Father. In the next instance, the Love of the Son is equally manifest. *Hereby* (says the same Apostle) *perceive we the love of God, because he [God the Son] laid down his life for us.* 1 John iii. 16. Another Apostle also mentions *the love of the Spirit.* (Rom. xv. 30.) And in what peculiar office doth this gracious agent display his love to the children of men? The scriptures, which he dictated, testify concerning it with full and repeated evidence. By this Spirit his people are *quicken'd from the death of trespasses and sins, and have an access to the Father.* By his omnipotent power, they are *renewed in the spirit of their mind,* obtain faith to confide in the great Redeemer, and apply all the work of his salvation to their souls. By his effectual grace, they *bring forth fruit unto God,* and hold on and hold out unto the end. In a word, all *the fruits of righteousness, which are (δία) through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God,* (Phil. i. 11.) are *the fruit of the Spirit,* as the grand agent of the whole. In this way it is, that he witnesseth for Christ in his people, and so becomes the pledge of their salvation; and he witnesseth for his people to their own consciences and to the world, that indeed they are *redeemed from the earth,* in being redeemed from the *corruptions that are in it through lust,* and (what is harder still) redeemed from *themselves.*

This operation of the Spirit is in perfect concord with the will and work of the Father and the Son, and is also, in all its intentions, the result of that everlasting covenant which subsisted before the world began. One and the same love, however diversified in their official engagements, actuates the *eternal Three*; because they are but *one Godhead*: And however the manifestations may vary, according to the capacity of creatures to appre-

send them, redemption is but one undivided work, and the concurrent energy of the *three persons* upon the objects of that redemption, in the several offices of choice, calling, justification, sanctification, and receiving to glory.

From hence it will appear, that this Holy Spirit, as well as the Son, must be *God over all, blessed for ever*; because all his operations appear to be divine and from himself; nay, because they render effectual the operations of the other two divine persons, which, without his completion of the gracious œconomy (for aught we can see,) might be void or in vain.\* It was for this reason that our blessed Lord himself refers the full explanation and effect of his own mission to the agency of the *third person*; where he promises to his disciples, that *the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father (says he) will send in my Name, shall teach you all things (John xiv. 26) will guide you into all the truth† and shall glorify ME.* John xiv. 13, 14. Thus *Christ* testified of the *Spirit*, as the *Father* had testified of *him* (Matth. iii. 17: And the *Spirit* also was to testify, in return, of *Christ* and the *Father*; else, how is that passage to be understood, where the Redeemer says, *ALL things that the Father hath, are MINE; therefore said I, that He [the Spirit] shall take of mine and shall shew it unto you?* John xvi. 15. These reciprocal testimonies of the divine persons to each other, prove their intercommunity or oneness of Godhead, for there is but one God; while, from thence, they declare, as plainly as words can declare, the proper divinity of each of the three witnesses, as persons or consubstences in the Godhead.

The like reciprocity holds good in the experience of the faithful. They will own, that they could never have known the *Father* as the *Father of mercies*, but through the *Son*: according to the express declaration of Christ himself, *neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* Matth. xi. 27. And again, *God [the Father] hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* Gal. iv. 6. It would be easy to offer numerous passages of scripture, where these references are made from the office of one divine person to those of the others, and where again the *Unity*

\* To a similar effect speaks the Czeingerine Confession of Faith, first published in 1570. *Hi tres, Pater, Sermo, et Spiritus—sunt unum in adoratione; sicut enim Deus Pater sine Filio suo et Spiritu Sancto eligere, creare, sanctificare non potest; ita Pater sine Filio et Spiritu Sancto Deus Jehovah adorandus esse non potest.* Syntag. conf. P. i. p. 193.

† *Εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν ἀληθειαν*, i. e. of things necessary to salvation.

of the *Three* is equally apparent and undeniabic. It will be sufficient perhaps, only to add in this place, that if to know God requires divine teaching, to love God in deed and in truth must necessarily be the effect of divine power. In fact, the *right knowledge* and the *true love* of God are so much one and the same, that it is impossible to separate them in Christian experience, or even Christian doctrine : and it is the saving office of the divine Spirit to lead and guide the redeemed into the possession of both. Upon this ground alone can “ the splendid union ” of *Taste* and *Truth*, in a sense more sublime than the philosophical, be established from an end the most important of all to man,—his everlasting welfare.

The Holy Spirit is, therefore the grand communicator and applier of the love of the Godhead to the souls of the redeemed. He prepares their hearts for the reception of this love, and then *sheds it abroad* upon them as they are able to bear it. In doing this, he effectuates the election of the Father unto life, and manifests it by repeated proofs to the soul. The salvation of the Son also he applies to his people, and *seals them unto the day of redemption*. And, in the performance of this gracious work in all its branches, he fulfils his own divine office, and proves himself in the fact to be a person in the ever living and true God. For, *who beside is sufficient for these things* :

It was this divine Spirit, who in the beginning moved upon the face of the waters, to vivify what was creating in this material world ; and it was He, who *overshadowed* the blessed Virgin, to quicken and produce that holy substance, which *therefore* should be called the *Son of God*. It is the same Almighty agent, who moves upon the troubled heart of a sinner, and generates a new life in that fallen Spirit, which before was dead to God, to itself, and to glory.

If these premises be true, or, rather, if the holy scriptures be true from which these premises are gathered ; is it possible to mistake the author and agent of so much infinite and everlasting love, for a *creature*, for an *emanation*, for a *quality* ? If the Spirit *hath* love (and we read in God’s revelation both of the *love* and the *fruits of the Spirit*) ; can the love which exists in him, be the finite love of a created *being*, and yet be coëval and coöperative with the Father of mercies, in the everlasting salvation of sinners ; if *love be of God*, can the *love of the Spirit* which is everlasting in all its fruits and operations be any thing else *beside* that love of God ? And if *God himself be love* can the very *Spirit of the*

Can he be less or any thing else than God? Surely, one should think, that no man, who credits the Bible, and certainly no man, who in the least understands it, can hesitate upon so obvious a matter. An infidel, indeed, escapes the conclusion by denying the premises, yet escapes it by involving himself in the mazes of inextricable doubt and perplexity, where he can give no clear or just account either of the author or design of his own being. But a professor of christianity, with the Bible in his hand, rejecting the principles of that Bible which connect it as a system of saving truth, and these principles in particular concerning the *personality in Jehovah*, on which the whole fabric of redemption is raised; is indeed a most inconsistent creature, and would render the revelation of his Maker just as incongruous as himself. 'Tis no wonder, that such men rail at divine truth in a *system*, while their blindness doth not see one, and which not being seen by themselves, the pride of an unsanctified understanding will not allow that others should be favored to behold it. But Christ hath given the reason of all this, in Matth. xi. 25, &c. See also Dan. xii. 10. And yet, after all, it seems most palpably absurd, that men should study the order, relations and connections of other truth, as a bright and beautiful *WHOLE*, in all the sciences, and at the same time refuse to the *revelation* of the God of truth a character of symmetry, union, and perfection, which they think essential in every ordinary hypothesis.\* Blessed be God, however, his wisdom and truth are perfect; and the more the eyes of men are enlightened by his grace, the more of this perfection and harmony do they see in all his counsels of salvation.

The man who hath *tasted that the Lord is gracious*, and who *knows whom he hath believed*,† hath the witness in himself, that

\* A late ingenious philosopher, commenting upon his favorite Stagirite, hath truly said, that "even *negative* truths and *negative* conclusions cannot subsist, but by *bringing* terms and propositions together, so necessary is this UNITING power to EVERY species of KNOWLEDGE." HARRIS'S HERMES, p. 364. Note.

† 2 Tim. i. 12. To *know* God, or Christ, or the Holy Spirit, in the sense of the Apostle, is not a theoretic or speculative notion raised in the mind by the powers of reason; but a divine communication and impression, through the means of grace usually, upon the sensitive as well as intellectual faculties of the soul. Hence the Hebrew word for the *wisdom* which leads to salvation, is derived from a root which relates to the *taste* and *sensible perception*: and hence the Apostle, evidently bearing in mind the original idea, mentions the *savor* of this knowledge, the *tasting* that the Lord is gracious, and the *handling* the word of life; which is a manner of speaking that applies to the certainty and demonstration, which the soul obtains concerning these objects. The consequence of this scriptural reasoning is, that "cardinal men, lacking the spirit of Christ," when they talk of believing God,

the *Spirit is love* and the *God of Love*. In perfect conformity with the revealed word, which this Holy Spirit gave forth in ancient times, he believes in the dignity of his person, and rejoices in the evidence of his power. The voice of the Spirit in the gospel and the breathing of the Spirit in his inmost soul, are the flowing love of an infinite cause, and excite his affection, devotion, and gratitude, in return. He reasons, and by this gracious preceptor he reasons rightly and from matter of fact, that an agent acting upon him for his *translation from darkness to light*, overcoming the most rooted and inbred *enmity* of his heart to the will and ways of God, inducing at the same time a new and lively affection to them, and enabling him to resist the impetuous torrent of temptations from the world, the flesh and the Devil, and to hold fast a hope, which hath very little to expect in this life, and in some cases is against all the carnal interests of it, with steadiness to the end; that such an agent as fully, at least, demonstrates himself to be God, as the material universe itself can prove, that the hand, which made it, is divine. 'Tis true, the argument; drawn from experience, would not be conclusive, if alone; nor, in that case, could it be expected to silence the opposition of the gainsayer; but when the experimental proof is not only corroborated by the testimony of God's word, but is appealed to by that word, one great purpose of which is to produce and confirm it; then it is no longer a *particular* argument, confined to individuals, but a *general* truth, which is *consistently* to be acknowledged by *all* those, who profess to receive the outward testimony. We have a chart of the coast of New Zealand, and we have navigators who have landed upon that Island. Would it be thought decent to say, that their landing proves nothing of the *reality* of that country to others, however it might indentify the spot and confirm the chart to themselves? the case in divinity stands upon a stronger foundation than this in nature. God himself hath drawn the plan of his spiritual *kingdom*; and one particular portion of it is the *earnest of his Spirit* in the heart; which, in the plan, is defined to be *righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*. Rom. xiv. 17. Will any man acknowledge the truth of the plan, and yet be so inconsistent as to deny the existence of what the plan delineates? Is it not grossly absurd to admit, that indeed the

cannot be said to *know* whom they profess to have believed, but, at most, only to guess, or dream, concerning him. And they, of all others, are least likely to know any thing of the matter, who are hardly enough to deny the agency of that divine person, by whom alone all true knowledge of this kind can be obtained.

kingdom of God is all this righteousness. Peace and joy, and yet that these are not to be felt, or known? And is it not equally absurd to allow, that though these do exist by the power of the Holy Ghost, yet that *he* is neither a *person* nor *agent*, or (if he be) that he is not *essentially divine*? All this would be not only *making the word of God of no effect*, but would be placing it beneath the mere morality of Heathens, and putting it upon a level with the wildest reveries of impostors—one might add, below even them; for there might be some shew of consistency in these; but in the other case, the Bible would be a bundle of contradictions, of promises unfulfilled, of intentions in themselves everlastingly important, never to be performed.

It may be retorted; “if the fruit of the Spirit be *love*, how is it, that those, who profess to believe in him, have often so little of this love in their hearts and lives? Why then are there so many sects and divisions among Christians? And wherefore do they hold such *odia theologica*, such religious oppositions, among themselves?”—This is too much a truth, even though it were spoken by *the accuser of the brethren*. But it may be answered, that the *profession* of a truth by the tongue is one thing; and the *possession* of that truth in the soul quite another. There are thousands, who can give no better account of their name as Christians, than that it is the fashion and religion of the country in which they were born. There are thousands, who never read the Bible through, nor scarce as much as look into it, who still would be offended at the very doubt of their christianity. There are thousands also who only read it to cavil out of it; as though it were a book of arguments, with which they were to *dispute* against all mankind. There are other thousands who have been bred up in a party or persuasion; and therefore they think themselves bound in honor to maintain it. And there are as many more, who fancy it a point of cleverness and understanding to invent new modes of difference and distinction, to supply perhaps the place of those which are worn out and almost forgotten in the world. But all these litigious and irreligious wits, however they may be bemoaned for their own sakes, do not destroy the reality of the gospel, but rather fulfil its predictions. They do not prove, that there are no *fruits of the Spirit*, but only, that they themselves have not them. Much less can they infer, that there is no *Spirit of Love*, but, at most, that they have not *the love of the Spirit*. If such cannot be said *to know who they have believed*; how can their ignorance, or ignorance of any kind, affect the truth?

The *Holy Spirit* himself hath sufficiently cleared the matter *From whence come wars and fightings* [or *strife* and *words*] *among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts, that war in your members?*—These things are not the fruit of the *Spirit*, but of the *flesh*: they are not of *God* but of *man*. The *Spirit* of peace is not the author of confusion and discord; but the restless, the pertinacious boldness of the carnal mind. The *want* of the *Spirit* of Love, therefore, in particular persons can be no argument against his own personal existence; but only against his positive operation in some human hearts. Whenever he comes and dwells, he never fails to bring peace, and to preserve it. *He maketh men to be of one mind in an house*, in the temple, in a kingdom: and whenever they are *otherwise minded*, we may be sure, that *the Spirit* of peace is by no means the occasion of it, but rather that *the peace of God doth not rule in their hearts*.—

Though the truths of the gospel are to be maintained inviolate from error; yet this is not to be done merely by multiplying parties, which have too often much more of the heat of the flesh in them, than the wisdom of the *Spirit*; but rather *in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*, and perhaps against their own happiness and salvation. Luther, magnanimous and zealous as he was in contending for the grand peculiarities of the gospel, would have yielded far more to the idle and nugatory ceremonies of the Romish Church, than any modern Protestant can or possibly ought to do, for the sake of peace. He was rather driven than inclined of himself to that degree of reformation, which he afterwards established. But for Protestants *to bite and devour*, who are agreed in fundamentals, merely because of some external and non-essential circumstances, is matter of triumph at Rome, and, it may be in Babylon below. One thing, however, appears very certain, amidst this world of brawling and contention about outward rituals, that it is not man which can render truth prevalent and effectual to the soul, but God alone. He will maintain his own cause, much better without than with the help of man's evil tempers and passions, which are too often, like his tongue, (to use the Apostolic language) *set on fire of Hell*.

“Why all this (it may be said) is setting up the act of uniformity, and encroaching upon liberty of conscience and the natural rights of mankind?”—There is no plea in all this for human authority, nor yet for opposition to it. The whole of this matter stands upon much higher ground. God's book is the Christian's act of conformity: and every one, who is truly a Christian, is a conformer.



mist in grace, whatever he may be in respects which are not gracious. Such a man must own, that God hath but *one* people, *one* flock, *one* family, among men; and that *these* have but *one* Lord, *one* faith, and *one* hope of their calling. Here is a uniformity, in which all real Christians are united: And, if they are united here, in the name of religion and common sense, what is the profit or use of all other unions or disunions?

“But this is Latitudinarianism?”—Far from it, in the evil sense of that long name. It is no *broader* than that way of truth, the gate of which is so strait to human corruption, that no evil man desires to enter within it. There is such a thing as the grace of charity to bear and forbear, as well as the grace of faith to understand and believe. And if there be no schism in the natural body, and can be none without disfiguring it; what man living can point out the use or beauty of schism in that spiritual frame, which is called Christ’s body? Rom. xii. 5. 1 Cor. xii. 27.

O for more fruit of this *Spirit of Love* among Christians! There would not be so much classing into denominations, nor clashing of parties; but more pure and fervent affection for *all*, of all parties and denominations, *who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity*.\* The measure of love to Christ would appear in the measure of love to his members. It would be no longer the maintenance of *this* opinion and the *other* interest in the world, which would engross the chief attention of professors; but a zealous regard for the reality of godliness, and a general detestation of all hypocrisy and sin. *The kingdom of God* would then be sought, where alone it should be sought, *not in word, but in power*: And wherever it was found living and reigning, there would be joy in earth as well as in Heaven over it, even that *communion of saints*, which (alas!) in these last days, is but too seldom found out of the creed.

It is easy to believe that sentiments of this kind will not be too

\* How truly amiable is the spirit of the famous Ambrose, Bishop of Milan! and yet no one, who remembers his faithfulness to the Emperor Theodosius, can suspect him for a trimmer. *Quando hic sum [Mediol.] non jejuno sabbatho, quando Rome sum jejuno sabbatho; et ad quamcumque ecclesiam veneritis, ejus morem servate, si pati non vultis scandalum aut facere.* “When I am at Milan I do not fast on the Sabbath, but I do the contrary when I am at Rome: And so whatever church you come to follow its mode, if you would wish neither to suffer distraction and offence, nor to give any.” To the same effect the celebrated Augustine, his friend, justly says; *Sit una fides universæ ecclesie, etiam si ipsa fidei unitas quibusdam diversis observationibus celebratur, quibus nullo modo quod in fide verum est impeditur.* Omnis enim pulchritudo filie regis intrinsecus: illic autem observationes quæ varie celebrantur, in ejus veste intelliguntur. Unde ibi dicitur; in fimbriis aureis circumamicta varietate. *Sed ea quoque vestis ita diversis celebrationibus variatur, ut non adversis contentionibus dissipetur.* Ep. 86.

acceptable to bigots of any party. Such reflections are not calculated to soothe, but to oppose, that sensuality of opinions, which begin in the flesh, and naturally enough end there. But if they are agreeable to the mind of the *Spirit of Love*, and raise the least catholicism, or general affection, in the heart of the Christian reader to his brethren of any or of all denominations; the censure of a carnal mind, or the support of a carnal interest, where so much glory to God is concerned, cannot deserve a moment's consideration.

This branch of wisdom, as well as all others, will be justified of wisdom's children. To thee, O believer, who walkest in the light and in the love of the Spirit of grace, this experimental truth, were it even more forcibly insisted on, would need no apology. There is something within thee, which hath fellowship with this matter. It bears its own recommendation to thy conscience. If it did not, or if it should appear contrary to the written word, let it pass with the farago of human opinions, and die with the numerous sects, whose very names have almost perished with them. But can it not be appealed to thine inmost soul; how often thou hast contemplated with delight that happy time, or rather eternity, when thou shalt hold full communion with *the spirits of just men made perfect*, above all the unimportant divisions, which error and corruption have invented below! how happy hast thou been in the prospect of that tender, intimate, and sympathetic love, which shall flow from soul to soul, without interruption and without end, in the regions of immortality! How hath thy soul been almost transported with the promise in view, that thou and all the faithful *shall be one, even as the Father is in Christ, and Christ in the Father*, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, made in respect to communion, *one spirit with the Lord!* John xvii. 21. 1 Cor. vi. 17. O what enlargement of heart have these views afforded thee!—An enlargement capable of receiving *all that the Lord thy God should call!* It hath been the wish of thy soul, at such times in particular, that more unity, love and tenderness were exhibited among true believers, and that the household of faith below might more exactly resemble the household of glory above!—That professor hath tasted but little of the love of Christ, who hath not felt something at least of this love *in the Spirit* (as the Apostle terms it) towards *the brethren* of Christ. *He that dwelleth in love* (says another Apostle) *dwelleth in God, and God in him.* The Holy Spirit, dwelling in the heart of the believer, proves his own divinity and the believer's adoption at once, by

teaching him to love those that belong to God, and enabling him in this gracious habit to *make his own calling and election sure.* 1 Thess. iv. 9.

This love of God, shed abroad in the heart, implies and includes every other Christian grace and affection. 'Tis a general name for God, and the good which proceeds from him. If the love of God be in the heart, holiness and duty will appear in the life.— And, if one might use the expression, 'tis a Spirit, whose very body is good works. For as the spirit of a man is known through the body of a man; so is this Spirit of love discerned by the works and labor of love which it uses. Thus, *the body of sin is destroyed* (for sin hath its body of evil works), *that henceforth the Christian should not serve sin.* Rom. vi. 6.

This love also implies knowledge; because it is impossible to love what is unknown. A man that doth not know God, or is unknown of him, cannot love God. Knowledge and affection, in this case, mutually strengthen each other. And this knowledge (as was said before) is not a matter of mere speculation, but of taste and enjoyment. So the Apostle states it; 1 John i. 1, 2, &c.— These considerations expose the nakedness of all that empty profession, which treats the gospel as though it were a matter of vision or theory, but substantiates nothing, and produces nothing from it. The remark was just, that “bold and lifeless (though ever so fine and well-contrived) must those discourses be, that are of an *unknown Christ.*” A speculation upon the soil of the moon, cannot be more barren than such disquisitions as these.

'Tis a less painful reflection, that *at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace.* Rom. xi. 5. Blessed be God, though too, too many disgrace their holy profession, and give sad occasion for others to *blaspheme the holy name by which they are called*; yet even now, in these last dregs of time, God hath *a chosen generation and a peculiar people*, whose aim and desire it is *to shew forth the praises of him, who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.* 1 Pet. ii. 9. O that their number did more abound, and their work of faith were more illustrious, that an ungodly world might be more *ashamed* than it is, when it attempts *falsely to accuse their good conversation in Christ.*

Happy believer, who walkest, and whose delight it is to walk, according to this rule, *Peace be on thee and mercy!* The love of the Father, Son, and Spirit, which is *stronger than death*—stronger even than *thy death* of trespasses and sins—yea, stronger

than the death of Christ, for it spared not him for thy sake—*this unmeasurable love* is upon thee and in thee. Thy Lord *hath* loved thee with *an everlasting love*, before time began to flow, or sun and stars and earth received their forms; and *therefore with loving kindness hath he drawn thee*: He will love thee with the same everlasting love, subsisting without decline, when the heavens, the earth, and the elements shall melt away; and therefore thou art *safe under his wings*, and shalt *never be confounded nor dismayed world without end*. O happy, for ever happy soul, how art thou privileged to rejoice, by this *Spirit of Love*, in the view and fore-taste of that unabating ardor, with which thy God calls thee, and claims thee for his own! *A woman may forget her sucking child, and may have no compassion on the son of her womb*; there hath been such a monster: but thy God hath declared, that *He will not forget thee, for thou art graven* (as it were) *upon the palms of his hands*. Is. xlix. 15, &c. His eyes are ever upon thee to do thee good, in the best way, in the best time, and for the best end. Why then shouldest not thou rejoice, as indeed thou art highly privileged, in thy loving, and faithful Lord? He hath done and will do, both for thee and in thee, all that is requisite for his own glory and thy welfare. Remember, *Jehovah is the rock, and his work is perfect*. If thou hadst more faith in him; it would certainly shew itself more proportionally in this way of love. The love of the Spirit, shed abroad in thy heart, would cause thee to abound in love towards thy God: And this love would afford thee an increasing measure of humble and holy confidence. This confidence, again, would excite thee to abound in every good word and work, knowing that thou art not acting *as uncertainly, or as one that beateth the air*, but that thy *labor is not in vain in the Lord*. All these gracious effects, wrought in thy heart by this Spirit of Love, would heighten thy stature and stability as a Christian; and by his continual supply, thou wouldest *increase* (as the Apostle speaks) *with the increase of God*. Instead of a poor, doubting, trembling life; thou wouldest attain a hope, which would not suffer thee to be ashamed; a faith, which would make thee to know *whom and what thou hast believed*; and a joy which the world could neither give nor take away from thy heart. Thou wouldest enjoy this dignified religion, enabling thee to live superior to the creeping meanness of the world, and ennobling thee with the rank of a citizen of heaven while thou sojournest upon earth. The sense of possessing this privilege, in thy enlightened mind, would induce enlarge

ment of heart above every thing that men call by that name, a true liberality of sentiment, and a generous freedom of soul, which doth not consist in revolting against human laws, but in so living above them as to make them unnecessary.\* This, O Christian, is thy wisdom; this, thy divine exaltation; an exaltation, as much above all the littleness of human pride, as heaven is above the earth. O that thou hadst more of this spiritual glory shed down upon thy soul—even this illustrious majesty of a child of God! Thou wouldest more dearly prize the honors of grace and glory, and shew thyself sensible of thy rank, by living in that spiritual dignity of mind which is agreeable to it. Earthly peers, we know, should count it their honor to live above base things, and the princes of this world are anxious to preserve the splendor of their crowns; though all these are in themselves, to the mere philosophic eye, but poor and dying distinctions: And shalt not *thou*, who art a compeer with the angels in Heaven, who art a king and a priest to God, and an heir of God through Jesus Christ; shalt not *thou*, above all others, be solicitous to walk worthy of thy high vocation?—O look up to this Spirit of love and glory, that indeed thou *mayest* live and act in this superior strain!† Depend upon his wisdom and power, and possessing these, thou certainly *wilt*. And when thy pilgrimage in this vale of tears is ended, when thou “passest out of the vale of the dying into the vale of the dead,” O with what ecstasy of joy wilt thou rise up to those blissful regions, where *thy sun shall no more go down, but the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended!*

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## UNDERSTANDING.

OUR translators have usually rendered the original word for this name, *Binah*, by the word *understanding*; but neither this, nor the Latin *intelligentia*, which signifies, *intus legere*, to read what is within, nor the Greek *συνεσις* or *φρονησις* which import little more than what we mean by *prudence*, contain the full sense of the term. The word is derived from a root, which signifies to *build up*, as architects do, the several members of a structure. For, as the intellect frames the idea, and arranges

\* *Sapientia sola libertas est.* Sen. Ep. 57.

† *Magni animi est, magna contentio.* Sen. Ep. 39.

the distribution of the several materials for the fabric; so the body subserves that idea, and carries into sensible effect, what the intellect has already conceived. The sense of the term may be referred to those powers of the mind, by which we *distribute* a subject into its several parts for a close investigation, and then *collect* or *build up* those parts, when separated, for one grand proposition or principle. Hence, the word מוֹדֵל, which is sometimes rendered a *structure*, is often as justly rendered *model*, *pattern*, *exemplar*, *type*, or *similitude*; because every material edifice or frame is truly the copy of that pattern, which before existed in the mind: And, when it is spoken with relation to God, it means the revelation of a *type* or *pattern* from his *understanding*. Thus, the whole world was compiled according to the all-wise and all-perfect ideas of Jehovah; and thus Moses was directed to frame all the circumstances of the tabernacle according to those *spiritual forms*, which had been revealed to him in the mount. Exod. xxv. 40. *Look* (said God to Moses,) *that thou make* (form) *all things after their PATTERN which was shewed thee* (which thou wast enabled to see) *in the mount*. This may serve to shew the radical meaning of the word. We will now attempt to consider that the term *Binah* is, sometimes, used essentially for the Most High, and that then it is particularly employed as an office-name of Jehovah the Spirit.

The Old Testament makes great use of this word, and commonly in conjunction with the word *wisdom*, which implies a *certain knowledge* in the mind of a matter; like that *sure perception* which we gain of sensible objects by the sense of *tasting*.\* God employs these and other terms, which have relation to our animal and natural faculties, in order to convey by them some necessary information of his own being, and of our relation to him. Did he talk with us upon these subjects, according to the *mode* of their existence, we should not be able, with our present capacities, to understand him; because we are so far from having any ideas of *spiritual* modification, that we have no precise notion of the mode in which any *sensible* object exists in the world. He speaks, therefore, *ad captum humanum*,† according to our size and way

\* The Latin word *sapere* to taste, from whence *sapientia* wisdom, comes nearly to the idea of the Hebrew word.

† It should ever be remembered, that it is not from any obscurity in God or the things of God, that we cannot comprehend them, but from the weakness of our faculties. The natural sun, when it shines brightest, becomes less an object of vision than at other times. The mysteries of God proclaim the ignorance of man; for there can be no such thing as mystery to a perfect intellect.

of perception ; that we may not be destitute of any saving truth, but be *thoroughly furnished* (as the Apostle speaks) *for every good word and work*. In the former volume it was pointed out, that *Christ*, as God, claimed the name of *Wisdom*. Had he been less than God, *Wisdom* could not have been his title, as to his *essence*, or *nature* ; in which form it is ascribed to him ; whatever he might have enjoyed of the *communications* of *Wisdom*, as a creature : Between which two forms of possession, there is an infinite and eternal difference. *Wisdom essential* is God himself ; and all the persons of the Godhead are therefore *Wisdom*, because they are of and in the *essence* : And yet *one* of those divine persons is œconomically called by this name, and called so in *distinction* often ; because it was his office, as the Word of God, to declare and proclaim the *Wisdom* of God. God is *Wisdom*, but *Christ* is the *exhibition* of that *Wisdom* to us : And, therefore, as He is *essentially* such, and also the *means* or *channel* of our intercourse with it, *he is of God unto us Wisdom* itself. The same may be said of the word *Binah* before us. God himself declares *I am Understanding*. Prov. viii. 14. And *Christ*, who is the *Wisdom* of God *ad extra*, or to us, joins in that declaration. But, if the Lord had not so positively claimed this title ; what creature or creatures, could have said, “ I am *Wisdom* : I am *Understanding* itself : I owe nothing of either to another ? ” With respect to the *essence* ; God the Father is *Wisdom* and *Understanding* : So is God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. In the *Unity* of the *essence*, they are so ; and in the *Trinity* of person they cannot be less ; for *diminutions* or *differences* in deity cannot be supposed without *Polytheism* or *nonsense*. But, as the manifestation or communication of *this Wisdom* was the personal engagement of *Christ* in the covenant of grace, as it hath been shewed ; he, therefore is called *Wisdom* : So the manifestation and communication of *this Understanding*, being the office of the Holy Spirit (as we shall aim to clear) ; he is specially expressed by the name *Binah*, or *Understanding* : *Name* and *essentiality* being but one with God, and, further, as the communication of *this Wisdom* and *this Understanding* are operations of *one* and the *same* *Jehovah*, though referred to *distinct* persons in him : it proves, by the way, the *unity* and *coessentiality* of those persons in the *one* *Jehovah*.

If God BE *Understanding* in *essence* ; surely, the Spirit, who

searcheth his *profound*, can be no other.\* He is therefore, called the *Spirit of Understanding*, &c. who was to rest upon Christ, Is. xi. 2. and, at the same time, the *Spirit Jehovah*; by which latter name we see his *right* to the former. If he were not the *Understanding* of Jehovah himself, he could not spiritually *teach all things*; at all times, at one and the same time; to myriads of different beings, in different states, situations of place, capacity, and existence. Nor yet could he *shew* his people *things to come*, nor *glorify Christ*, nor *take of the things of Christ and the Father* (John xvi. 14, 15.), unless he were *one* with Christ and the Father. To say, that the Spirit could *take* of an infinite Understanding, and *exercise* it infinitely, without participating or having in himself that infinite understanding; would be as great an absurdity as to affirm, that a part contains the whole, that time can measure eternity, or that creatures create themselves. The scriptures speak very differently, and declare, that, however it might be supposed that *the multitude of years should teach men wisdom*, it surely is רוח ה' יהוה the Spirit Himself in man, and רוח ה' יהוה the inspiration of the Almighty, who giveth them understanding, or causeth them to understand. Job xxxii. 8. Agreeable to this the Apostle asks, *Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?* intimating plainly, that none but himself: For, as the Prophet speaks, *there is no searching of his understanding*; and the Psalmist gives the reason, because *his understanding is infinite*. But, as the Spirit *searcheth all this*: it follows, that He must have an infinite Understanding, or rather must *BE the infinite Understanding himself*: And, if He be this infinite Understanding, it will necessarily conclude, that He is truly and essentially God. There is no avoiding this conclusion but by denying him the attribute of *understanding*; in which case, it would be impossible that he should *teach any thing*. And how this can be reconciled to the express words of scripture, the opposers of the Spirit's divinity are bound to explain.

Thus it appears, that *understanding*, in its *essence*, is necessarily *God* himself; and that the *Holy Spirit* is *this essential under-*

\* What a contradiction doth this text (1 Cor. ii. 10.) afford to the strange assertion of Plotinus, that the first principle, or God, cannot properly *know* itself? See more of this in Cudworth's *Ins. System*. B. i. c. 4.

† Dr. Grey, in his edition of Schultens's Job, justly says, upon this passage: *Non intelligo adslatum motumque propheticum, sed ordinarium effectum Spiritus illuminantis, sine cujus infuura negat Elibi de rebus divinis vel sentiri, vel disputari recte, posse.* And then just afterwards; *Inimuitur lumen veritatis, quo Deus mente collustrat, non esse annis alligatum; & saepe, sic volenti D. . . . .*



standing, because *he* is a person in the Godhead. From him, in the unity of the divine persons, proceeds every measure of *communicable understanding* to the creatures, who never could know any thing by themselves, nor beyond the limits assigned them. God is *the* intellect, strictly speaking; and, from him, through the agency of the Spirit, is supplied all the intellection of other beings, whether in earth or Heaven. He is, at one and the same time, the first cause and the first intellect: and, therefore, the schoolmen and others\* did not say amiss, when they asserted, that *in Deo idem est intelligere & esse*, “in God to understand and to be, is the same;” or, *Ipsè est scientia sua, et scientia sua est ipse*, “himself is his knowledge, and his knowledge is himself.” He knows all things, not *because they exist*, as we know them; but *they exist because of his knowledge, in a manner we cannot know them*. He foreknew them, when they had not a sensible existence, or such a being as is the object of created perception; and he brought them into this mode of existence according to his will. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world*: and so his people are known of him, before they could be positively known of each other, or recognize themselves. He sees *through eternity*† at one view, (to speak in the language of men) because he alone is infinite and eternal; while all the creatures, having a finite capacity, can only see to its particular extent, beyond which, let it be more or less, an infinitude will ever remain to be explored and understood.

These ideas, concerning the Spirit of God, are not *new*, but as old, at least, as the scriptures. Novatian said truly, *Spiritus Sanctus non est in evangelio novus, sed nec nove datus*; † “the Holy Spirit is not a being never revealed till the times of the gospel, nor yet from that period newly given:” he is one and the same, in his influences upon Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles,

\* Thom. Aquin. 1. quæst. xvi. art. 5. Mornæus *de ver. Rel. Christ.* c. 13. Maimon. *Part. Mos.* p. 256. Zanch. *de attrib. Dei.* l. iii. 9, 10. Gomar. *de vis. Dei.* 251.

† It was the remark of a Jesuit and no great friend to divine revelation, that a sort of people, who follow the principles of Aristotle, “pretend that God knows no events but *after* they are come to pass, that what is usually called the *future contingent*, cannot be known of God, and that what doth not already exist, cannot be known at all. The Socinians, (and he might have added some other names) who make profession of this *refined* philosophy, and according to which they regulate all religion, are but the disciples of the Mahometan doctors”—who attribute all to *sense*, and who believe that God himself hath that kind of substance, which we term *body*. See F. Simon’s remarks upon Dandini’s voyage to Mount Libanus. c. 8.

‡ Novat. edit. *Welsh.* p. 110.

and ever suited his agency, according to the times and occasions, appointed in the counsels of the highest. Accordingly (as it hath been shewn, from many authorities, in the *introduction* to the first volume) the most learned and respectable Jews, long before and for some time after Christ (till their hatred of Christianity led them to oppose, or torture, all the great truths in the Bible) used this name *Binah* to express the *third* person in the Trinity, in whom they professed to believe. The term *Holy Spirit* was, in their idea, the name of a *divine person*; and they often used it to express both him and his operations. They had not then learnt, with Arius and the other disciples of the too ingenious Origen, to consider him as a mere prophetic gift,\* an inspiration, an emanation, a virtue, or some other sort of *quality*. However such an opinion may agree with the dogmas of the Platonic school at Alexandria; it by no means accords with the revelation of God, who only (as we have in a former essay observed) could impart any truth concerning his own being.

As the words *mercy* and *truth* are often coupled together, which are (as hinted in another place†) office, characters of Christ and the Spirit; so we find, and especially in the book of the Proverbs, that the names *wisdom* and *understanding* are frequently conjoined, as being other office-titles of the same divine persons. The redeemed have communion with both of them under all these denominations. Thus Christ is the *wisdom of God*. 1 Cor. i. 24. and *of God made unto us wisdom*. v. 30. And thus the Spirit is to *teach all things*, to lead and guide *into all truth*. John xvi. 13. and being *sent* from the Son, John xv. 26. *is that understanding which is true*, and so said to be *given by the Son*. 1 John v. 20. See also John xv. 26. The full assurance, being the gift of grace, must come from the *Spirit* of grace; and therefore it is not only an assurance of *hope*, but (as peculiarly characteristic of its divine agent) the *full assurance of understanding*. Col. ii. 2. He is inseparably connected with Christ the wisdom; and therefore the *knowledge of his will is, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*. Col. i. 9. In other words, believers are led to know and enjoy the communion of *Christ* and the *Spirit*. It is this *Spirit's* office to *take of the things of Christ and shew them* to his people. John xvi. 15. And when Christ *breathed* on his disciples, and said, *receive ye the Holy Ghost*. John xx. 22. it was an outward sign of that invisible grace, which by his Spirit he bestowed upon

\* So Abarbanel, R. Solomon Jarchi, &c. in Huls. *Theol. Jud.* p. 205, &c.

† See *Spirit of Truth*, p. 167.

them, in order to *open their understandings, that they might understand the scriptures.* Luke xxiv. 45. This *Holy Ghost* illuminated their minds to apprehend those mysteries of the word, concerning which, before that operation, they were spiritually blind and ignorant. From the sense of this great truth, the Psalmist, in the cxixth Psalm, so often prays for *understanding* from Jehovah, that he might *know* spiritual things, and once in particular, at v. 144. requests this precious gift, that he might *live*— This spiritual grace is indeed the life and action of the soul; and therefore it is said, in another psalm, that a man however high in honor with respect to other things, if he spiritually do not *understand, is like the beasts that perish.*

Since the fall, man is naturally without knowledge of God, and without concern for the salvation of his soul; and though the education which he may receive in a Christian land, and the customary ideas which he may imbibe from others, may furnish him with something to say upon the topic of a *Deity*, or upon any other articles of the *Christian faith*; yet his *understanding* is just as *darkened* with respect to any real apprehension of God, and his heart as much *alienated from the life of God*, as the heart and understanding of any Mahometan or Pagan. It seems to be a sad mistake with many, arising from ignorance of the word and power of God, that the having some *notion* of God and of Christ, and of a certain *theory* deduced from the scriptures, is quite sufficient to constitute them real and knowing Christians. But, if they happen to adorn all this speculation by a tolerable decent and virtuous life; they are then (as they suppose) in a very safe state indeed, and really *working out their own salvation.* There is indeed so little even of this low kind of knowledge among the generality of men, that with reluctance one would drop a word against it: But when men collect their principles and gather their notions, not only *without God*, but *against his revealed will*; there is no charity in pronouncing well of a case, that (if God be true) will never stand the test, which one day must be made of it. There cannot be too much goodness, nor even too much of the appearance of goodness, in the world: and the temporal happiness of society requires every encouragement to both. But we are speaking, in this instance, of man's state with God, by whom all things are understood in a very different way from the modes of the world, and to whom mere appearances are nothing, and indeed worse than nothing. Realities or truth, only can be acceptable to him, who is all understanding to search out, and all truth it

self to weigh the minds and actions of his creatures. We may deceive others, and ourselves too; but human vanity never yet pretended a power to delude him. The question then, which will arise upon these considerations, is; how shall a man know, that he is not deceived in this most important concern; and what certainty can he obtain of rectitude in any thing?

The solution is easy; because God hath made it so: and nothing but extreme corruption and blindness could keep men from seeing it. Man feels himself a *feeble, ignorant, and fallen* creature, whether he will own it or not. In this situation, he is *void of rule*, and, being *without strength*, could not walk by one, if even he had wisdom enough left to find out the rule or lay it down. The author of all wisdom, therefore, hath provided this rule, and fitted it for the case of those, for whose benefit he was pleased to grant it. This rule is his revealed word, or will; and it applies to those objects, for which it was principally needed; the objects of *spiritual life and salvation*. It meets man upon the ground of his *fall, alienation and apostacy* from God: and till a man finds himself *upon* that ground, it can be no rule to him, and will do him no good, respecting those objects of it just mentioned. The question then occurs, How is man to be brought upon this ground, with respect to his *perception*; for it will appear, that, perceiving it or not, he is certainly upon it?—The rule revealed has furnished an answer. Considering him as *dead in sin*, it shews, that the Spirit of God alone can *quicken* from that death—as depraved and departed from God; that this Spirit restores and gives *an access with confidence* through Christ Jesus—as having a *wicked and stony* heart naturally; that the same gracious agent converts and renews it to a *heart of flesh*, capable of *perceiving and feeling* what it never could before—and (to avoid more particulars at present) this rule treats man, as *blind* in the soul, *darkened in the understanding*, and utterly *ignorant* of God and his glory; and shews that this almighty Spirit alone opens the *eyes of the mind, enlightens the understanding, and teaches all things* which are necessary to be known. Hence it may be seen, as clearly as the words of this revelation can manifest it, that man, being ignorant, cannot *teach himself*, and being *dead*, cannot *recover* himself, or attain any understanding of God; unless God in mercy *first visit him* by his gracious Spirit, and teach him the *use* of that revelation, respecting his state and condition for time and eternity. God shews man his own *darkness*, before he admits him to know, or consider himself as *light in the Lord*.

This is the scripture-mode of representing man since the fall; and, therefore, they who deny it, or attempt to conduct themselves by any other line, oppose the only strait rule which God ever gave to man, and consequently walk in the crooked paths of spiritual error.

We are come to the use and necessity of that office of the Holy Spirit, by which he is known to be the Spirit of *Understanding*. God is *Understanding* in himself, and in a mode incommunicable to us: But, in mercy to poor sinners, the Second Person would be known under the name of *Wisdom*, to be communicable wisdom for them; and the Holy Spirit, or Third Person, assumed the office name of *Understanding*, to give them an *understanding which is true*, and to lead them forward to contemplate, receive, and enjoy Christ, who is the wisdom and power of God. The divine persons confer upon believers, according to their state, a due portion of their official influences. *Haply, therefore, is the man, that findeth Wisdom, and the man that getteth Understanding. It shall give to his head an ornament of Grace, a crown of Glory shall it deliver to him!*

This great and glorious Understanding then descends from Heaven, that those, on whom he descends, may both experimentally know\* *themselves*, and know *him*. From whence it follows, that, *without* this descent, they can know *neither* aright. This *Understanding* is also clothed with *power*: He is not a naked idea or an unfelt notion, which leaves the heart as it was, while it puffs up the mind; but life, light, activity, joy, and immortality, all together. He comes, as God, *with the power of God*, and not only bears down all resistance from without, but turns the heart into so sweet a compliance within, that it yields as much by its own will, as by the will of the Spirit itself, which bears it along. Thus the heart *would* not resist, if it could. "When the Lord himself (says the amiable Archbishop Leighton†) speaks by his Spirit to a man, selecting and calling him out of the lost world; he can no more disobey than Abraham did, when the Lord spoke to him, after an extraordinary manner, to depart from his own country and kindred.—There is a secret, but very powerful, virtue in a word or look, or touch of this *Spirit* upon the soul, by which it is *forced*, not with a *harsh* but *pleasing* violence, and

\* So, *to know wisdom*, Prov. i. 2. means sensible perception and experimental knowledge. The word ידע implies that thorough and certain recognition, which gives the *mind* or *sense* full evidence or conviction of a matter.

† Comm. upon 1 Pet. i. 2

*cannot chuse* but to follow it ; not unlike that of Elijah's mantle upon Elisha, 1 Kings xix. 19. How easily did the disciples forsake their callings and dwellings to follow Christ?"

It is this *Understanding*, which accompanies his own word with conviction and demonstration to the souls of his people : Without him, the word, inestimably precious as it is, can only touch the ear, without reaching the heart. It is He, who giveth *understanding to the simple*, and often by means of a few plain and simple words ; while the rhetoric and other literary embellishments of man live only in the sound. These, however ingenious in themselves, or in human esteem, when they pretend to act in divine things, presently discover their weakness and futility, and, like the momentary ebullitions of froth, are lost in air. How often shall a plain sermon and an unstudied book, where the man himself has not aimed to be *seen* but only to shew his Lord, be blessed to the conversion, establishment, and happiness of immortal souls ; when pompous orations and laboured performances shall evaporate in sound, or (what is much the same) produce no spiritual good ? Or, if they are remembered for a while, they are remembered not for God's glory, but for the praise of those dying creatures who made them. A poor employment this, to speak and write for the breath of worms, which is at first corrupt in itself and soon vanishes into nothing !

This glorious *Understanding takes of the things of Jesus* and explains them to the mind, inducing both a right apprehension and a true experience at once. He is the great teacher ; not of mere words and barren comments ; not of florid fancies and airy speculations : but of *things*, and of things *rich and solid*, even *grace and glory* everlasting. All the understanding, which he communicates to the soul, is to be enjoyed as well as known, to be lived upon in the heart, while it is *found sweet to the taste*. Without Him, there is neither life nor power in the most just or excellent words ; witness the word of God himself, which is a *book sealed*, a book unfelt and unendeared, till the great teacher apply it to the soul. If this great *Understanding* be not present, *preaching is vain*, and *hearing is also vain*. Without Him, preachers, however learned or able in other respects, are but mere pulpiteers, not ministers of Jesus rightly dividing the word of truth ;—*tinkling cymbals*, clear perhaps and fine ; *sounding brass*, loud, yet only noise and shew. Without Him, people also may be professors, towering, old, and esteemed professors, but not Christians in-

deed, not perfect,\* mild, nor humble followers of a meek and lowly Saviour. And without Him, it is possible to be members of an outward Church, and of the purest outward Church too in the world; and yet not members of Christ's mystic body, nor communicants with him the living Head. In a word, as *with* Him, men become *heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ*, both for grace and glory; so, *without* Him, they have nothing but spiritual ignorance, vanity, corruption, and wretchedness without end.

How often, to convince us of this, doth this Almighty Understanding work faith and confer knowledge upon many low, despised, and, (in other respects) ignorant souls; while he leaves the learned and the proud to the wretched ignorance, error, and uncertainty of all human knowledge? And how often, to put the utmost contempt upon this knowledge, which wholly leaves a man at the grave, doth he suffer the grand deluder of the world to perplex these wise and great ones in labyrinths of their own making? What a great profane wit† once said, every man out of Christ, whether learned or ignorant, may say too; *Dubius vivit, incertus moritur*: "I lived in doubt, and quite uncertain die." There can be no certainty, but in truth; and there is no truth, which can profit the soul, but what is discovered in the word of God. If we venture to ground our knowledge in divinity upon any thing but *the written testimony*, we shall find, to our cost, that the Devil is an abler logician than the acutest of us all. He not only can impose his sophisms upon us for truths, but can corrupt and ensnare the affections, while he puzzles and confounds the mind. He has cheated every one of us ten thousand times: We know, too, that we have been cheated; and, yet so well can his artifices soothe and suit our corruptions, that, unless this Spirit of truth restrain, he will deceive us to the end. 'Tis this all-wise teacher alone, who enables his disciples to detect *Satan's* fallacies, and suffers not the meanest of them to be wholly ignorant of his de-

\* This much-abused word occurs very particularly in 1 Cor. ii. 6. Eph. iii. 5. and in some other places. It by no means implies a perfection devoid of sin, but that *many* degree of knowledge, which in human capacity is opposed to *puerility and weakness*, and in sacred life to those who are *babes in Christ*. Thus, among the Pythagoreans, the *τελειοι* were those, who, like the *חכמים* in the Jewish schools, were distinguished from the novices, or mere learners. And thus in the school of Christ, the *τελειοι*, the *perfect*, or well-established disciples, being arrived to the measure of a *perfect man*, become by degrees *fathers and old men*, who are not to be *carried about* like children or novices, with every wind of doctrine. See several criticisms upon the word in Leigk's *Critica Sacra*.

† Duke of Buckingham.

*tices*. He graciously exposes the snare, removes erroneous impressions, and revives the heart too with a persuasion, which (however languid and obscured at times) shall never finally be baffled or lost.

Doth not all this explain to the believer, or enforce the explanation, that the source of his spiritual knowledge lies *out* of himself; and that it flows freely and only from Him, who is *all understanding* to teach, and *all power* to preserve those that depend upon him?—It is a striking passage (already noticed) in Plutarch, that Pericles, whenever he attempted to address the people, used to pray to the Gods, that no unbecoming word or improper expression might pass his lips: And shall a Heathen to his idols do this, animated only, as Pericles was, with the dying concerns of a moment, and thus put to shame those who know the true God, and profess the hope of living with him through eternity? Ought not Christians, above all men, in the deepest distrust of their own sufficiency, to *ask for wisdom* at the spring-head of all wisdom, even of God, *who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not*? Are they privileged to have *a right understanding in all things* pertaining to salvation; and shall they not apply for it to that bountiful Spirit, who will deny them nothing for their good? Alas! Did this humble, yet wise and safe, frame of mind more obtain among professors; what a different scene would appear in the church of God below? What different sort of people would be found in the professing world? This at once would dissolve half our parties and divisions, which originated from pride, passion and disappointment on the one hand, and from interest, insolence, and intolerance of mind, on the other. It would then be seen, that it is the *spirit of the world* which forms and fomented divisions, not only from divine truth, but from the unity of those brethren in whom the truth resides; and by no means the *Spirit of God*, who is the author of peace and concord. It is none of *his* wisdom, which finds out *points of difference*, nor indeed any true natural wisdom among men; but a foolish and wicked spirit, which either cannot or will not discern those *essential grounds* of holiness and peace; in which all Christians, as Christians, must be agreed. The Spirit of truth, who is *understanding*, inclines all his people to *rejoice in the Truth*, not only as it appears in the narrow circle of a particular profession, but also *wherever it is to be found*, and will draw the heart of a believer to love another believer *for the truth's sake*, though his mode of education, another set of phrases, or a different habit, may have set them at a distance in the opinion of



men. If God has vouchsafed his grace and love to a man, whom we, as Peter thought of Cornelius, may perhaps have considered as *unclean*; who are *we*, that we should withhold *our* affections where God hath bestowed *his*? Are we not alarmed with a fear, lest in so doing, we should *withstand God*?—It is however a reviving fact, that those souls, who have had most true life and spirituality, and therefore walked the closest in communion with God, have ever been the most gentle, humble, and conciliating; with respect to their conduct among men. They feel too much of their own weakness and frailty to venture upon those large strides of presumption, which the want only of true understanding and clearness could ever prompt others to make, in many a difficult and slippery road. They, who hastily *jump to conclusions*, (as one used to express it) are commonly those, who *see but a little* and *presume a great deal*: Did they see more of the way before them, they would not attempt to run, where the ablest find it a labor to walk. To the grief of soberer minds, how often may they hear some poor talkative professors determining upon the most difficult and sublime topics, with the positive air and authority of a general council? And how often do such persons take a great deal of pains to prove, to every intelligent Christian, that really they know nothing of the matter? Bishop Hall names a man of this sort, “a bladder full of wind, a skin full of words, a fool’s wonder, and a wise man’s fool.” It is *indeed* very different to *confess* the truth, and to make a *profession* of it: The one implies a previous and certain knowledge; whereas the other may be proposed without any knowledge at all. The meanest believer, ’tis true, may be called upon at some time or other, to speak for his master, and the truths of his gospel; and, in doing this, *for God*, he is not to *fear the face of man*: But he will always remember, or ought to remember, that, if God’s *providence* has rendered this a just or necessary duty, God’s *grace* will not leave him to himself, but be *his mouth and wisdom*, his aid and support, which the enemies of truth shall not be able to overthrow. In a word, every believer might take up his word upon such occasions, and address himself to God;

Whene’er thy laws,  
Thy truth and cause  
To own, my duty be;  
From fear of shame,  
Or love of fame,  
Good Lord deliver me!

Upon the whole; we may reflect that man hath no spiritual understanding from *himself*, that he cannot procure it but through the *internal renewing and operation* of the Spirit of *understanding*, and that he cannot even *exercise* it, when conferred upon him, but by the *continual agency* of this *Holy One*. The inference from all which, to the soul of the believer, is, that it is *necessary* for him, never to *lean to his own understanding*, but simply to depend upon this Lord the Spirit for his *instruction in righteousness* in the use of his word; and that, for this reason, he ought ever to pray for the fulfilment of the promise, that this blessed guide may not only be *with him*, but dwell *in him*, as a fountain of grace and understanding, springing up into everlasting life.



## OIL OF GLADNESS.

OIL is one of the three *active* principles (as the chemists assert,) which enter into the composition of all animal and vegetable substances, and by which they are enabled both to subsist and grow.\* The essential oil lubricating and sheathing all the parts, and forming a vehicle for the essential salt or nitre by being perfectly intermixed, and both these acted upon by the light; is the mean used by the wise creator to put in motion the spirit of the whole animal and vegetable œconomy, or, in other words, to cause it to live and prosper. When a tree dies, we perceive an abstraction of this oil from its substance; for, when a part of it is placed upon the fire, it will yield no flame, as every substance, which hath oil in it, obviously will. And every body knows that the fatness of animals, which proceeds from the exuberance of this natural oil, is, when proportional to the other parts of the frame, both indicative of their health and conducive to their beauty.

\* The earth, while it supplies the various plants which grow upon it, is supplied for that purpose very much by the dew, which is full of oleaginous particles. "The dew" (says our philosophical husbandman, Mr. Tull) seem to be the richest present the atmosphere gives to the earth; having, when putrified in a vessel, a black sediment like mud at the bottom. This seems to cause the darkish color to the upper part of the ground. And the sulphur which is found in the dew, may be the chief ingredient of the cement of the earth; sulphur being very glutinous, as nitre is dissolvent. Dew has both these." Tull's *Husbandry*, c. vi.—A lively comment this upon that gracious promise, *I will be as the dew unto Israel*, Hos. xiv. 5, i. e. the spiritual cause of all gracious fertility.

As oil is an essential part of the life, health, strength and beauty of substantial forms; it hath pleased the divine wisdom to constitute it for the emblem of *that Holy One*, who imparts every portion of divine life, vigor, and glory to the spiritual world. Whoever is not acted upon by or is not possessed of *him* is dead, according to the scripture, in the most dreadful sense of that term. Whoever doth not enjoy *him*, is so far from being spiritually *beautiful*, that he is as loathsome and abominable in the sight of Jehovah, as a putrid and stinking carcase can be unclean and offensive to the natural sense of man. None ought to be offended at the strength of these expressions; for this very image is employed by God himself to describe his abhorrence of the state of sin, and of those who are in it. Isaiah xxxiv. 3.

These premises may lead us to the spiritual design, for which the Lord instituted, with so much precision, the ceremony of *unction* under the Jewish dispensation. Not more than the *blood of bulls and goats could take away sin*, could oil, as a material substance, either *be holy* or *make holy*. It was what the oil *signified*, and what Jehovah revealed under its emblem, which fulfilled that gracious intention to the heirs of salvation. The true believers then, as well as now, were divinely instructed to resolve the parable, and through the agent in nature, or natural object, to behold and to experience the spiritual blessing from the God of grace. Neither Moses, nor any other man, was equal to the comprehension of so much wisdom, as the spiritual eye sees, in the legal œconomy, under its various types and shadows; nor could any human ingenuity have contrived mysteries so nobly prophetic and deeply predicable, as those in the Levitical service, even though previously possessed of the gospel.\* A gracious mind sees the hand of God, beyond the power of man, in the whole arrangement and design.

When unction was prepared, according to the commandment in Exod. xxx. 23, &c. the basis of which was *oil-olive*, strongly impregnated with *three principal spices*; and when this preparation was poured upon the head of Aaron, and of his sons the High-Priests after him; they spiritually beheld the promise, and the mode of its fulfillment, that the Holy Spirit would, in the fulness of time, descend upon the great head of the Church, and

\* An Heathen professed, *Tradidit arcano quodcumque volumine* Moses Juv. Sat. xiv. l. 102. And to thousands, who would not wish to be thought Heathens, the writings of Moses are as much a *volumen arcanum* as they were to Juvenal.

from him flow down to all his members, that they also *might be an habitation of God through the Spirit*. They saw, that he was to be *anointed* (whence his name Messiah, Christ) *with this Oil of Gladness above* those, whom in mercy he would call and make *his fellows*. Ps. xlv. 7: They foresaw in faith, that the Spirit Jehovah would *rest upon him*, (Is. xi. 2.) and *be upon him, anointing him to preach good tidings* (Is. lxi. 1.) and, in a word, to do all that was necessary to be done for his people's salvation.\* The *fragrance* of this sweet unction to the outward smell signified to them the complacency and delight of the *Holy One* in this gracious operation, and the communicated excellency bestowed upon them, who received this precious treasure into their souls. It might also signify, the internal consolation, life and support which they should feel in themselves under his sacred operation.

When they beheld the High Priest fully *anointed* with the holy oil, so as (according to the Psalmist) to *run down upon his beard, and to the skirts of his clothing*; and, on the other hand, saw that the inferior Priests were only *sprinkled* with it, and this sprinkling made not without the *blood of the ram of consecration*: they were led to consider, that the Holy Ghost would be poured *without measure* upon the great High Priest of our profession, because of the infinitude of his person and office; but *in measure* upon those who are spiritual *Priests* in all ages; and that these last would need an *atonement* for their sins, (in contradistinction to the great Messiah) before they could enter upon the holy service of offering up spiritual sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving to the Most High.

When they read, that the holy unction was only to be compounded for this use, and that it was by no means to be *put upon a stranger*; they understood, that the Holy Ghost was not only remote from all impurity and the low purpose of this mortal life in himself, but that also he would *peculiarly* apply himself to the true *Israel of God*, and, in that application, render them his *peculiar* people too.†

\* The mode of anointing a Priest under the law in the form of the Greek  $\chi$ , from whence it has been conjectured further, that through the *cross* of Christ, the blessing of the spiritual oil was to flow, has been treated of by some; but not being authorised by the written word, it is not insisted upon here.

† The learned Dean Prideaux, following the Rabbins, seems to suppose, that this holy oil was but *once* made, and that it was afterwards *miraculously*, kept in the most holy place till the destruction of the first temple. But Witsius, with very apparent reason, urges that there is no ground from the command in Exod. xxx, to suppose, that it was to be compounded only once

Thus the ancient believers spiritually beheld the glory of this divine person, and the nature of his gracious office; and if we, in the present dispensation, are favored with the same anointing, we shall behold these comfortable intentions as they did. We shall find, that the institutions delivered to *them* have a voice of grace and truth to *us*, and preach aloud, that Christ and the Spirit are at once the hope and the means of glory. We shall perceive, that the New Testament only declares in express words the accomplishment in fact of the predictions of the Old, and that there is an inexpressible harmony and inseparable relation between them both. This unction will also enable us to see, that the faith of God's elect is no novelty, but hath ever been one and the same precious gift, almost from the foundation of the world.

When the great Messiah was to appear in the flesh for the accomplishment of his people's redemption, that flesh was qualified for this office, not only by the hypostatic union with a person in Jehovah, but by the special endowment and unction of the Holy Ghost; and for this reason, that, through Christ as the head, the Spirit of grace might have communion with all the members. Accordingly, it was prophesied concerning our Immanuel, *that the Spirit Jehovah should rest upon him*, &c. (Is. xi. 2. and lxi. 1.) constituting thereby what is to be understood by the typical unction: And indeed, if Christ himself as to his divine nature be a person in the Godhead, none but a person of co-equal subsistence could possibly glorify him, as *God*, in his arduous mission. Nor when the Holy Ghost descended upon Christ at his baptism, by which he was evidently anointed and commissioned as *man*, to proceed on his great work, could any being less than the Almighty afford the qualification. If Christ's disciples were baptized by the *Holy Ghost*, in order to *endue them with power* for the discharge of their subordinate commissions; and if this baptism be that *Unction from the Holy One*, which enableth the believer to *know all things* needful for salvation, and is also *the Anointing, which teacheth his people*, and is *the Truth* himself; 1 John ii. 20, 27, and, further, if no other than an infinite and almighty agent can possibly extend such blessings to innumerable objects at one and the same moment, and guide, rule, and preserve them to everlasting glory: Surely, it is impossible, that the blessed Messiah, *who is before all things, and by whom all things con-*

for all generations, but that it was never to be applied to any profane use after it was compounded. See Prideaux's *Connection*, p. 1. B. iii. sect. 5. Vits. *De sacerdotio Aaronis & Christi*. Sect. 57, &c.

ist, should have the unction of a *creature*, and a commission from a *subordinate* being, to perform his undertaking. A man must have immense credulity in the possibilities of creatures to imagine that a divine person can receive accessions of power or dignity, either from a *dependent being*, or from a mere *emanation* which can scarce be called a being at all.—To such unavoidable absurdities are those driven, who acknowledging the *data* or truths of the scripture, yet venture to deny the conclusions necessarily deducible from them; and denying them because spiritual existence cannot be explained by corrupt reason, which, as to the essence of even the meanest matter, can fully explain nothing in the world. They seem to forget exceedingly, that if finite understanding could comprehend God, (speaking with reverence) God would not be infinite; and that it is a most absolute impossibility to know any thing more of the *mode* of his existence, than what he is pleased to reveal and declare concerning it. It is the wisdom of man and his best reason, therefore, to believe implicitly the declarations of God: And to doubt him, is that irrational Atheism, which detains the mind in every maze of error and obscurity.

From the above considerations, we may perceive with what propriety the *Holy Ghost* is called the *Spirit of Christ* (1 Pet. i. 11.) and the *Spirit of the Son* (Gal. iv. 6.) as well as the *Spirit* proceeding from the *Father* (John xv. 26.), or the *Spirit of God*; because the intercommunion and co-existence of the divine persons is such, that whatever is predicable of one of them, as to their *nature*, is predicable equally of the others. And from hence also we may understand, when it is said concerning the faithful; *God is in them* (1 Cor. xiv. 25), or *Christ is in them* (1 Cor. viii. 10.) or the *Spirit dwelleth in them* (Rom. viii. 11. *et. ul.*); that such phrases mean, that they are *partakers of the Divine Nature* (2 Pet. i. 4) in general, by having communion with, or by being *partakers of*, either of the divine persons in particular. (See Heb. iii. 14. vi. 4.) Upon the like account, when either of the divine persons is mentioned in scripture, as the *immediate* author of grace or fellowship; it is to be understood that—through the office-character and operation of the person named, the believer is to consider himself, in *that* instance, as brought into communion with the Godhead. This observation seems fully confirmed by our *Lord* himself in his last prayer to the Father; *I in them*—this is the *nexus*, or bond of union between *Christ* and his people—and *thou in me*—this is the union of *Christ* with the

Godhead—and, just before, *As Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee*—this is the reciprocal fellowship of the divine persons—that *THEY also may be ONE IN US*—and this implies the union or fellowship of believers with the divine persons, as the final object of their salvation. Hence we see the Apostle's meaning, where he says, that *he that is joined to the Lord is ONE Spirit* : 1 Cor. vi. 17, that believers are *members of Christ's body, of his flesh, and of his bones* : Eph. v. 30. that *both HE that sanctifieth, and THEY who are sanctified, are all OF ONE* ; for *which cause Christ is not ashamed to call them brethren* : Heb. ii. 11. And that *through him [Christ] they have an access by one Spirit unto the Father.* (Eph. ii. 18.) These passages of scripture, and several others of the like import, necessarily infer both a *unity* and *personality* in the Godhead, and also the *communion* of the saints with the unity, by means of the personality. Thus they have *fellowship with the Father* (1 John i. 3.) *fellowship with the Son* (1 Cor. i. 9. 1 John i. 3.) and the *fellowship of the Spirit* (Phil. ii. 1.) : And will any man venture to say, that the faithful have these fellowships, or any one of them, all resulting from one cause, all conducive to one end, without any being less than God ? Will he be bold enough to declare, that the respective communions, thus distinctly marked from the several operations, and clearly leading (as in Eph. ii. 18.) from the office of *one* to the *other*, do not necessarily state a *personality*, and in consequence a *Trinity* in the *divine nature* ? And will he dare to affirm, while the scripture expressly reveals the *unity*, as the *personality*, that this *personality* doth not subsist in the *unity*, and only because he cannot comprehend it ?—Men have dared to affirm such tenets, though directly opposite to God's own declaration ; and the worms, who are not able to comprehend the essence of the least thing about them, have been hardy enough to dispute against the triune essence of their *Maker*, in the very face of his own communication and testimony. This method is only consistent in those, who put the Bible upon a level with Quintus Curtius, or any other Romance, "*And who reason onward, till they doubt of God.*" But the reason or *wisdom of this world never knew God* ; and *God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world*, and perhaps in no one instance more than when it attempts to define Him, who hath made it foolish.

Leaving these to the divine mercy ; of this we may be assured as a truth, that those, who have obtained the fellowship of the divine persons, cannot deny or doubt of their proper divinity, nor

of their unity of nature. Such are divinely persuaded, that the communion with the Spirit is a communion with God, and that the Holy Ghost is that *personal Paraclete*, or Teacher, who *leadeth and guideth into all the truth*, and of course into this as a most important branch of it. They know whom they have believed in this case, as well as in all the others. Experience follows and concurs with doctrine in the great leading principles of salvation, and God neither leaves *himself* without witness, nor yet his *people*, concerning a matter of such consequence to his own glory. It may be said to them, as it was to the Virgin Mary; *Blessed are they that have believed; for, there shall be a performance of those things, which have been told them from the Lord.* The Holy Spirit, then, is not only the *Oil of Gladness* but the sacred *Anointer* too. God cannot be *passive*, but is always the first great agent, active and acting: And, therefore, whatever perfection is revealed concerning him, or apprehended of him, it is always causative and efficient, not dormant or inert, as in the creatures till acted upon. In this view, he is the hope and the strength of his people, helping their infirmities, correcting their errors, comforting their hearts, and carrying on the whole work of grace in them for glory. To him they are to look up in all circumstances and situations; and to depend upon his blessing, in all times of adversity or of wealth, of sickness or of health, "in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment." With respect to the things of time, they know (to use the words of an ingenious author\*) that "if all the [earthly] happiness that is dispersed through the whole race of mankind in this world were drawn together, and put into the possession of any single man, it would not make a very happy being;" and, therefore, they are led by this Holy Spirit to seek for happiness out of the modes of the world which can afford none, and to find a divine reality of it in him.

From his outward emblem of *oil*, they are led to understand some intimations of the *manner* of his grace in their hearts: and their souls are confirmed by experience, in whatever their eyes can learn by vision concerning it. To such, the mention of a few instances, may not, however well-known, be altogether unimportant.

Oil hath ever had a most distinguished place in the *materna medica*, and among the ancients in particular, was always held in the highest estimation as a great antidote against *poison*. both

\* Addison. Spect. No. 163.



outwardly and inwardly applied.\* Simple olive oil, warmed and applied to the wound made by the bite of serpents, it is well known, hath effected a cure, when the person hath been almost at the point of death. It was for this reason, they frequently anointed themselves to induce *health* and *strength*; and possibly *the anointing with oil in the name of the Lord*, mentioned by the Apostle, which has been so miserably distorted to the superstition of *extreme unction* among the Papists, signified only that the friends of the sick Christian should use it *medically*, as a lawful means under the divine blessing, for his recovery. James v. 14.—So, in a spiritual view, the believer sees, and is happily made to experience, that the Oil of Gladness is the only great antidote for the poison of sin, injected by the Old Serpent, and that this alone can effectually resist the malady of a corrupt nature, or heal its putrid and destructive wounds. Luke x. 33, &c. See also Is. i. 6. When, therefore, they see themselves sorely beset, they pray for this *unction of strength* and *wisdom*, that they may victoriously repel and rightly understand; and when they feel the contagious sores of iniquity upon their souls, they implore this gracious anointing both to mollify the pain, and to heal up the plague. Nor do they pray and implore in vain. *The Holy Spirit is given to them that ask*. He descends as the *oil* from Christ to heal, and becomes the *Oil of Gladness* in healing all the maladies and miseries of sin. He will finally make a perfect cure, and bring them to the regions of everlasting health and joy. There they shall have the *beauty* of holiness for the *ashes* of corruption, this *Oil of Joy* for the *mourning* of sin, the *garment of praise* for the *spirit of heaviness*: There they shall be called *trees of righteousness*, the *planting of the Lord*, that he might be glorified. As this oil afforded them a *cheerful countenance* even here below, according to their measure of possession; O how will it gladden their spirits and beautify their souls, when the possibility of corruption is done away from them for ever!

Without oil in the natural body, the springs of life could neither act nor move; and the whole animal system, through the acrid nature of some juices, and the obstructions arising from the vicidity of others, would soon be exsiccated and become a lump of adust and lifeless matter.—The parallel holds good in the spiritual system; for, without the *Oil of Gladness*, there is no power in the fallen soul of man to think or act for God and his own hap-

\* Com. Salmuth, in Guid. Paucir. P. i. tit. 52.

piness ; but, on the contrary, sin rages in all its faculties, renders them more and more corrupt, and, at length makes his whole system, like a dry and decayed branch, fit only for *everlasting fire*.

Oil, in the *vegetable* world, maintains the same œconomy as in the *animal*. By its penetrating quality, it carries the other necessary juices into and through the finest vessels, and sheathes those vessels at the same time from the nitrous and rough particles, which mix and ascend with the sap. It also seems to separate, strain, or prevent from entering into the system, all such gross and terrene atoms, as would, if admitted, choke up the capillary vessels (which are almost inconceivably minute) and consequently induce disease and death.—The emblem expresses the case, as it obtains in the spiritual life. But for this *Holy Oil*, the word of God, and the life of God, could find no passage to the heart of man, nor receive a lodgment there. Neither law nor gospel could enter within his soul. And, again, did this *spiritual oil* only carry on the law to a man's spirit, and leave it there by itself to operate with its fiery nature upon him ; in that view, there would soon be an end of all his hope and happiness. He would feel vengeance within him, corroding with the force of the worm that never shall die, and of the fire that never can be quenched. But this *Holy Spirit*, applying the law to the mind, and (preserving our figure) sheathing it with his heavenly grace, renders the law in spiritual experience like nitre in natural operation. As nitre discusses and divides the atoms with which it is intermixed ; so the law, in the power of the Spirit, is the preparation for the gospel ; and the conviction of sin, with which it pierces the soul, disposes it to *receive with meekness the ingrafted word* of salvation. And when the soul is brought to the knowledge and experience of *the truth as it is in Jesus* : this *Oil of Gladness* preserves it from being choked up with earthly things ; so that neither the cares of the world nor the deceitfulness of riches can operate, as they naturally would, to render it unfruitful. Thus this *Holy Lord defendeth the inhabitants of* [the spiritual] *Jerusalem* ; so that *he that is feeble among them is as David* [or the beloved ; i. e. Christ] *and the house of David* [all the people of Christ] *shall be as God* [by being made partakers of the divine nature] *and the Angel Jehovah before them, or Christ in them, and with them, through faith, the hope of glory.* Zech. xii. 8.

Were it not for the oil in plants, the action of light or heat upon their substance would soon exhaust the aqueous and other juices, and consequently would destroy it. On the other hand, the

natural oil, by its tenacity, which (as Dr. Quincy assures us) is "a kind of glue or cement to the other principles,"† preserves the frame from the penetrating effects of the frost, and especially where the oil has been matured and duly concocted; for those late and tender shoots, in which the aqueous parts of the sap predominate, not having had time for the requisite digestion, are often destroyed by the winter; when the lower parts of the same branches, and the rest of the tree, have received no injury.—So the *oil of grace*, communicated by the divine Spirit, preserves his people in all kinds of trial: And the more they possess of his saving power, the better able are they to resist and overcome those things, which entirely overwhelm the rest of the world.

One property of oil is to soften and supple what it is applied to in nature for that purpose.—The effect also in grace of the *Oil of Gladness* is an inwrought tenderness of spirit and conscience, which enables the Christian to receive with meekness and humility the holy will of God, and to dread the very thought of acting contrary to it. This oil of salvation carries home the *new covenant*, in its promised power, to the Christian; by taking away his *stony heart*, and giving him an *an heart of flesh* in its stead. Every body knows, that oil is the universal *subulum* or supply of *light*, and that without the oleaginous particles neither vegetable substances, as wood, nor mineral matter, as coal, would emit a flame, though placed in the strongest fire.—Thus, without the *Oil of Gladness*, there can be no reception of Christ, the *true Light*, no sweetness for him within the soul. The *Spirit of life* introduces the *light of life*; their personal union is inseparable; and so is their action. *No man can call Jesus Lord* [savingly call him *his Lord*] *but by the Holy Ghost*; and no man *having* the Holy Ghost, can do otherwise. This is very plain in the parable of the virgins. The five foolish had indeed the lamps of profession; but they had no oil within them. When, therefore, the bridegroom came (say, either in death or judgment), they had no light; because they had not that, which is the concomitant of it within them. In other words, *being sensual, not having the Spirit*, they were *without Christ*, and shut out, in consequence, from his kingdom.—The scripture, likewise, represents the church under the figure of a candlestick with many branches; but as the candlestick in the holy place had no light in itself, but received first the holy oil, and then the flame; so is it with every individual believer, and with the church of God at large. They

† *Pharm. P. i. § 1.*

must receive the quickening power of the Spirit, before they can see their need of Christ, or have the least desire towards him. He prepares their hearts for that vital flame, which shall never be extinguished to all eternity. And then, as the soul enlightens the body for its natural life, by dwelling in and animating it : So the Holy Ghost illuminates and actuates the soul by making it his own habitation. Eph. ii. 22. Hence the ancient Christians called the ordinance of baptism *φωτισμος*, or *illumination*, because it was the outward sign of possessing Christ, *the light* of the soul : And, for the same reason, they styled the solemn days, appointed for that ordinance, *the days of light* ; the newly baptized, the *newly enlightened* ; and the time of Christ's own baptism, *the light-bringing day* ; all which terms they employed to denote the spiritual effect of divine mercy, namely, *light to the mind*.\* Analogous to this, the participation of the Spirit is called and prefigured by the *unction* with consecrated oil : And thus the *Messiah*, or *Christ*, or *Anointed One*, was anointed with the *Oil of Gladness*, in token of being imbued with the Holy Spirit, and his people are called *Christians*, or *anointed*, because, in being truly his people, they have received the same spirit with him, and by him. *Of his fulness have all these received, and grace for grace.* John i. 16. The *Oil of Gladness*, flowing from him, is that enlivening and enlightening *chrism*, which makes them *Christians*, and keeps them so.

Under the law, there is a positive prescription concerning the use of oil in presenting every *mincha*, or offering of faith and thanksgiving, under several forms and types, before the Lord. A specification of this kind of oblation is made in Lev. ii. and ix. And the reader, who wishes to dwell particularly upon the several distinctions and meanings of the legal obligations, may be much gratified in perusing the learned Meder's discourse upon them.† It will be sufficient for this purpose of the essay to consider the oil, prescribed in the law, as typical of the Holy Spirit, without whom no offerings or services can be acceptable to the Lord. All the institutions of the Law have a voice to those, *who have ears to hear* : nor is it possible to believe, without an equal possession of blindness and blasphemy, that the wisdom of God could have descended to the minute detail of the several parts and compositions of what should be accepted of Jehovah, unless some spiritual doctrines, some sublime and evangelical truths, essential to

\* See the elder Spanheim *de baptismo ignis*  
 † Mede's Works. Disc. li p. 284, &c.

his people's salvation,\* were intended under those emblems.— These were the similitude† of the Old Testament, which concealed those *mysteries of the kingdom*, that, like the parables of the New Testament, were only to be known by those to *whom it was given*. Matt. xiii. 10, 11.

This oil, as we have said, typified the Holy Ghost, in whom and by whom all offerings were to be made to Jehovah. Nor did Christ the *High Priest of our profession*, present the dignified oblation of himself as the sacrifice for his people, without this *holy oil*: for it is expressly written, *through the Eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God*. Heb. ix. 14. Thus *God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself*, &c. And thus is spiritually fulfilled the testimony of the Prophet, concerning the people of God; *the burden [of the enemy] shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing*.‡ The same *eternal Spirit*, by whom Christ offered up himself, descends through him upon his people, enabling them to be *conquerors and more than conquerors* over their enemies and likewise to *present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God*. Rom. xii. 1.

As the oil represented, sometimes, the *person* of the Spirit; so, sometimes, it preached the *graces* of the Spirit. In condescension to human capacity, he appears to have taken this comprehensive emblem; and through the medium of the outward sense, (which is the usual method of the scripture) to affect the intellect of man.

The ancients made much use of oil to *beautify* their persons. In the Psalms, we read of oil to *make man's face to shine*.— Ruth anointed herself for decoration, Ruth iii. 3; and the woman

\* The excellent Witsius hath made the like observation. "The intention of the ceremonies was, that they might be the *figures and shadows of spiritual things*, and that they might continually exhibit a picture of Christ and of the grace introduced by him. And certainly this was a most happy privilege to the Jews, that, when God delivered all the mysteries of salvation by parables and types, they should have these representations of the divine mercy and of the promised Saviour constantly before their eyes.— Especially too, as by Patriarchs, Prophets and other teachers, they were instructed in their spiritual import, after the manner of that dispensation." Egypt. L. iii. c. 24.

† Thus the book, the title of which is translated Proverbs, might have been, with perhaps greater propriety, rendered *similitudes*. They are not an indigested mass of moral precepts only; but, under the picture of sensible objects, they were intended to convey many rich delineations of spiritual grace to the mind.

‡ Is. x. 27. Literally rendered it is, *before the face of the oil*. This hath been well expounded, and by Jonathan the Chaldee too, "thou shalt be delivered through Christ, in whom the *spirit* of Jehovah rests, because he hath anointed him." Roberts. Theo. in Job.

of Tekoah and the Prophet Daniel omitted the use of oil for the contrary reason. 2 Sam. xiv. 3. Dan. x. 3. The custom is also mentioned in Matth. vi. 17. Luke vii. 46. On this account, the *holy oil* is the figure of that *beauty of holiness*, which the Spirit of God puts upon his people, and by which they are enabled to worship him, according to his own will, *in spirit and in truth*. Thus, when the Psalmist prays, that the *beauty of the Lord our God might be upon the Church*, it is as if he had said, "Let the holy oil, whose unction affordeth all the beauty of holiness, endue their souls with his sanctifying power." The oil signified *holiness*: the application of this oil to believers, or the holy Spirit's operation upon them, constitutes the *beauty of holiness*: and when they have done with the *vile body of sin*, they shall be most perfectly beautified, by a complete transformation into the very image and likeness of Christ Jesus in all things.

Joy was also denoted under this sacred emblem of *oil*: It was therefore, in peculiar reference to this grace of the Spirit, called by the Prophet the *oil of joy*. Is. lxi. 3, and by the Psalmist the *Oil of Gladness*. Ps. xlv. 7. The Spirit, as God, is not only *joy* himself *essentially*, and so called Ps. xliii. 4. but the *cause* and *communicator* of it to the redeemed. Thus it is said of believers, that they *received the word in much* [outward] *affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost*. 1 Thess. i. 6. and of the first disciples, that they *were filled with joy and the Holy Ghost*. Acts xiii. 52. The *kingdom of God* is also said to be *joy in the Holy Ghost*. Rom. xiv. 17. All which demonstrates both the *nature* of his being, which must be omnipotent thus to *influence* and *reign*, and the *kind* of office assumed by him, which is to *make glad* the city of God.

This spiritual oil also induceth health and *strength*. Now he (says the Apostle) *which stablishes us with you, in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God*. 2 Cor. i. 21. *Jehovah the Spirit is the saving strength of his anointed*; and He alone *strengtheneth them with strength in their souls*. 'Tis he who *strengthens them with might in the inner man*: and surely can such a blessing come from any one less than God? If God be the *strength* of his people, surely that Spirit, who *quickeneth* them, and in whom they *live*, and *wait*, and *walk*, and are *led*, can be none else than that *almighty strength* in essence, or Jehovah, working upon them, and dividing his gifts *severally as he will*. 1 Cor. xii. 11.

We have already considered *oil* as one great mean of all *growth*, and consequently of *fertility*, in the vegetable world. The Lord the Spirit employs the image of oil to intimate the similar effect of his grace in the spiritual world. *My well-beloved* (saith the

Lord, speaking by the Prophet) *hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill*, or (as it is literally rendered from the Hebrew in the margin) *in the horn of the son of oil*. Our translation has taken the *effect*, but omitted to express the *cause*. Christ's *vineyard*, or Church, is upon a hill, yea, *the hill of Zion* itself; but its *fertility* is from him, who giveth *strength* to the *faint*, and *supplieth* every spiritual nutriment, which shall *turn to the salvation* of his people. Phil. i. 19. Every believer in Jesus is a fruit-bearing branch of the spiritual vine. He is not like the cypress tree, to which Phocion compared a vain and wordy orator, having indeed much pomp and beauty in its form and appearance, yet bearing no fruit: but abundant, according to measure, in *all the fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ Jesus, to the glory of God*.

The use of oil, in *cleansing* the lepers under the law, is extremely significant and remarkable. After the application of the blood of the lamb to the party, in the same places was the oil to be applied and poured on by the Priest, viz. on the right ear, on the thumb of the right hand, on the great toe of the right foot, and finally on the head. Here appear the effects of the gospel *insigns*. The *blood* of Christ is applied first to the *ear*, and then the living *oil*, or grace of the Spirit, follows, to render that ear open to receive the word of truth. The next application of both these is to the *hand* that it may be *purged from dead works to serve the living God*: then to the *feet*, that they may be *swift* for obedience, as well as cleansed from defilement: and lastly to the *head*, that the understanding may be *purified* and enlightened, and the whole spirit, as well as body, under the conduct of the divine Spirit, given up to the Father through Christ Jesus. The application was made to the *principal* parts of these several members, to denote both that these included the government of *all the rest*, and that the Lord should be glorified by the *best* faculties of his people.

*Oil*, and the *olive-trees*, which produced it, were considerable branches of the *riches* and agriculture of Judæa. Thus Asher was to *dish his foot in oil*. Deut. xxxiii. 24. He was to be *rich in oil and olive-trees*; and it literally came to pass. The *olive-trees*, and *cellars of oil*, formed some of the *riches* and temporal blessings of David. 1 Chron. xxvii. 28. And they are called *treasures* in Jeremiah xli. 8. Oil is also stated to be a part of the *trade* of Judah. Ezek. xxvii. 17. And what are those *riches*, or (as they are emphatically styled) the *exceeding riches of grace, and glory, and wisdom, and knowledge, and goodness*, mentioned

concerning God; but the graces and effusions of the Holy Spirit, the oil of salvation conferred upon his people's souls? 'Tis through him only and his *liberality* of flowing, that they become *rich in faith*, and *in good works*, preparatory to their enjoyment of the full riches of his salvation. His graces are those *hidden riches* (as the Prophet is led to style them) by which they *know* the Lord, Is. xlv. 3, and which the world doth not see, nor can see, because the wisdom, which gave them forth, as well as the wisdom which is in them, is an *hidden wisdom ordained of God before the world for his people's glory*. 1 Cor. ii. 7. All these *treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ*; and, therefore, *the Spirit taketh of the things of Christ and sheweth them to his redeemed*. Col. ii. 3. and John xvi. 15. Thus it is, that believers become *rich and wise*, at once, *unto salvation*.

Under the Jewish dispensation, if not the patriarchal, certain *persons and things* were consecrated to God by libations of *oil*. It has been upon good ground believed, that when Jacob anointed the *stone* for a *pillar* with oil in Bethel, he received the ordinance by tradition from the fathers of his faith, as well as of his flesh; and that the *Lapides Betulii*,\* or anointed stones, among the Heathen, were only corruptions of a sacred ceremony, the meaning of which they had either lost or misapplied. They thought, indeed, that, in consequence of their consecration by oil, a power or virtue took possession of the image or stone; † but they apprehended nothing more than the invisible power of some of their Gods, or, at most, some physical virtue from the heavens. Whatever was consecrated to God under the law (as the tabernacle and all its utensils were) by the solemnity of anointing with oil, could never afterwards be engaged out of his service, without profanation. Lev. x. 7. Exod. xxix. 2, 21, 33.—All this plainly intimates, that those, who are anointed *Priests unto God* (as all true believers are) by the Holy Spirit, are like their head Christ Jesus, *consecrated for evermore*. Heb. vii. 28. *The gifts and calling of*

\* See enough concerning these in Stillingfleet's *Origines Sacre*. B. iii. c. v. §. 10, and the authorities he cites in the margin; with Gale's *Court of the Gentiles*. Part I.

† Arnobius, who had been a Gentile philosopher and rhetorician, and was converted to the Christian faith about the year 300, humbly confesses; *Venerabar (o cecitas!) nuper simulachra modò ex fornacibus prompta, picturas, veteribus in arboribus tenias: si quando conspexerem lubricam lapidem; & ex oliivi unguine ornatam, tanquam inesset vis præsens, adularer, affabar, & beneficia posechan nihil sentiente de trunco*. Adv. Gent. L. i. The learned Selden, in the *Prolegomena* and first *Spartagma*, c. 2. of his *Treatise De Div. Spijs*, hath discussed this subject with his usual ability.



*God are without repentance.* Having given to the heirs of salvation the earnest of their inheritance, this gracious and almighty Spirit will not suffer them to be wronged of the purchased possession. The anointing oil of Jehovah is upon them, and they shall remain in his true tabernacle for ever.

If these things be so, O Christian; is not this Holy Spirit most significantly entitled, *The Oil of Gladness*? Doth not the beautiful name most pointedly describe the bountiful effects of his love? And hast thou not joyful communion with him, at times, in all these benignities of his office? Yes; as surely as thou art a Christian, thou hast. Thy very name, as well as the name of thy master, belongs to thee only for this cause. He was called Christ on account of this unction; and thou art a Christian, only by partaking of this unction through him.

If thou hast this *Oil of Gladness* poured forth upon thy soul, the consequences of it will appear throughout thee. Like the leaven, which our Lord speaks of, it will leaven the whole lump; and thy whole body, soul, and spirit, will feel its sanctifying power. The corruptions of the outward man shall be subdued and purged; the affections of the heart shall be purified and guided to their proper object, and the intellection of the mind illuminated and extended for a more ample apprehension of God. It will mollify what is hard, even the stone within thee; it will cleanse what is defiled; it will make holy, and keep holy, unto life eternal, thy whole man.

This sacred oil will *smooth* the rugged roughness of evil, which sin hath brought upon thy soul: And though it will not wholly eradicate the harsh tempers of thine earthly frame, till that frame be dissolved; it will, at least, polish them in a manner, which nature can never do.\* Rudeness of manners, incivility of disposition, and proneness to murmuring, not only indicate natural unhappiness, but yield too sad a proof, that the *Oil of Gladness* either hath not been poured forth at all, or in a very low degree, upon thy soul. The Spirit of God doth not make men boisterous to complain, but patient to endure.

There is a *fragrance* in this holy unction, which at once *perfumes* as well as gladdens the soul. It is not only acceptable to

\* It was the advice of Democritus, "to have honey within, and oil without;" by which the laughing philosopher probably meant, it was necessary for a man's welfare, to have good tempers in the heart and good manners in the life. Christianity says nothing against this; but, on the contrary, most powerfully induces it, yet without "simulation or dissimulation."

the Most High in itself, as coming from him ; but it renders the persons, on whom it is poured, *an offering of a sweet smelling savour* through Christ Jesus. By it they are enabled to conceive holy thoughts, speak holy words, and to perform holy deeds ; none of which they are able to do by their own power. Their life and conversation, in proportion to their enjoyment of the heavenly gift, shall yield *an odour of a sweet smell*, which, like the box of ointment that Mary bestowed upon her Redeemer, shall fill the house of God, and even beyond that house flow out to the sense of the world. *All men shall know the disciples* of Jesus, by the discovery of his spirit of love, actuating their tempers, their language, and their lives. Like the aromatic oil, which was poured upon Aaron ; this precious *Oil of Gladness* will diffuse around its sacred odours, and not only refresh the sense of him that bears it, but convince the sense of others too, that indeed *the anointing oil of the Lord is upon him*. Lev. x. 7.

O how great then is the privilege of those, who are the *redeemed* and the *ransomed* of Jehovah ; who *come and sing*, because they are so, *in the height of Zion*, and *flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat*, or the bread of life, and *for wine*, or the joy of his salvation, and *for oil*, to beautify with holiness !— *Their soul shall be as a watered garden*, and *they shall not sorrow any more at all*. Jer. xxxi. 11, 12.

God often visits with his gladness the souls of men. How many proofs have we of this truth handed down, by the most credible witnesses ? Witnesses, who, in the hour of death, would not deceive ; and witnesses, who, in their holiness of life, could not wish to delude.\* Yet, greater evidence than even from these arises from the testimony of God, and from those promises of consolation and joy, which he never could have given forth in vain. But in vain would they have been given, if they had never been *experienced* (according to their tenor) by gracious souls, at times, when no earthly thing could have given the shadow of a consolation. O what animating expressions of the most fervent happiness have issued forth from lips, quivering under the agonies of death, and from tongues tremulous in the struggles of departing life ! The witnesses for Christ have testified *the joy of their Lord* under the cruellest strokes of their persecutor's rage :

\* See among other excellent books, Burnham's "Pious Memorials;" Fleming on "God's Appearances for his Church," and "The Triumphs of Faith," published at Edinburgh, 1767. See also a very striking account, which Mr. Flavel gives of a Christian experience, in his admirable "Transcript of the Soul of Man." P. 238, &c.

And martyrdom hath received half its honors from the gladness and alacrity, with which it was endured. The accounts of these transactions at once astonish and edify the mind. Far unlike the apathy of stoical pride, or the brutality of Indian savageness; the soldiers of Christ met death as conquerors, and not as stocks. No sullen gloom pervaded their spirits, no despair of life; but the *Oil of Gladness* lifted up their eyes and their hearts beyond the skies, and made them sensible, that the worst malice of men only could send them home the faster to their God. Let infidels affect to find parallels to these among infidels as eagerly as they can; but there is as much difference between sufferings endured by grace, and sufferings supported only by nature, as there is (to use the lowest comparison worthy of the subject) between the most vivid hope which can fill, or the most hardened unbelief which can stupify the human mind. The expectation of a Christian upon these occasions is a *fulness* of expectation, and therefore called the *πληροφορία*, or full assurance, which possesses and animates almost to real enjoyment his awakened soul; but, to say the best of the other, it is a mere *vacuity* from absolute despair, which (as in the dying Emperor Adrian) can only cause the heart to flutter between a trembling hope and a dismal uncertainty. The partition between *these* is so thin and feeble, that it totters with every blast, and is often crushed by the full weight of the trial. Even Socrates himself, who gave the greatest example among the Heathens of a philosophical equanimity in death, reasons and concludes before his judges with an apparent doubt upon his mind of a future existence, though certainly there is something dignified and to be admired in his courage and conduct which could back him so far in his last extremity. We may deplore “this Homer of the philosophers” (as Plato called him) and his admirer Cicero, that amidst a world of ingenuity and the honest efforts of reason, they are led rather to an anxious expectation of a future happiness, than to a *lively hope* or firm persuasion about it. All certainty in this respect, was only to be derived through the gospel.\*

The Christian's joy is a *joy unspeakable and full of glory*. Reader, hast thou never found it so? Hath no rivulet of peace flowed into thy heart from the boundless ocean of peace? Hast thou not known, that the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath brought gladness and tranquility too?—Yes, believer, thou hast

\* Vide Cic. Tusq. Quæst. & de Senect. *passim*.

found this mercy, and *tasted* indeed *that the Lord is gracious*. Though annoyed by distractions, and broken at times by interruptions, through the calls or the evils of the body and its outward affairs; still thy soul pants for the enjoyment of this blessing, and cannot rest without the view or the relish of it within thee. Thou hungerest and thirstest after this fruit of righteousness, though, on earth and in thy earthly tabernacle, thou canst not be fully satisfied with it. “The highest pleasures (said a good man) of a gracious soul in the body, are but the pleasures of an uncentred soul, which is still gravitating and striving forward, and consequently can be but low and very imperfect, in comparison with those it enjoys, when it is centred and fixed in its everlasting rest. They differ as the shadow [or cessation] of the labourer for an hour in the day, from his rest in his bed when his work is ended.” And yet, faint and low as all present views and enjoyments of grace are here below, compared with *the fulness of joy at God’s right-hand*; there have been instances, where the communication of divine love has been almost too much for nature to sustain. But these have usually been upon some great occasions, either upon leaving the world, or upon suffering for Christ in it, where it has been expedient for the glory of God and the edification of his people, that such testimonies of his presence should be declared. However, there will be enough of this at all times to shew the truth of God’s promise, that *light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart*. Ps. cxvii. 11. In other words, that where Christ, that true light, descends upon the soul; the Holy Spirit will cause to spring up those returns of joy and praise, which, like the incense upon the altar, shall ascend for a *sweet smelling savour* before the throne of the highest.

Happy believer; didst thou know thy own privileges, or couldst thou walk in the constant sight and sense of them; nothing upon this poor earth would much or long perplex thee. Like a traveller near the end of his journey, thou wouldest patiently bear the dust and dirt of the road, upon the view of thine heavenly mansion, and thy Almighty Father ready to bless thee there. ’Tis this which, by divine aid, hath ever borne up the souls of the faithful in past trials, worse probably than ever will be thine; and ’tis this which must support thee also in the least as well as greatest difficulty, or alike it will be far too much for thee to bear. The realizing views of these things, not the mere speculations upon them, render the heart truly magnanimous in encountering the evils of life or of death; and the grace, which shews these

things, gives the Christian that nice sense of honor and duty, which would incline him to all that is right, though neither men nor Angels, nor even God himself were to behold. 'Tis this Spirit of Faith, dear Christian, which must enable thee to consider thyself, and to act, as *a stranger and pilgrim upon earth*; not the hearing only, or the talking only, about it. 'Tis this *Oil of Gladness*, which must anoint thee for a higher profession, than that poor miserable one, which (Alas!) too often obtains among men, and of which it is difficult to understand, whether it belongs to this world or another. O how hard it is rightly to discern in many instances, whether there be any real difference between some who profess the truths of the gospel, and others who, like *Gallio, care for none of these things!* The believer, as Timothy had, should desire to have *a good profession before many witnesses*—the witnesses of his conscience within him, of the world about him, and of God above him. These testimonies he must have, in some measure, before he can enjoy that quietness and assurance of spirit, which are the general and genuine result of them. A meagre, half-starved soil can yield only wretched and despicable fruits: Nor can the effect of a mean, half-carnal profession rise above itself, or produce aught at best but a pitiable poverty of joy. “Wouldest thou have comfort in thy misery (said a very learned and good man,) wouldest thou have joy in all thy sorrows, wouldest thou find rest in the greatest troubles of thy life, wouldest thou entertain death as a messenger of joy, wouldest thou welcome the Lord Jesus at his coming? O labor then to make *thy election sure*; never cease till thou hast gotten the *seal and earnest* of thy salvation; renounce all kinds of peace, till thou hast found the peace of conscience; discard all joy, till thou feelest the joy of the Holy Ghost.\* O then, pray for vigor of grace; or that *fergency of spirit in serving the Lord*, which shall ever draw down with it a glorious superiority over the world, and a sweet approximation of soul to God and the redeemed in glory. In a word, ask to live *like a Christian*; like a man, who indeed *hath* the heavenly unction, who is thus akin to Christ and to God, and who both *is* and *feels* himself really to be a *citizen of Heaven*.—*Ask and receive*, that *thy joy may be full*. Thy dear Saviour means nothing but kindness and joy for thee; and if thy cup were more *emptied* of other things, it would be made to *run over* with his love. Thou art privileged not to *glean*, like Ruth, in the field, or the vintage; but to *gather* the whole ripe shocks and precious fruits of thy Father's bless-

\* Mede. *Disc* liii.

sing. Why then wilt thou crawl and creep; when thou mayest, as with *the wings of eagles*, rise up and soar? Why study hard, and labour much, upon a little dirty clod; when the ætherial mansions, the whole universe of the blessed, may be thy glorious contemplation and felicity? O that this wisdom, and dignity of grace, precious soul, may be more and more thine! Canst thou not join in this prayer for *thyself*, which an unworthy *stranger* ardently offers up for thee! Art thou not willing to mingle this gracious joy with one, whose soul burns that thy soul and his may participate together *the felicity of God's chosen*, and *the riches of the glory of his inheritance*? O that heart might thus answer heart, and be more spiritually alive to this grace, that the communion of Saints below may more perfectly imitate, as well as forerun, the communion of Saints above!

1. Come, Thou *Oil of Gladness*, shed  
All thine-energy divine:  
Bid each faithful heart and head  
In thy sacred love combine.
2. Come, Thou *Oil of Gladness*, pour  
Gracious joy on all around:  
Make, full fraught with heav'nly lore,  
All in heav'nly hope abound.
3. Come, Thou *Oil of Gladness*, come,  
Shed abroad thy reigning grace;  
Fit thy *Kings and Priests* for home,  
Crown them with eternal peace:

## CONCLUSION.

SEVERAL other titles and ascriptions, belonging to the HOLY SPIRIT, occurred to the author in proof of his divinity; such, for instance, as *Witness, Gift, Guide, Spirit of Burning, Spirit of Judgment, Rest, Spirit of Glory, &c.* but the size of the volume will not admit of any further enlargement. It is humbly conceived, however, that the many testimonies, which have been already submitted, under the preceding names, do illustrate, according to the measure and manner of the human capacity, some of the essential glories of the *Eternal Spirit*, both in his *divine nature, person and office*. Evidence from the scriptures, both positive and collateral, appears as full, clear, and convincing; as it is possible for the mind of man fairly to require, or his understanding to receive. Though the point insisted on be not in its essence an object of *sense or animal perception*, and cannot be such from the pure spirituality of its nature; yet it has been shewn, that God the Spirit has given testimony to this point by some proofs that have even reached the senses, and by circumstances, which might impress them with the most happy and lively demonstration of his being and presence. He hath indeed left all men, who have this word in their reach, without excuse for unbelief concerning himself; and they have no subterfuge in this case from any difficulty in his revelation, which is clear enough here; but must recur at once to their own corrupt and positive dislike of its authority, or, not being able to overthrow or get rid of this, must take shelter (as too many in all ages have done) under some wilful perversions and sophistications of the divine record. But, admitting this record to be *true*, and permitting it to speak its own genuine sense in harmony and analogy with itself (which is allowed in all other writings); the doctrine of its Author's divinity is true also, and from the record is proved to be so. On the other hand, if that book can be demonstrated to be *false* in principle or authority, and so is an audacious imposition upon the world; it is readily granted, that there is and can be no *other* proof of this subject, and that all the miracles, or *sensible* evidences of it, and all the internal operations, either promised or received, which are the *experimental* evidences; are equally lies, dreams, and delusions. It will be further granted, in that case, that we are exactly in the situation of all the Heathens, ancient and modern; that there is no assurance, or evidence, of any one thing in the world; that we

live without present hope, and must die without future end or purpose of being. It shall be added too, and must be added, that there is neither sin nor goodness, neither religion nor irreligion, neither Heaven nor Hell; and that all those, who have declared these things to the world, in the shape of Patriarchs, Prophets, or Apostles, have been impudent mountebanks, who have played upon the hopes and fears of mankind, for the advancement of their own designs. It will be allowed also, in this train of consequences, that Christ and Mahomet are quite upon a level, and equally detestable impostors; that Judas Iscariot was an honest fellow, for betraying the former; and that all the people, called martyrs, were a set of stupid and inconsiderate simpletons, for believing and dying in the cause of a crucified malefactor. In one word, it must be acknowledged, in this view of things, that there is no hope in life or in death, that we are bewildered in the chaos of our own imaginations, and that Lucretius and Hobbes, and such like men, were perfectly right, in attempting to banish every trace of religion, as mere mad superstition, from the face of the earth.

There are many people, who will profess themselves shocked at these consequences, and yet do not see that the principles, on which they proceed concerning religion, naturally and necessarily lead to them.—They think *without* the Bible, in the first instance; and then, in the next, they think *against* it. Nor do some people express much concern upon the discovery of this consequence; but call their method, with a peculiar ease and confidence, *liberality of sentiment* and *freedom of inquiry*. But if those fine words are examined to the bottom, they will be found to merit another title, and will really appear to be only *looseness of principle* and *scepticism universal*. The first point they begin with in religion is—a *doubt* of God's truth in the Bible; forgetting that without this truth there is no religion at all, and that there either must be already such an infallible rule, or there never can be one. If the rule do exist, then it is their wisdom to follow it: But if it do not, then all the men in the world could not agree to compose one; and consequently all their pretended inquiries must end in uncertainty; if *that* can be called an *end*, which is *nothing*; or *that* can be good logic, which has no *conclusion*.—However, this *doubt* (say they) ought to be satisfied. And *who* is the judge, evidence, and counsel, in the matter? Their answer is, *human reason*, which after all, they must own, can judge nothing concerning spiritual existence. And yet the Bible deals chiefly in spiritual existence. If reason were even uncorrupt and undepraved, which it is not; it



could be no judge in this case, unless it were infinite and eternal; because here the determination is to be upon an infinite being, and upon eternal concerns. Of course, the *evidence* it can produce, or the *counsel* it might bring, being alike depraved, limited, and irregular, stand exactly in the same predicament. The fallacy of these people is; they presuppose, that all things are in doubt, and that therefore there is no such matter as truth revealed; and yet absurdly enough they hold that both these *conclusions* of their own are to be *believed*. That principle in man, which doubts, is, according to them, to procure evidence out of itself, in order to convert itself into a believing principle, or rather to frame a believer in nothing beyond it. The sea might just as soon make itself dry, the fire emit a cooling flame, or a man scoop up the ocean with a shell; as any of these can turn this Ethiopian unbelief into the fair complexion of holy faith. Their itch is to dispute every thing, and to believe nobody but themselves, who own at the same time, that they know nothing with precision. They are quite sure, that nothing is true, which is not agreeable to their own reason; and yet often this reason doth not agree *with itself* upon the most trifling subjects within its immediate scrutiny: But it pretends to be very exact, however, in the everlasting concerns above it. Thus our reasoners venture to go on, as though they were omniscient beings, who could see through all spiritual and abstracted nature, could comprize all that is to be known universally, and could determine upon the whole with perfect judgment and infallibility. They are sceptics towards God, but the most implicit believers in themselves. In this high sentiment, they determine upon what angels *veil their faces to behold*, with an air of importance and authority, and are not ashamed to conclude, that what they themselves know not, is and must be, therefore unknown. Their sentiments are indeed *liberal*, and their inquiries *free*; for they are by no means limited by the strait line of *truth*, but make copious excursions enough in the regions on either side of it. Truth is too low and fixed a subject for such unfettered speculatists, as disdain to take any settled foundation; but love to soar above all certain boundaries, and the narrow apprehensions of those pitiful mortals, who humbly believe in God: And so,

————— their sail-broad vans  
 They spread for flight, and in the surging *smoke*  
 Uplifted spurn the *ground*; thence many a league,  
 As in a *cloudy* chair, ascending ride  
 Audacious; but that seat soon falling, meet  
 A VAST FACILITY. —————

MILTON.

But, for people of this order, these imperfect essays were not designed. Written, as they are, for the most part, without any labored attention to method; they are calculated, principally, for those who receive the Bible as the truth of God, and who wish to be more truly acquainted with it as such; and for some others likewise, who, not weighing the sense of its words nor that analogy of principle which runs through the whole, have been led into perplexities, which the Bible does not contain in itself, but which have been brought to it by the false reasonings of its readers. That book, indeed, is a parable, and (according to Christ's own words) intended to be so: Consequently, it hath its mysteries, or, (if the world will call it by that name) its obscurities. It is no shallow composition, but contains the words and the mind of God. If men do not perfectly understand these *words*, it is no wonder: They do not understand the most obvious and most ordinary *works* of God.\* And it is the less to be wondered at, because it is expressly said, that none *can* understand the scriptures but *those to whom it is given*; and the very Apostles understood them, only according to that dispensation, Luke xxiv. 45. Of course it will follow, that none can understand them *farther* than it is given. This measure, or bound, also must rest entirely with Him, who imparts this understanding itself, which is a principle superior to human reason, though working upon and by it. Reason of itself cannot *determine* in spiritual things *what* are truths, but at most conceives only their *connexion* and *agreement*: But the gift of *spiritual understanding* is imparted, that reason might be *informed*, and from that information proceed, in a manner analogous to its nature, to combine, connect, or conclude, not its own ideas, but ideas from the word of God as the ground on which they are to be raised, and which the Spirit of God, as the agent, alone raises from that ground. The word itself doth not and cannot raise ideas truly spiritual and divine; as we may see in thousands who frequently read it, but to whom it is *a book sealed* impenetrably: Nor does the Spirit act but by the word, or in perfect concord with it. So that here is the strongest fence, on the one hand, against absurd or enthusiastic reveries, because the written word checks all fanciful excursions and all idle opinions; as, on the other hand, there is the fullest implication of

\* See this observation proved most demonstrably in that equally instructive and entertaining work, entitled, *An Essay on the first principles of Natural Philosophy*, by the Rev. William Jones; an author to whom the religious and philosophic world are greatly indebted for labors of much ingenuity and erudition.

the necessity of divine grace, to help the ignorance or check the infidelity of man. This grace is a gift, afforded according to the will of its author, and allotted and diversified with respect to the purposes of glory and salvation, which are to be brought forth in his people.—Proud reason quarrels with this; and yet without reason. *Grace* in all its parts or distinctions, whether of holiness, knowledge, faith, &c. is the *donation* of God, and a *free* donation, because it could not be earned by a creature. A creature might just as soon earn its own natural life, before it had life. It must *first* live, *then* act; and a man must have the grace or faculty for divine knowledge, *before* he can presume to know the things divine. 1 Cor. ii. 11. The ground of all human error is in the fall and apostacy of our nature from God: And yet men profess to think and act, as though they were *not fallen*. They advance upon this mistaken ground; and, consequently, the farther they push their conclusions, or speculations, upon divine subjects; the wider they are from the truth of God, and, it may be added, from the God of truth. Nor, till they are brought back to see this *origin* of their error, and are enabled to keep it constantly in sight; can they make any excursions, in which they do not stray.

The scriptures are entirely written upon this great idea of the fall. They keep it ever in view. All the terms, with relation to man, are formed upon this very principle; the combination of those terms into fuller detail amply expresses it; and the whole purpose of revelation proves, enforces, and answers it as a fact, which every one of us may feel within ourselves, and may see but too many evidences of in the world about us. Our restoration to God, and his names revealed to convey the means of that restoration, are increasing demonstrations of that truth, which it is both our duty to believe, and the way of our happiness to know. All its important evidence, taken together, will be found to generate this grand conclusion; *That fallen man can be recovered to GOD, only through the love of the FATHER, the redemption of the SON, and the power of the HOLY GHOST; THREE divine persons in ONE and the same GODHEAD.*

This truth is the basis of the Bible and consequently of all Christianity. Remove it; and they both fall utterly to the ground. God only could plan a work, which should glorify two such essential attributes as his own *justice* and *mercy*, in the salvation of sinners. Accordingly we read of an *everlasting covenant*, and a *counsel* of the Godhead for this end.—No creature could make

an atonement for his own sin, and much less for the innumerable sins of others: No creature could work out an *everlasting* righteousness and bring it in for the justification of even himself, and much less for the justification of others who might need it; since *all* he *could* do, it would be his *duty* to do, without remission, and to the continuance of his being. Having done this, he might justify *himself*; but not *others*. In this absence of all created help, we find, that Jehovah was to reconcile to Jehovah these helpless fallen creatures, that Jehovah became the Redeemer for this object, and that *Immanu-EL*, *God with us*, took that *name*, because he was to take our *nature*, in order to *suffer* in the behalf of his people, and to *fulfil* all righteousness for them.—It was impossible, that these creatures who are represented as *dead in trespasses and sins*, in respect to *spiritual* life; and *enemies* and *aliens* to God, in respect to their *desires* after it; should *change* themselves, *renew* their minds, *new-create* the frame of their spirits, and *transform themselves from darkness to light*, either by will, or power, or conception of their own. They were as incapable of all this, as a dead carcase is of restoring itself to life, or of performing its living functions: And the scriptures describe this to be exactly their case. Upon this very account, it was necessary, that the *author* of all life should *restore* it; and, accordingly, it is revealed, that *another* divine person, assuming the name of *Spirit*, is the very *Spirit of Life* for this purpose; that he testifies concerning Christ, as the *mediate* cause of removing all impediments and glorifying all attributes, in his life and death; and that he himself is the *Comforter*, in consequence, to *secure* every blessing to the redeemed, by *giving* them life, grace, holiness, and, in a word, by *sealing, teaching, guiding, and preparing* them, in the state below, for a sublime and everlasting inheritance.

Here we see a perfect accordance between divine revelation and the state of men, an unspeakable suitableness between the gracious offices of the divine persons and the wants of sinners, a just harmony in all the attributes of the Godhead and the everlasting salvation of souls. The whole of it is grounded upon facts which we know, and upon necessities which we feel; it rests upon evidence, which reason enjoys not, and doth not require, in other cases, even the evidence of good men in all ages; who were eye-witnesses, ear-witnesses and heart-witnesses, of what is delivered to us; who could have no temptation to impose, but who were called to die for their testimony, to convince us, that they did

not impose.\* And if, after all this, we think the matter to be still a subject of *free inquiry*, or of *uncertain* foundation, like a common speculation; we become like those fools, who, having a chart and compass and the testimony of seamen, that have seen what they relate concerning a distant country, very gravely throw them all over-board, and profoundly resolve that these are checks upon their *liberality of sentiment* and *free inquiry*, and that they will sail on, without these limitations, to explore an unknown world. The next news, we should expect to hear of such able pilots, would be, that they were cast away, or gone to fathom the profound below.

All the other doctrines of the gospel are links in this chain, and depend in perfect agreement upon each other. If one be taken away, it is no longer a *whole*; and its strength is virtually dissolved. The doctrine of the *divinity* of the Holy Spirit, for instance, is so capital a link, that, let it be once broken, the whole system of Christianity falls to the ground. The Bible will become untrue; and all that is contained in the Bible, a confused mass of idle principles, disjointed fables, and useless narrations. It is no wonder, therefore, that the enemy of souls should militate in all ages, very particularly, against this essential article of truth, and that where he could not absolutely deny, he should attempt to perplex, confound, and pollute it; so that, from this very pollution, he might gain a step, in some favorable time, to succeed farther against the article itself. It may not be altogether impertinent or unprofitable, to look back and see, how he has managed this matter in past ages; because it may in part help us to the apostolic lesson of not being *ignorant of Satan's devices*, and hence be the means of guarding against them. We will,

\* The reader will find this kind of argument, pursued with equal strength and elegance by a late noble author, who cannot be suspected of indulging an enthusiastic credulity. The *observations on the conversion of St. Paul*, written by the *first Lord Lyttleton*, contain an admirable defence of this out-work of Christianity. "Is it (says he) on account of the *mysteries* in the gospel that the *facts* are denied, though supported by evidence which in *all other* cases would be allowed to contain the clearest conviction, and cannot in *this* be rejected without reducing the mind to a state of absolute scepticism, and overturning those rules by which we judge of all evidence, and of the truth or credibility of all other facts? But this is plainly to give up the use of our understanding where we are able to use it most properly, in order to apply it to things of which it is not a competent judge. The motives and reasons, upon which divine wisdom may think proper to act, as well as the manner in which it acts, must often lie out of the reach of our understanding." This is reason "taught reason," and approved by divine revelation. *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord: for as the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Is. lv. 8, 9.

therefore, as briefly as possible, mention the chief of those dogmatists, who have either set themselves entirely against the Spirit's divinity, or treated it in a manner, which, though covertly, yet essentially undermined the doctrine.

The man, who fancied the Holy Ghost was to be *bought for money*, was the first upon record, since the Christian æra, who turned blasphemer against him. A fit instrument was Simon Magus for so foul a deed, and deserves to be placed at the head of the motley corps, who have enlisted themselves into the same service. To mention this poor wretch's assertions is to confute them. The chief of these were; that Simon himself was the true Messiah or Christ; that he appeared at Mount Sinai in the person of the Father; that he came in the reign of Tiberius in the form of the Son, and descended upon the Apostles, as fiery tongues, in the person of the Holy Ghost; that the world was not made by God, but by Angels; that there is no resurrection of the flesh; and that a promiscuous and unlimited commerce with women was a noble part of Christian liberty. Licentiousness of this sort is a common point of agreement for many heretical opinions. We shall only observe further of him, that he was contemporary with the Apostles, propagated his opinions in Samaria and Palestine, from whence they had a rapid flow, and that he was the common father of that prolific brood, which under the names of Sabellianism, Antitrinitarianism, Manichæism, &c. &c. &c. for a long time after, disgraced and troubled the Church. He was the first who broached the notion, that the names of *Father, Son, and Spirit*, belonged to the same numerical *person*, and, of course, that there really is no Trinity.

From this corrupt progenitor arose, in the next century, among many others who advanced all sorts of opinions and practised all kinds of impurities, Hermogenes and Praxeas. The first denied the Trinity, and asserted that matter was coæval with God. He was a *painter* by trade, and a practical Polygamist.\* This drew

\* It is an observation made by Jerom, and repeated by many others, that the principal Heresies, which ever disgraced religion and plagued the world, were begun, carried on, and ended, by the support of women, or for the sake of women. From the Nicolaitans in the revelation down to Bernard Ochin, who, soon after the reformation, set up the inexpedient and impracticable (not to say, licentious) doctrine of Polygamy; we might produce but too many instances to justify that observation. The mind of man is naturally inclined to pleasure; and when it finds no happiness in God, or hath lost its happiness in the things of God, it roves abroad (like the unclean spirit) after those objects, which are most adapted to the constitution and temper of its owner. It will easily find pleas for self-indulgence, and can even

upon him the sarcasm of Tertullian (as painting was then reckoned an improper profession for Christians), *tingit illicité, nubit assidue*; "he paints without law, and marries without end."—Praxeas carried on the opinion of Simon Magus, respecting the Trinity, charging all Christians, who worshipped the three persons in the Godhead, with the worship of three Gods. To him Tertullian opposed himself, with his uncommon abilities and tartness, and gives us a testimony thereby, that, in his time (which was about the year 190,) the Church expressly worshipped one God in *unity* of substance, power, and glory, and the *three persons of Father, Son, and Spirit, in that unity*.\* Praxeas in fact, seems to have been the immediate parent of what was afterwards called Sabellianism.

Noëtus of Smyrna, however, obtained the infamy of being immediate master to Sabellius, (and according to some of Praxeas himself)† and of inculcating the same opinions. He lived about the beginning of the third century. His disciple, Sabellius, being a man of greater talents and capacity, and asserting the same opinions, consequently, with more art and address, obtained them to be called after his name. He confounded the distinction of persons in the essence, asserting, that they were mere names of one and the same individual being, who suffered in the person of Christ, and who appeared in the descent upon the Apostles.—Hence his disciples were called Patripassians, because they maintained, that the Father endured all the agonies upon the cross. They also averred, that God was called *the Father* in Heaven, upon earth *the Son*, and, when he put forth his power in the creatures, *the Holy Ghost*.—We have already given, in the former volume, a short confutation of this error, which has a tendency to subvert every doctrine of the gospel.

Paul of Samosata, soon after Sabellius, though they differed in other points, agreed with him very nearly, if not entirely, upon the article of the Trinity. They both denied the *personality* in the Godhead. The principal difference between them was; Sabel-

fancy that this indulgence of the flesh is not unacceptable to God; though God himself hath enjoined the *crucifixion of the flesh, with its affections and lusts*, and though the indulgence of these hath a natural and direct tendency to draw the heart from God and *the things above*, and to fix it on the creatures and *on things beneath*. See 1 Cor. vii. 29. Gal. v. 24. Rom. xiii. 14. 2 Pet. ii. 18. *Delicatus es, Christiane, si et in sæculo voluptatem concupiscis; immò nimium stultus, si hoc existimas voluptatem*. Tertull. *de spect.*

\* Blackmore's *Summary of Christian Antiq.* Vol. i. p. 59. and many other authorities from ancient writers, in Spanh. *Theol. ober.* Vol. iii. p. 1216, &c.

† Spanh. *Hist. Christ.* sæc. iii. p. 748.

lius asserted, that the whole Godhead was in Christ; and this Paul, that the Saviour was a mere man, neither coëternal nor consubstantial with the Godhead. Both these men, as well as some of their late successors, endeavoured constantly to puzzle the cause, by confounding *the persons* with *the substance*, and by using these different terms for one and the same idea.

In the next century (i. e. about the year 317 or 320) sprang up the famous Arius, and drew away great multitudes after him. He neither wanted art, learning, nor ambition: And he employed these (as all other men do, who have not grace) to subserve his own views and passions. We need not, however, *dwell upon the man and his communication*; for this has been treated of by a variety of authors: It is sufficient for us to mark his particular error concerning the divinity of the Holy Spirit. As he denied that the Son was of the substance of the Father, or consubstantial with him, but was a creature *made out of nothing*, though before all other creatures; so he asserted, that the Holy Ghost was not God, but created or produced by the Son, and inferior in all respects to him, though employed by him in the work of creation. Thus, in his view, the Holy Spirit was the creature of a creature, or, in more modern language, the emanation of an emanation. Consequently, there was a time, when the Son and Holy Spirit had *no* existence, and a time, when, like the merest maggots, they *began* to exist. Those, who maintained these principles, were called (by a wonderful abuse of language) *true* Arians. There were many sects of them, who had the same common parent, but who distinguished themselves, however, from their brethren by a variety of names and opinions in this matter, in which they disagreed as well amongst themselves as with the orthodox. Hence, generally, after the names of their several leaders, they were called Aëtians, Eusebians, Eunomians,\* Anomœans, Eudoxians, Acacians, Semi-arians, and the like. The most prevailing sect of these, and the nearest to the orthodox, were the Semi-arians, who maintained that the Son was *ομοιουσιος*, but not *ομοουσιος*, i. e. that he was of *like* substance with the Father, but not of the *same* substance; that he was *like* the Father also in *will* and *operation*, but really *different* from him in *nature* or *essence*. The

\* See Eunomius's Confession of Faith in Cave's Hist. Lit. In this Confession, he says, "the Father begat the Son, not according to his own *substance*, but according to his *will*, and that, afterwards, *επισησεν*, he made the Holy Spirit by his own proper authority, and command, and yet by the energy and active power of the Son."—A little below, he calls the Holy Spirit—"the first and greatest of all the *works* of the only begotten."



same they believed, for the most part, concerning the Spirit. Consequently, they must hold, either, that there is but *one* person in the Godhead, called the Father, and so the Son and Spirit are absolutely *creatures*; or, that there are *three* Gods, of three *different* substances, who have only the relation of a *likeness* to each other. The wit of man cannot devise a medium between these two: And let a man take *either* of the two, he will be sure of equally contradicting the scriptures, and of finding himself, one time or other, in the wrong.

Photinus, Bishop of Sirmium, from whom came the Photinians, asserted (about 20 years after Arius) that Christ was a *mere man*, without any being till he was produced of the Virgin Mary, and that the Holy Spirit was neither God, nor a person in the Godhead. He also asserted, that the names of Father, Son, and Spirit, belonged to one and the same individual being, and that the same numerical person took those names only to signify some particular operations. In this opinion, he followed the Sabellians. He wrote elegantly and ably against all heresies but his own, and is said to have been a learned and eloquent man.

About the same time, lived also Macedonius, patriarch of Constantinople; a worthless character, and fit to oppose that gracious Spirit, whose divinity he denied, and whose influences (to say nothing of his principles,) his whole conduct proved, he never felt. He was one of those worldly priests, who aim at nothing but riches and rank, and who stick at nothing to obtain them. If men were to follow Jerom's advice, they would avoid such clerical tradesmen, and scandalous money-hunters, as they would the pestilence.\* Macedonius was at first a Semi-arian, asserting that

\* *Negotiatorem clericum & ex inopie divitem, ex ignobili gloriosum, quasi quaedam pestem fuge.—Ignominia omnium sacerdotum est, propriis studere divitiis.—Delicatus magister est, qui pleno ventre de jejuniiis disputat. Sacerdotis Christi os, mens, manusque concordent.* Hieron. ad Nepot.—But Christianity is "improved" (say some) since the days of Jerom. Perhaps others will ask, *In what?* And, perhaps, others again will take up the complaint, sung 400 years ago, as not quite inapplicable now:

*A maximis ad minimum,  
Vix habet unum filium  
Religio tam sacrum,  
Qui purè propter Dominum.  
Religionis habitum  
Portare videatur.*

This doggrel, to the extent of 51 stanzas, is entitled *Planctus Bernhardi Westerrœdis*; and, if it have no other merit, it has the merit of being a witness for truth in that dark age, the 14th century. It is mentioned by Fl. Illyricus the author of the *Catalogus testium veritatis*, and preserved at full length by Baselius in his *Sulpitius Belgicus*. p. 150.

the Son was of the *like* substance, but not of the *same* substance with the Father, and yet not a *creature*. When the *pure* Arians, who advanced him to the chair upon the murder of *Paul the good*, found he was not *purely* their own; they drove him from it: And then, to draw away disciples after himself, he set up a new heresy, or rather new modelled an old one. Agreeing with the Semi-arians concerning the Son, he opposed himself particularly against the Holy Ghost, and denied him to be God, or a divine person, or even to have any person or substance at all; maintaining, that the Spirit was a mere created energy, imparted to the Son, and divided among all other animated beings. Hence he and his followers were called Πνευμαλομαχοι, *Fighters against the Spirit*; for the censure of whom the second general council was convened at Constantinople, in the year 384; as the first general council was at Nice, 60 years before, for the condemnation of Arius.\*

In the fifth century, another sect was raised against the doctrine of the Trinity, which proceeded, in a great measure, upon the notion of Sabellius. The professors of it were called Theopaschitæ, “God sufferers,” or Fullonians, from Peter Fullo, Bishop of Antioch, their leader. This tribe asserted, that the whole Trinity suffered upon the Cross; and therefore they addressed the *trisagion* or doxology to Christ alone, as the representative of the Trinity, or the man in whom the Trinity was. With respect to the person of Christ, they came very near, if not quite to the Eutychians or Monophysitæ who so confounded his two natures, as to represent the *human* to be absorbed in the *divine*, and to lose thereby its own proper existence.

About the end of the same century, or (according to Cave) at the very beginning of the next, appeared the celebrated Johannes Grammaticus, called Philoponus from his constant study; a man

\* See the *Sum* of these and other councils, digested by Bartholomew Carranza, formerly Archbishop of Toledo. Of his *work*, it may be said, that it will give a Protestant reader a sufficient idea of the several councils; and of the *author*, that being suspected of inclining to Protestantism, he was imprisoned by the inquisition, and his archiepiscopal revenues were confiscated to the king of Spain. By appealing, indeed, to Rome, he saved his life, but not his see: for he died many years after in a private station. Thuanus says, he knew him; and that his learning, integrity, and the holiness of his conversation were such, as made him worthy of his dignity. See Sleidan's *Com. App.* p. 48. The reader, however, should be cautioned of a flagrant error, committed in the acts of the Laodicean council, c. 35. which the Papists have entitled, *De his qui angulos colunt*, instead of *angelos*, and which would otherwise have directly opposed their creature-worship. Carranza has followed them in his *Sum*, printed in 1552. Theodore exposed this mistake according to *Corar. v. opera.* p. 505

who for his shining talents as a philosopher was certainly respectable, but who, too little like a professor of Christianity, abused those talents to the mean purpose of his own applause. "Tertullian (says Cave) long ago justly observed, that philosophers in the Church have, for the most part, been the Patriarchs of heretics." He had studied Aristotle and Plato; and, like Origen with many others, he endeavoured to corrupt the simplicity of divine truth, with the dogmas of the schools and the language of error. Thus, the scholar is as liable to be befooled in divine things by the subtleties and jargon of human science, as the unlettered man by the wrong apprehensions of ignorance. Neither the one nor the other can be safe, one moment, from delusion, but by a wisdom and direction very superior to their own. Philoponus was cheated by his philosophy to believe, that *person* and *nature* are the same, which was the common confusion of the heretical depra- vers of the Trinity; and he was hardened in that cheat by a concern for his own glory, and the pride of not yielding to an adversary. His heresy consisted in maintaining, that in the Trinity there are *three substances* or *natures*; and yet he inconsistently enough urged, that there are not *three Deities* or *Gods*. But this consequence is unavoidable upon his hypothesis; and, therefore, he and his abettors were not unjustly called Tritheists, or maintainers of the doctrine of *three Gods*.

Joachimus of Calabria, an Abbot, who flourished about the year 1200, was condemned by the Lateran council, 1215, for accusing Peter Lombard, the famous master of the sentences, of asserting that there was a *quaternity* rather than a Trinity in the Godhead; because, beside the three persons, of whom one begat, the other was begotten, and the third proceeding, he held that there was a *common essence*, neither begetting nor begotten, nor proceeding, and so was distinct from the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.\*

Nothing more, respecting the Trinity, appears to have been started in this dark and barbarous age of the world, immersed in Romish superstition and ruled by Papal tyranny; till Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica, about the year 1354, was accused of believing in two Gods, because he distinguished between the *divine essence*, and its *energy* or *act*. Palamas was a Greek, and hated by some Latin monks, who determined to find, or say, whatever they could against him. Men, thus happily disposed, may possibly obtain credit among themselves; but it must

\* Spanb. *Hist. Christ.* sec. xiii. p. 1690. Carranzæ *Summe Concil.* fol. 421.

be through an excess of liberality indeed, if they gain any thing better than pity elsewhere.

With the much-needed reformation came in a world of errors, some of which arose from the most glaring impiety and licentiousness. There seemed an endeavor among many, not only to shake off those fetters which had been so long unjustly imposed upon men's consciences, but to shew that men's consciences were to have no bounds at all, and that the word of God himself, instead of being a test for all men, was now to submit to those tribunals of reason or fancy, which every man might presume he had a right to set up for himself. And as most of these judges had a law of their own, or made one for themselves; it is not at all miraculous, that there have been almost as many determinations, as men, and that, upon this ground, no two men should have thought alike. They not only invented, therefore, a thousand new opinions, but industriously revived many of the old, which either suited, or, by lopping off some excrescences, might be made to suit, the genius of the times. The Papists had covered every thing with mystery, and crammed it down by force: In opposition to all this, which was bad and impious enough, there arose a set of men, who, pretending to join with the wise and pious reformers, and taking advantage of the general liberty, endeavored to subvert the Christian religion itself, by laying it down for a principle, that all true religion was not mysterious, or that there ought to be no mystery in religion, or that whatever was mysterious in religion was altogether wrong. This foundation turns the Bible out of its place, and sets up reason, the reason of *every man*, and consequently the *different* and *jarring* reasons\* of all men, to be the infallible judge in spiritual controversies. Under this usurpation of reason, it is no wonder that the Mosaic account of the creation, the fall of man, the prophetic rites of the Jews (for all their institutions had the voice of prophecy), the doctrine of the trinity, the incarnation of Christ, the satisfaction and atonement of Christ, the descent of the Holy Ghost, his communion with his people, and the other doctrines of the gospel dependent upon these, were altogether exploded. Reason could not understand these things; "therefore, says reason, they are false." If faith would urge, "that they are *the things of God, which no man can know but the Spirit of God*;" reason answers, "I will take no evidence but what comes

\* Austin quotes from Varro, that there were no less than 288 different opinions of philosophers upon *one* single question. "What is the *summum bonum*, or chief good?" *De Civitate Dei*. l. xix. c. i.

to my own proper sense, and will believe the attestation of no man, not even of God himself, unless the same miracles are set before me, as are stated to have happened unto them." Thus reason very modestly proposes that God shall continue to interrupt the laws of nature constantly (for every man to the end of time may plead this) for her satisfaction; and then she will do him the honor to believe that the Almighty can tell no lie; but, not before. She will upon this condescend to own, that possibly He may be right in some other assertions concerning his own divine nature, and that the gospel, though it may be rather mysterious to her after all, shall have leave to be credited a little in the world. But as God never meant, that his gospel should be a subject of depraved *reason*, but of gracious *faith*; there is no hope, but that, as it ever hath been, so it ever will be, *a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to them, who stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.* 1 Pet. ii. 8. — "I cannot understand all this," says reason: To which the best answer is; "it would not be *true*, if you could. You perfectly understand nothing: How then can you presume to comprehend the *Infinite Cause* of all things?"\*

\* If it be objected, that this method of disclaiming the agency of reason in religious matters, tends to open a door to enthusiasm and all manner of nonsense; it may be answered liberally, that to the religion of Jesus Christ there can properly belong no nonsense, which is a ridiculous repugnance to truth, nor enthusiasm, which is a serious abuse of it; so that a wild profession is not a true one. And with respect to the use of reason, it being an excellent gift of God originally perfect in our nature, it is to be regarded, though now depraved, in all things but those, which are above its powers, as all divine things most certainly are; and on these therefore it would be *irrational* to employ it. As this objection is of much importance, it may be worth while to give it a short consideration.

*The case of ENTHUSIASM briefly stated.*

That there is an intercourse upon the business of salvation between the Spirit of God and the spirits of men, really, powerfully, and effectually, cannot be doubted or denied by those, who will receive the authority of the following scriptures among many others:

John iii. 5. vii. 39. Rom. viii. 2, 9, 11, 16, 26. Gal. iii. 14. Eph. ii. 18. 1 Pet. iv. 14. John xvi. 13. Rom. xiv. 17. 1 Cor. vi. 19. Titus iii. 5.

What these scriptures (which are the wise revelation of God) *promise, testify, and explain*, as the undoubted privilege of all real Christians, cannot therefore be nonsense, nor yet what is usually understood by enthusiasm. This last term then, in its common evil sense, must be applied to something very different from the *grace of God* or (what is the same) the *operation of his Holy Spirit*, enlivening, enlightening, and enabling the souls of his people; or, while we pass strictures upon men and their errors, we may extend our censures unwarily to the truth of God itself. The real Christian "does not only believe (says Mr. Addison, who will not be suspected for a fanciful devotee) but feels there is a Deity. He has *actual sensations* of him; his *experience concurs with his reason*; he sees him more and more in all his intercourses with him, and even in this life almost loses his faith in conviction. In short,

Reason has fled from this humiliating ground, and set up a religion, or rather a variety in religion, of her own. We will only take the chief of those into view, which most nearly relate to the subject of these essays; only premising, that all the sects, we

the person who has a firm trust on the Supreme Being is powerful in *his* power, wise by *his* wisdom, happy by *his* happiness." *Spect.* No. 465 and 441. Will any man call this enthusiasm?

It is right to ask then; What is properly enthusiasm, that dangerous evil, against which we hear so loud an alarm in the world?

It cannot be gross vice or immorality; for, generally, vicious and immoral people exclaim vehemently against it. Nor is it carelessness or unconcern about salvation; because the more indifferent the people are in that respect, the more violent is their outcry upon the matter. Is it then an enthusiasm in the pursuit of the world's pleasures, riches, and honors? In the chase of its gaieties, parade, and professions? Certainly not; for this is by no means an enthusiasm condemned, but, if successful especially, admired, followed, and crowned with applause. Nobody puts a stigma upon people with these accomplishments, nor believes them to merit the odious title of enthusiastic creatures, if even life, health, and substance are wholly laid out upon these objects.

On the other hand (as we have seen) the impressions of divine grace, and all their "sober certainty of waking bliss," must be above the imputation of any ill name; or God and his truth, however impossible in fact, will seem to fall under condemnation.

Yet this mark of infamy is placed only upon religious professors. 'Tis a something in religion which is thus branded; and if it deserve the brand, let it for ever wear the shame. But it can only deserve this, by being contrary to the express and written word of God.

Agreeably to this principle; the true definition of religious enthusiasm (not regarding the misapplication, but the commonly received sense, of the term) may be somewhat like the following:

An elevation, conceit, effusion or inflation only of the human mind, under the impulse of which it pretends to think or act in religious concerns, without having or without regarding the proper warrant of God's written word, which, being fixed in its canon and closed in its prophecy, is now the only settled rule, law, and testimony, by which all the circumstances of religion are to be proved and determined.

If this definition be correct, we shall find the censure of enthusiasm to fall upon two sorts of persons. First, those who pretend to divine inspiration, while they are only warmed by a deluded fancy, *above* the word of God and *beyond* its sanctions: And, secondly, those who, rejecting all supernatural aids or (what is the same) the particular efficacy and omnipotence of those aids, are so *vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind, as not to hold the head* [Christ] for spiritual *nourishment* or erudition, and by *following their own spirits* venture to *intrude into those things which they have not seen*; and therefore proceed *without the word and against* it. Both of these act upon the same common principle, however different the effect; their own natural and corrupted mind being ruler and guide in both. For, as the one sort is borne aloft by a wild and unbounded imagination, the other blindly follows a corrupt and incapable reason; which two are different powers indeed, but are however powers alike of the same human understanding.

Upon this view of the case then, it may appear, that the depraved energy of fallen man, if it attempt divine things without assistance or without rule, is urged by that arrogance or inflation of an undisciplined soul, which deserves the name, because it bears the nature of enthusiasm; and consequently that those are the religious enthusiasts, who presume to soar above God's revealed wisdom in his word, or pretend to obtain divine knowledge without

shall mention, pretend a regard to the scripture, so far at least as it can be wrested to support their respective opinions. As to those, who are such masters in reason, as to reject the Bible altogether; it would be too foreign to our matter, and require too long a discussion for this place, even if it had not been sufficiently done already, which indeed it has been by Dr. Leland and by several others.

Some of the German Anabaptists, among other points, thought perversely of the Trinity, holding the three *persons* to be three *essences*, different from each other in nature, power, and glory, and maintaining that their unity consisted only in that kind of *will* and *consent* of operation, which may subsist between two or three kings, or did subsist among the disciples of Jesus. They also held the same opinions with Marcion, Cerdon, &c. concerning the person of Christ and respecting the divinity of the Holy Spirit. They took their composition from Arianism and the enthusiasms of some ancient heretics, and wrought it up, with some wild conceptions of their own, for a new sect or sects, to which they gave a new denomination. It is right, however, to say, that the northern Anabaptists in Germany, and the society called Baptists in England, were always people of a different stamp; the latter of whom are for the most part of the same principles with our Congregationalists or Independents, excepting in the article of *baptism*.

About the same time with these Anabaptists, the famous Michael Servetus made his appearance, for the trouble and disgrace of the reformation. It is an old remark; "Where God founds a church, the Devil will build a chapel." It was permitted to be so in this case; and the reason of it may be seen in 1 Cor. xi. 19. The Devil chuses his instruments, for the most part, with his usual sagacity: and Servetus in respect to the abilities of his mind and to his literary attainments, was qualified to do honor to a better patron. Like his master, he was indefatigable, and *went to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it*. He

divine teaching, and to act and determine in spiritual things by the strength of their own weak and incompetent faculties.

Nothing has been said here of diabolical impressions, because, whatever they may act upon the human mind, they so act according to the mode of its corruptions and depravities, that the result can only be the same abuse or contradiction of the revealed will of God, and therefore must merit no other name.

In confirmation of these sentiments, the reader is requested attentively to compare the following scriptures.—Isa. viii. 20. John viii. 47. 1 John ii. 5. Matth. xxiv. 25. 1 Cor. ii. 11, &c. iii. 16. Eph. ii. 18. Phil. iii. 3. 1 John iv. 13. Jude 19. Luke xxvi. 45. John xv. 5.

wrote much, as well as travelled much, and took uncommon pains to disseminate his opinions, or rather the opinions of Paul of Samosata, which he improved in their error. He opposed the doctrine of the Trinity with the utmost virulence, and led the way for the Socinians; upon which account, perhaps, it is, they are so exceedingly zealous to defend his reputation. Spanheim, who at least was as likely to know correctly about him as they, informs us, that he was *homo ad omnem improbitatem effectus*, "a man framed for all sorts of wickedness."\* Yet this unhappy man could sit down to correct proofs of a Latin Bible, printed at Lyons, and to write a preface and marginal notes for it, *after* the declaration of his principles. He went farther: for he entitled one of his books, *the Restitution of Christianity*; though it tends to sap the very foundation of all Christianity. With this conduct he pretended to believe, that the Bible was a divine revelation: and yet he wrote many things in direct contradiction to it. He followed his own ingenuity, which is generally allowed to have been great; and this seems to have misled him in warping the scriptures to a pre-conceived system, which he maintained with such an intemperance of language and heat of spirit, as certainly could give neither himself nor his opinions any weight or value. He was a metaphysician, and thought to comprehend by *reason*, what only is delivered to the Church as an article of *faith*. No natural man can endure this *hidden wisdom of God* (as the Apostle calls it); nor even allow it to be wisdom at all, *because* hidden from him. Servetus deserves to be placed at the head of modern Anti-trinitarians, and may be esteemed the wretched martyr of a bad cause. The putting him to death, however, cannot well be justified, if it was adjudged *only* for his heterodox principles; and serves to shew in that case, that good men, left to the passions of their own corrupt hearts, are capable of doing very ill things.

Soon after Servetus the Spaniard, Valentinus Gentilis an Italian, newly vamped up the opinion of John Grammaticus or Philoponus, and contended, in opposition to the Unitarians, that there were *three* eternal Spirits, numerically different, and different in degree. This was Tritheism, or the opinion of three Gods, with a witness. Yet he found followers, and especially in Poland and Transylvania. These followers, aiming to improve their master's opinions carried their refinements so far, as to re-

\* *Misc. Sacr. Ant. Lib. x. col. 1544.* See to the same effect, Melch. Adam. *in vit. Calvini.* p. 89



produce the different degrees of Arianism and Socinianism, which from that time to this, have so eminently edified the world in all things but one—the true knowledge of God, by a life of faith and communion with him. But this, according to *them*, is a mere error, in religion; and, on the other hand, according to the Bible, all religion, which does not end in this, is mere delusion.—These are wide extremes; and the Bible must be cut up and framed anew, before they can be reconciled.

In this first age also of the reformation, arose the famous Lælius Socinus, an Italian of family at Sienna, and his memorable nephew Faustus. The uncle was, according to Spanheim, a consociate with Bernard Ochin, with Gentilis abovementioned, and several others, to the number of forty in the whole, in the Venetian territory. These people being for the most part men of acknowledged abilities with respect to human attainments, set up and propagated, by combining the old heresies of Paul of Samosata, of Photinus, of Pelagius, and in some degree of Arius, a new and famous heresy, which, from the Socini its principal founders, is now well known by the name of Socinianism. From their Racovian school in Poland, this error has spread itself, and particularly in the countries professing Protestantism, through all Europe. It is (among the *pure* Socinians at least) not many removes from Mahomedism; insomuch, that one Adam Neuser, a German theologist of the Socinian order, openly espoused the Turkish religion, was circumcised at Constantinople, and pressed his example upon his brethren; which he might, not very inconsistently, do; the ground-work of the two religions being pretty much alike. For though (as it hath been observed)\* not one example can be produced of a Turk turning Christian, or to any other religion; yet for a Socinian, who renounces that distinguishing tenet of Christianity, the divinity of Christ and the Spirit, to commence Mahometan, is rather an easy than a violent transition. And there have been people among us of the Socinian leaven, who have tacitly acknowledged this, by proposing a formal renunciation of the doctrine of the Trinity, in order to win the Turks, “who, (as one pleasantly says) pray five times a day that they may never become Christians.” Perhaps some of them would think it rather hard, if they were obliged to pray half so often, that they might never become Turks.

After the Socini, uncle and nephew, the most considerable abettors of this opinion abroad have been Ostorodfus, Crellius,

\* Ives's *Travels through Persia*, p. 318.

Smalcius, Volkelius, Conrad Vorstius, &c. The names at home are too numerous to be mentioned; and it might seem likewise invidious to mention them. Suffice it therefore to add, that these great masters of reason have been very well answered by several English and foreign divines; among the former of whom Dr. Jonathan Edwards, whose *Preservative against Socinianism* might be recommended to an English reader, was none of the least.

So much has been said about *reason* in religion of late years, that one would almost think, its panegyrists had made a new discovery, or that it was a new creation dropped from the clouds. The whole discourse of some men, in this age, turns entirely in favour of *rational religion*, as though this kind of religion was either a new thing, or (what seems most likely to be the opinion of its advocates) the Christian religion was never found rational before. And so because the doctrines of Grace have been abused by fanatics and hypocrites; they think it impossible to go too far into the opposite extreme: and hence they deny grace and its operations all together. High encomiums are raised therefore, at present, upon people of *cool piety*, and *moderate devotion*; which terms are not to be quarrelled with, if used in a true sense: but, when they are employed to cover laxness of principle and formality in religion, one cannot help saying, that the piety of such men is *cool* enough indeed, chilling cold, without warmth of love either to God or man. Their devotions will certainly be very *moderate* upon this ground; and there is no sort of fear, that they should happen to be over-strained. Of this *reasonable piety* of the age, it may be said, without breach of charity, because it is a melancholy truth, that it is not founded upon the word of God, nor supported by the grace of God, nor effected to the glory of God. It is a religion of mere philosophy or ethics, in all respects independent of, and in some contradictory to, the religion of Jesus Christ. Dry and speculative both in form and matter, it has no principle to mend the heart, no power to influence the life. And, as this is evidently, from the sentiments and practice of its professors, the character of our modern *rational religion*; we may well wish for the *ancient faith* to revive again, and to resume its former credit and operation in the world.

And what is this *reason*, of which we hear so much applause, and see so little benefit?—It may not be amiss to consider.

As God creates only what is good; so reason, before the fall, was pure and perfect reason, and adequate to its proper objects. Reason is that faculty in the intellect of man, which combines

ideas, and, from their combination, concludes their due result : and, if the ideas are certain and conclusive, the deductions will be the same. This faculty in man, at its first creation, had none but right objects for its exercise ; and it had a perfect and true power to form and collect ideas from those objects, and to obtain just conclusions by them. There was then no cloud thrown over the objects, and no darkness in the faculty, which was to be employed about them ; but they perfectly corresponded with each other, and led all the powers of the soul into truth. This happy state of reason consisted, not only in the purity and justness of its formation, but in its constant communion with Him, who is uncreated rectitude, and who carried it on consentaneously with his unerring mind, and pointed it to himself as to its final object or end.

Upon the fall, this beautiful scene of light, truth, and peace, immediately changed. *Reason* now flowed from a dark, depraved, and agitated intellect ; and, of course, her ratiocinations were no longer carried on, either with God, through God, or to God. Having forfeited communion with him, and, insensible of the greatness of that benefit, boldly owning no assistances from him ; it preposterously endeavours to collect bright ideas of spiritual things from a benighted world of matter, and to form certain and exact conclusions of truth without correspondence with the God of truth. It is so blind, that it doth not know, that its faculty has lost its original certainty, and that the mind and every thing about it is shut up in a *darkness that may be felt*. It is often at a loss upon the most trifling earthly subjects, about its own powers and existence, and clashes with itself in each individual, and with its own operations in other men. All the debates and controversies in the world prove the weakness and insufficiency, and from thence the fall, of reason. In affairs where men have no other guide, and lawfully appeal to reason, they often differ strangely, and rather guess at, than produce, right conclusions. In this humiliating condition, however, reason rejects the very notion of its impotence and depravity, though proved by every circumstance of natural, moral, and intellectual evil ; and ventures to act from itself, concerning divine affairs, in a manner, which it ought not to do, and certainly would not do, if it were not depraved. All the other faculties became partakers of this degeneracy of the mind. The passions and affections fell into disorder, quarrelled at once with the rule of righteousness, and with each other. They now had no system but self ; and self was

too much at variance to keep up a system. Each appetite of the body, each passion of the soul, no longer adverting to the particular end for which it was created, the good of the whole man and the Creator's glory; sought its own immediate gratification, and gave rise to those jars and conflicts, which every one feels within him. But, as reason is the appointed natural guide to the attainment of whatever can be possessed of this world by body or mind; each *appetite* or *passion* makes its addresses to reason, and tempts it to become its advocate, wrestles with it to prevail, and promises a truce to the conflict within upon granting its terms. Hence, according to the respective *predominancy* of each particular affection, enfeebled reason becomes a dupe, and warps all its conclusions to the service of the reigning tyrant within.—Thus, the man, whose *first* appetite is *ambition*, mistaking the object of true and lasting glory, which is God, lays out all the powers of his reason to subserve that ambition in the aggrandizement of self. Of this Machiavel's writings give us a monstrous proof, where reason is prostituted to work into system all the selfishness and horrors of the most restless ambition.—Thus, the man of *avarice*, having lost the knowledge of the true riches, endeavours to gratify his lust of wealth, by forming plans to scrape up all the perishing trash within his grasp upon earth.—Thus, the man of *shew* or *pride*, ignorant of the beauty of holiness or spiritual perfection, strives to satisfy his passion for ornament and splendor, by devising modes to adorn a poor corruptible body, and by adding his share of support to the same gaudy fashions in the rest of the world.—Thus, the man, whose desire turns upon *curiosity* or *knowledge* (laudable as that desire is above most others), yet, having none at all for true erudition or a divine tutor, pursues the shadow of human learning for substantial wisdom, and often imagines *that* to be true *science*, which is all *opposition* in itself, and which at the best is but *falsely so called*—Thus, the man of *lust*, who is by many degrees nearer the brutes of the creation, forgetting the chaste affection, which God gave to his nature, for his own comfort, for the comfort of one amiable help-mate endeared by every tie of the most unreserved society, and for the general welfare and increase of mankind; wanders, in direct opposition to this elegant as well as benevolent harmony, from female to female, for the indulgence of a sensuality, in which goats and dogs are his rivals, and in which he is scarce on a level with them. The same brutal lust will prostitute the wretch's *reason* to contend for this,

as it hath done (and with great learning too)\* in books of the vilest obscenity; or if it cannot so far violate reason, through some adventitious checks, as to constrain her, like an audacious strumpet, to justify indiscriminate or unlimited amours; it will urge her to become advocate at least for some further license, than the marriage of *pairs* can allow. Reason may shrink for a while, and plead *inexpediencie*, and from thence that the practice cannot be *natural*, and then further, that, consequently, it could not be instituted by the *God of nature*: But strong lust will bring weak reason down, and not only so, but turn the Bible itself into a shop for licentious wares, and find drugs in it to provoke and stimulate appetites, which God revealed it from Heaven to correct and subdue. In this prostitution of religion, lust will proceed to compel reason to urge, from the condemned *hardness* of some men's *hearts*, or from an ancient practice which doth not apply to any Christian society in the world, the establishment of a commerce, which would overturn and dissolve all religious, civil, and domestic oeconomies, and, from a *masked* battery, let loose the rakes of the earth, like Romans upon Sabines, to reduce the worth and comfort, or to make a *prey* of woman-kind.† Lust, the vilest lust, shall be the spur and the spring of these excogitations; while reason and the scripture shall be dragged forth, like two pimps, to procure for or defend emotions, with which reason (depraved as she is) has nothing to do, and which the scripture, *untortured*, in the very end and design of it, expressly condemns.— Thus, also, the Atheist having lost sight of God, suborns his reason to deny his very being, and, like the ostrich hiding his head in

\* The author is sorry to stain his page, in evidence of this assertion, with the names of Peter Arcin, Sanchez the Jesuit, and the truly infamous Adrian Beverland; all men of fine parts and learning, but who abused them (like the wits of Charles the second's court) to the most brutal and indecent purposes.

† Bernard Ochin was the first Protestant, who wrote in defence of Polygamy, and was well answered by Beza. In the last century, several authors appeared to justify this practice, both in Germany and England, some anonymously, and others under fictitious names, who were answered abroad by the elder Spanheim in his *Dubia Evangelica*, Vol. II. by Johannes Musæus, in a Latin dissertation; by Walter Schluter, chaplain to the king of Denmark, in the German tongue; and by the learned professor Meyer, in his book *de uxore Christianâ*, which Spanheim the son highly commends in his *Theol. Oper.* P. ii. col. 1006. Putting religion out of the question, Sallust, an Heathen historian, lewd as he was, gives, in his concise style, sufficient argument against the practice from *reason* alone. Speaking of the Polygamy, which obtained amongst the ancient Moors and Numidians, he adds, *Singuli pro opibus, quisque quamplurimas uxores; denas alii, alii plures habent; sed reges eò amplius. Ita animus multitudine distractitur: nullus pro socia obtinet: pariter omnes vitæ sunt.* Bell. Jugurth

a bush, fancies that, because he cannot see his Maker, his Maker doth not behold him. One might enumerate many other particulars, in which men argue *from* or *for* their vices; and, because reason is corrupted and employed in their aid, they very correctly call the clamors of their passions and appetites the voice of *reason* itself.—From all this, we may see what reason is, in our present fallen state; that, instead of being luminous as at first, it is dark and degraded; and, instead of being free to command all righteousness to the animal frame, it is become a slave to those mean and sordid appetites, which sin corrupted, and which, for sin, must perish in the grave. From hence too we may see one great cause of all human error even upon the natural objects, and what mistakes must necessarily arise, when this principle is suffered to come in, as a rule or criterion in spiritual things. Surely, that, which is now become a false medium for vision, is very ill qualified to correct our sight. Who could have believed, but for the existence of the fact, that this glass of reason should have refracted such different colours as Socinianism, Arianism, Tritheism, Sabellianism, and Deism, from the same ray of pure and uncorrupted light? And yet this is the case; as perhaps the following considerations may shew.

The principal ground, for instance, of the Socinian error consists in this one point—the submitting of the Bible to what they suppose to be reason, instead of submitting this reason to the revelation of God in the Bible. In this respect, they are but one remove from the Deists, who, from the pretended dictates of this imperfect and depraved principle, reject all revelation together. The Socinians act a more uncandid and inconsistent part; for, while they profess to receive the Bible as the truth of God, they reject those most distinguishing principles, on which the whole of the Bible stands, and without which it is indeed that composition of absurdities, which it is for the interest of some men that it should be. To say, that the Bible is the truth of God, which must be certitude itself as such, and yet to deny its peculiar doctrines, because poor fallible worms cannot measure or bring them down to the full comprehension of their faculties; is a bold contradiction in itself, and just as absurd as the conduct of that man would be, who should refuse to receive food as food, merely because he cannot explain *how* it is so. If reason could explain any one thing in the world, there might be the more pretence for all this *wisdom above what is written*: But as no man can unravel the multifarious mysteries in nature, and yet allows their existence;

it becomes the more inexcusable in any, who receive God's word *as such*, to quarrel with its doctrines, only because their little limited reason cannot define them. Their reason, in this place, dwindles into *opinion*, because the objects are out of its reach ; and stand in the same predicament with those conjectures of philosophers who form kingdoms in the moon, and raise states and empires in all the planetary worlds about them. Christianity has indeed but very little obligation to many of those divines, who, under color of making the religion of Jesus Christ (what they are pleased to term) *reasonable*, have given up the most essential doctrines of that religion, purely because their reason could not account for them, forgetting, that the objects of faith cannot be the objects of reason, and consequently not subject to reason. One should have thought, that the first question to be asked by these cogent reasoners would have been ; " Hath God *said* this ? Is this *his truth* ?"—If it *be* so (as most of them have conceded) ; there is an end of all controversy, and there should be an end of all doubt ; *because God cannot lie*.—If it *be not* so ; then, again, there is at once an end of the whole matter ; for all the mere reasonings in the world cannot prove the Bible to be true, and for this plain reason ; because all the doctrinal parts of it, relating to God and the world of Spirits, are not the invention nor the present objects of the reasoning faculty. A snail or a fly might as justly commence mathematician, pretend to write down the order of things in the universe, and dictate lectures of instruction to the intellect of man.

What have been the *effects* of this potent reason in the Socinian world ?—A train of doctrines, which invalidate all revelation. They have passed a rubicon (as one expresses it) and may dispute either for the *Talmud* or *Koran*.\* In the first place, they will not allow, that God has given a true account of *himself*, nor of *Christ*, nor of *man*, nor of *Heaven*, nor of *Hell*. For, they deny, that there are persons in the Godhead, and assert that other beings may properly have the name of Jehovah ; though God says,

\* Huls. *Theol. Jud.* in præf. See also, concerning the Socinian practices and opinions, Jones's *Letter to the common People*, annexed to his 3d edition of *The Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity* ; a book, which cannot be too much diffused or read by the common people at this time, when all sorts of errors, both religious and political, have been employed, with art and strength united, to overturn the constitution both in Church and State. It is the interest even of all *sound* dissenters to oppose schemes and endeavors, which are altogether formed against the very foundations of Christianity, and, under the pretence of universal Liberty, can only introduce universal licentiousness and infidelity.

*his name only is Jehovah*, and hath declared a plurality in his essence. They maintain, that Christ was a mere man, without any existence before the Virgin Mary; though Christ himself says, that he had the *glory with the Father before the world was*.— From this daring blasphemy against his person arise twenty other impious dogmas concerning his work, which they assert to be merely human, without any satisfaction for sin, without any merit for righteousness, or without any other consequence than as a mere pattern, like the example of any other moral man. Their philosophy too allows the strange opinion, that souls sleep in the dust, perhaps die with the body; and rise again (if evil) not to be tormented for ever, but for a space of time proportionate to its sin. Thus they have invented a method of quenching what Christ calls unquenchable and everlasting fire, and of putting an end to that gnawing worm, which he declares shall never die. Lastly, they roundly affirm, that the Holy Spirit is no person, and consequently not God. Sometimes they inform us, that he is the *gospel* itself, in which they concur with the Antinomians; or at best, some accidental gift, or virtue, or emanation from the Deity, for some particular purpose, which being accomplished, it ceases to be. Those of them, who do allow the Holy Spirit to be a person (for these masters of reason differ wonderfully in their very correct reasonings upon this subject,) affirm however, that he is a mere *creature*, of a nature heterogeneous to the divine, a prince of the Angels, or the whole mass of angelic spirits together. How reason discovered all this, it is hard to conceive; but with some any thing will do, which may degrade the eternal Spirit from his proper divinity. After such clear accounts respecting his person, his *offices* in the Bible are, without doubt, most exactly handled. Accordingly, they inform us, that original sin and grace, and election and justification, and sanctification, are a parcel of wild chimeras fit only for madmen and fools. Hence, the comforts of the Spirit, promised in scripture, and many other spiritual blessings to be received even in this world, are all *old wives' fables*, fit for the entertainment of superstitious heads, but by no means of such sagacious and profound reasoners as themselves. In fine, they would reason the word of God out of its own truths, the people of God out of all their hopes and comforts, and themselves out of any claim to Heaven but by their own rational virtues, which they talk a vast deal about, but which neither they nor any body else, by human power, can truly and properly perform. To add no more upon this



head, the whole Socinian hypothesis, both in matter and conduct, is diametrically opposite to that comprehensive plan, which the Apostle has laid down in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, beginning with the 17th verse of the first chapter, and ending with the last verse of chapter the third. They, who follow Socinus and his reasoners, must reject the Apostle; and they, who credit the Apostle, must give up Socinus and them.—A man, who feels any concern for the salvation of his soul, will not hesitate which to chuse for his company; and especially when he finds that God, and Christ, Prophets and Apostles, with all the blessed above, are in perfect harmony and conjunction with St. Paul.

It is this pretended light of reason, exercised out of place upon the objects of faith, which has occasioned or revived most of the heresies in the world, and which has misled multitudes of otherwise respectable men into every contrariety of error. The not considering, that our reasoning powers are *fallen flowers*, degenerated and corrupt, as the scripture testifies, and as (one would think) the proudest heart must feel; is the grand root of all the confusion. Either our reason *is* depraved; and so we cannot judge properly upon divine things, as God tells us we cannot, and as the *difference* of our judgments proves to a demonstration: or, it *is not* depraved; and then the whole Bible proceeds upon a false hypothesis, has nothing to do with us, nor we with it. We are then wise for ourselves, and renounce all revelation from God. It is of no importance, in the former case, to urge the learning or attainments which our faculties may acquire, unless it could be proved, that these advantages can discover to us, without the risque of any important mistake, how we may renew the soul and restore it to its lost perfection; and then likewise we virtually set aside the use and necessity of a divine revelation. But this discovery is beyond the reach of art; for, as it was said by Cicero, there is no opinion so absurd, but which has been espoused by some philosopher; so we can prove, that there is no heresy so blasphemous, no doctrine so mischievous or contradictory, but which has been supported by some learned man. The higher the *conceit* of knowledge, the greater has been the *danger* of error. Men of moderate parts, or attainments, are afraid to venture with those,

Who nobly take the high Priori road,  
And *reason* downward till they doubt of God.—POPE.

Ordinary men, like ordinary horses, are preserved from making

such bold leaps, as risk every thing and gain nothing. The great wits, who soar the highest, are they who meet with the most desperate falls. Providence seems to have permitted this on purpose to shew the world, that by all its wisdom it never knew God, and by all its learning it cannot explore the truths of God. And this fact confirms loudly that voice of the scripture, where it declares, that *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*—What then can be thought of that principle, which calls God's wisdom folly and which pretends, therefore, to be its own infallible guide?—Men may call it *reason*, if they please, or any thing else; but, let it be denominated or adorned as it may, certainly it will one day be found to deserve a very different name.

The Arian gets upon the same reasoning ground with the Socinian, Latitudinarian, and Deist, when, instead of implicitly *believing* the record of God, he begins to *argue* only from his own understanding upon it. He joins with them to make a demand, like Nicodemus, *How can these things be?* When reason can settle the theory of the *wind*, which is an invisible though material substance; it may have advanced a step towards the knowledge of something higher; till it does this it must be content to be a *learner*, even in the *masters of Israel*. It is not wonderful then, that the Arian, like all other people, cannot *conceive*, how the three divine persons can be one Godhead or essence, nor how entitled to the same acts of worship, as can be proved to be given them in the Bible, both in doctrine and example. Rather than submit to this evidence, he boldly *reasons* about it from things *human* to things *divine*: and, because a human son is inferior to his father, and was begotten by him at a certain point of time, he very positively concludes that it cannot be otherwise with the Godhead. As to the Holy Ghost he is very much at a loss, what to do with him. Sometimes he is almost ready to think him a sort of a little God, made by the plastic power of the Father, or perhaps by the joint help of the Father and the Son; and sometimes he will very roundly insist upon it, that he is nothing but the plastic power itself, very handsomely dividing God from his own energy. He gets into his own reason, will see the ground of all things by that faculty, or will believe nothing. God's testimony, indeed, if it can seem at any rate to chime in with his own notions, will do very well; but set them at variance, which may easily be done, and it will presently be seen that our Arian

is only a concealed idolater, not worshipping the God of the scriptures, but rather the device or fabrication of his own *reason*.

Can the Arminian be acquitted in *this* view; and is not he too far enlisted (perhaps unexpectedly to himself) under the same banner? He may and doth hold the *theory* of the Trinity rightly enough; but if he be examined upon the *effect* and *operations* of the second and third persons, he appears, in the mode of its maintenance, too much upon a bottom with the Arian. He is speculatively right, and practically wrong. He will deny, for instance, the *particular* effect of Christ's redemption, in *perfectly* atoning for the sins of *his own* people, in *completely* investing them with his righteousness, and in thus giving them an *unalienable* title to glory. And is not this a violation of his *divine sovereignty* as King over Israel?—He limits also the *omnipotent* efficacy of the Holy Spirit in those communications of grace, by which he is the *first*, the *sole*, and the *sovereign* agent in the redeemed (as Christ was *for* the redeemed) and by which he absolutely and finally *secures* them to life everlasting. And doth not this seem an impeachment of his *divinity* as *Lord* over all? \* If it be enquired of him, How he can boldly reject or torture a thousand passages of scripture, which directly speak for these points or naturally proceed from them; he flies off in a tangent to his *reason*. He will urge, that he cannot conceive, how God, consistently with such and such attributes (the ideas of which are the offspring of his own brain) can act in this and that manner; that it is not *reasonable* to believe so; and that, *therefore*, it must be otherwise. In doing this he has left the plain testimonies of the Bible, and taken up the common subterfuge of all heretics, *human, corrupted, miserable, reason*. He will wind and turn some texts of the Bible, it may be, in order to favor his rational scheme; but this scheme being *already formed*, and this

\* The author, wishing to treat this point with the utmost tenderness consistently with truth, would therefore beg any candid *Arminian* to consider, how far the *causative supremacy*, inseparable from divinity, can be reconciled with that *dependent* or *consequent activity*, which his principles necessarily lead him to adopt, respecting the work of the Son and Holy Ghost in the salvation of sinners. He may also reflect, how it is possible that either of these divine persons can be *disappointed* in their office of grace, consistently with their *divinity*, and how far the maintenance of such an opinion necessarily *derogates* from the *wisdom* and *omnipotence*, from the *truth* and *faithfulness*, of these glorious persons, and from the *order*, *beauty*, and *consummation* of all their works both in grace and nature. These things well digested may prove, that the charge, severe as it seems in *words*, is not entirely unfounded in very *deed*.

hypothesis being *previously* laid down, *those* authorities from God are not treated as principals, but only as accidental auxiliaries to his own natural understanding. He examines the counsels of God by his own rule; and, though the pre-conceived opinions of his own mind are not to be reconciled with the harmony and general purport of the divine declarations, he persists to follow the one against the other, and to represent the will, power, and *covenanted* truth of the Almighty, as truckling to the will, power, and *contingent* inclinations of feeble and sinful creatures.\*

Thus the ground of all errors in divinity, various and contradictory as they are and must be among themselves, appears to be in the *depravity* of reason. People differ upon all subjects, where they employ their reason, to a proverb; and it will be more in vain, under such a guide, to expect universal agreement, than it was by the Emperor Charles V. in his retirement, that his great number of clocks, which he strove to regulate for that end, should all continue to strike together in the same moment of time. The truth is, *God made man upright, but he hath since followed, as well as sought out many inventions*—some of his own, and some even worse than his own—the Devil's. Were reason pure, as in its first estate; it would be perfect and concordant in all its conclusions. All men would think *alike*, in such a state of perfection; but the *difference* in the faculty demonstrably proves, and upon fact, its own *imperfection*. But for the fall, there would have been no occasion for a divine revelation, which is founded upon this grand principle, "that undone mor-

\* It ought to be noted with candor, that there are many good men inclined to the Arminian principles, who, as good men, do certainly (though perhaps not obviously to themselves) live much above them. There are, strange as it may seem, many Arminians in *theory*, who are perfect Calvinists in *practice* and *experience*. Bring them upon their knees before God, they will ask, like his children, in the deepest confession of their own weakness, helplessness, and wants: Set them to speak from their own *hearts*, their voice will be the voice of Jacob: But if their *heads* are to pass examination, they become hunters at once like Esau, and wander from the Bible and the blessing into the mazes of reason and opinion.

On the other hand, it is equally fair to note, that there are Calvinists in principle, denying the liberty of the human will, who yet are seeking nothing in the world but the liberty or licentiousness of that will. Such are *free-willers*, in the worst sense. In their *heads*, they understand that grace is free; but, in their *hearts*, they know not the freedom of grace. They will talk soundly of Christ, and the Spirit, and salvation; and *feel*, at the same time, no more for their power, than if they were fancies or dreams. These are but *mere reasoners* in their way, and differ only from others in this respect, the one speculating *with* and *according* to the Bible, and the other *without* or *contrary* to the Bible. It is a solemn and awful truth to add, that such men are farther from the *real possession* of the gospel in its life and power, than perhaps all the other tribes of reasoners put together.

als are without saving truth, and cannot obtain it by any other channel." The gift of the Bible demonstrates the error of man: and its light explains his darkness. It demonstrates too, that his benighted reason, ignorant and perplexed upon lower objects, can never by arguments drawn from itself, conduct him to those sublime truths which relate to God. All experience justifies this doctrine. The wisest heathens knew nothing truly or certainly of God: they confessed him indeed to be *unknown*: the best of them lived in perplexity, and all of them died in doubt. It was reserved for the book of God, to enlighten the doctrine of immortality, and to give the most convincing evidences for grace and glory through Jesus Christ.

Truth, in all things, should be the chief concern of man. In spiritual things, above all, it is of infinite and everlasting importance. And who can comprehend spiritual things, but he, who is, in some measure spiritual? And who can enable a man, by nature *carnal, sold under sin*, to become thus spiritual, but the author and God of spirits himself? God gives to man both *discernment* and *objects* to discern. If He speak, He speaks nothing but everlasting truth: And if He give to man the faculty to hear, man will hear nothing from him but this truth. It is the summit of human wisdom then to yield implicit confidence to God. We know, that we ourselves can err and be deceived; for we err daily. But if God cannot mistake nor delude; what may that bold creature be called, who *rejects the counsel of God against himself*, and because he cannot scrutinize the understanding and conduct of the Most High, resolves to follow none but his own? "Teach my best reason, reason," was the language of an ingenious man; and it should be the humble language of every man, in his approaches to God, or to the things of God.\* The Bible was delivered for this end; and when a man has grace to understand that blessed book, he possesses a demonstration of truth in it, which all the petty sophistries of human wit are unable to puzzle or confound. He has *an understanding, which is true, and is in him, who is both true and the truth itself*; and he is led to know eventually according to the promise, that *the doctrine is of God,* and that *God teacheth it to man.* John vii. 17. Is. liv. 13.

If the preceding essays shall be blessed to promote this happy effect in but one believer, or to dispel any of his doubts upon the

\* *Idem qui Theologiæ est Auctor, ejus est objectum et finis sine ulla causarum confusione; adeo ut Theologiæ defini possit—Sapientia a Deo, de Deo, per Deum ad Deum.* Ramburtii Theses in *Thee Sedun.* Vol. ii. p. 17.

glorious subject to which they relate, and much more if they are honored by HIM, of whose essential glory they treat, to produce any solid benefit to the Church of God; the author will have attained his utmost end. He abhors all earthly advantages in this matter, and believes, it would be almost a sacrilege in him, as a layman, to receive any. Content with his humble station and retirement, and satisfied that it is enough for a *pilgrim and stranger upon earth*; he possesses no ambition but that, which, he hopes without pride, is above the glare and tinsel of this mortal life, or at least above all sordid means to attain them. He believes, that exalted stations may rather be pitied for their snares, and despised for their aims, than solicited for any real advantages to body or mind.\* As for human glory, it will easily be granted, that, this is a wrong road to its attainment, if it were truly desirable; but the author has seen too much of men, either extremely to value or to wish for it.† Human praise is mere breath in the begin-

Who can read the mortified declaration of a man, who was raised to the highest rank that a subject can enjoy, without a reflection upon the vanity of human greatness? After Dr. Tillotson became Archbishop of Canterbury, he left this acknowledgement behind him in his Common-place Book. "I doubt it will prove a melancholy business when a man comes to die, to have made a great noise and bustle in the world, and to have been known far and near, but all this while to have been hid and concealed from himself. It is a very odd and fantastical sort of life, for a man to be continually from home, and most of all a stranger at his own house. It is surely an uneasy thing to sit always in a frame, and to be perpetually upon a man's guard, not to be able to speak a careless word, or to use a negligent posture, without observation and censure. Men are apt to think, that they who are in the highest places, and have the most power, have most liberty to say and do what they please; but it is quite otherwise, for they have the least liberty, because they are most observed. It is not mine own observation; a much wiser man, I mean Tully, says, *in maxima quaque fortuna minimum licere*: "They, that are in the highest and greatest condition, have, of all others, the least liberty." To which his biographer adds, "All these and many more are the evils, which attend greatness: but what will not mortals undergo, and what real goods will they not sacrifice, for the sake of gratifying vanity?" *Biogr. Dict.* Vol. xi. P. 179. To the same effect is the confession also of a layman of the highest official dignity. Lord Bacon, the chancellor, declares, that "men in great place are *thrice* servants: Servants of the *sovereign or state*, servants of *fame*, and servants of *business*. So as they have no freedom, either in their *persons*, in their *actions*, or in their *times*. It is a strange desire to seek *power*, and to lose *liberty*: or to seek power over *others*, and to lose power over a *man's self*. The rising into place is laborious; and by pains men come to greater pains." *Essays*, § xi. These are not the declarations of mere philosophers, nor the spleenetic and sour effusions of disappointed courtiers, but the sober experience of persons, who had attained the summit of ambition in their respective professions, and whose understandings are beyond all question. The late Lord Chesterfield could talk of being "sated with the pompous follies of life;" but these, with minds of a superior form, seemed perfectly disgusted with them.

‡ *Sapientia divina—non pendens ex hominum judiciis, animos Deo admovet, eo Quem pati contumelias honestum est dishonestamentum, & opprobrium splendidi omni humana gloria.* MOLINEUS de laud. Theol. §. 35.

ning, has but a short date, and then drops into everlasting oblivion.—To say no more upon so mean a subject as himself, the author will only add, that he believes he can be well satisfied, if he never knows of any profit which God may in this instance vouchsafe by him to others, or if he be never known himself as the instrument of it, till the perfect consummation of the just. That knowledge then will not hurt him, through the natural vanity which now cleaves inseparably in this life to all men, but serve only to heighten his gratitude, and wonder, and praise, that, *out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, God should have been pleased to ordain the least display of his strength.*

AND now, reader, upon the close of this work, or of thy perusing it, it may not be amiss to ask thyself, “What is the result of all these things? Are the proofs and authorities collected from the scriptures sufficient to satisfy my mind in this important article of the Spirit’s divinity? Have I obtained *clearer views*, and been led to a *closer experience* of the truth in this matter than ever before?” If thou *hast*; bless God, and pray, that these happy effects may be increased more and more, to his glory and thy edification. But if *not*, and yet if it be thy wish only to obtain them; there is one way in which thou shalt never err, and one mode of study, in which thou shalt never be mistaken. Take the Bible constantly into hand, meditate thereon upon all convenient opportunities, and above all *pray over it*, as a poor, blind, and helpless sinner, that God may teach thee his mind and will in that book, and explain to thy understanding all the truths necessary to salvation. If thou hast grace to do this, and grace to persevere in doing it; thy doubts shall gradually vanish, many present difficulties shall be satisfactorily answered, many obscurities happily enlightened, and (what will amount to an argument of fact to thy soul) such comforts, assistances, and mercies shall flow into thy heart, as shall crown every doctrine of salvation with its own proper experience, and give thee to *taste, handle, and enjoy the word of life*. Then it will cease to be a barren, naked speculation for the head; but it will become food, strength, and consolation to thy very soul. Thou wilt then perceive, that the *glorious liberty of the children of God*, is neither noise nor nonsense, neither whim nor notion, but a solid inheritance, and a wise as well as most enduring joy. Thou wilt have a sensible and spiritual experience, that the *Holy* fallacy elsewhere; is it possible, there should be any here! Is it

*Spirit* is indeed *God the Spirit*, giving thee *that fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*, which no creature can give, and leading thee on to those *sure mercies*, which by *Jehovah* only can be enjoyed.\*

On the other hand, if, wiser than the author of all wisdom in thine own conceit, thou canst venture to impeach his veracity, or to question his account of his own being, and, in consequence of this, will presume to scan him by thy reason, and to measure his word by thine own understanding ; thou mayest be left, like thousands before thee, to this poor scanty reason and understanding, which never did and never can find out *God* nor his truths, and mayest wander on as *Heathens* in all ages have done, without light, without hope, and without certainty in any thing. A void, an endless void, dark and inscrutable, will always meet thy views ; and thou must take, in a short time, a dreadful plunge, into what no air of confidence can make less abhorrent to thy soul. And can it be thought, that a gloom so hateful can proceed from *Him*, who created all light both intellectual and natural, and who is light essential in himself ? Is this the best conclusion of human reason, (if that can deserve the name of a conclusion which is involved in the deepest doubt,) which leads thee only to the insupportable reflection, that thou hast a being without knowing any just or certain end of that being ? And doth not all this speak to thy heart, that a principle, which determines in so dark, so horrid a result, must necessarily be abominable in itself, be destitute of all beauty, use, or truth, and be wide also from *Him*, who could not but create all things for these sublime purposes ?—Admitting only for a moment, that the Christian *may* be mistaken, and that the whole of *God's* revelation is an empty fable ; is not that a most wonderful delusion, which can impart comfort in all the exigencies of life, and animate the throbbing heart with unutterable transports in the extremities of death ? Whatever there be of

\* Bishop *Stillingfleet* excellently says ; “ *Christ crucified* is the library which triumphant souls will be studying in to all eternity. This is the only library, which is the true *ιστηριον ψυχης*, that which cures the soul of all its maladies and distempers : Other knowledge makes men's minds giddy and flatulent ; this settles, and composes them : Other knowledge is apt to swell men into high conceits and opinions of themselves, this brings them to the truest view of themselves, and thereby to humility and sobriety : Other knowledge leaves men's hearts, as it found them, this alters them, and makes them better. So transcendent an excellency is there in the knowledge of *Christ crucified* above the sublimest speculations in the world.” *Religious Miscellany*. Book iii. c. 6.



not even sense and enjoyment, which all men desire, and against which there is no arguing?—On the contrary, view the bold and boasting reasoner. If he think at all upon the subject; it must be, either to feed his vanity by shewing his talents, or to make himself and others miserable by making this vastly wise and profitable discovery, that nothing can be found at all certain either in life, death, or eternity. A man, who proceeds upon his own powers, has but this object or this conclusion. For the proof of this, read the writings of such men. They abound in the most labored reasonings on these topics, and are set off with all the force and elegance of composition. They will give the matter an air of *plausibility*: it shall run very smooth; and it shall sound incomparably well; but there is a dreadful dryness running through the whole, and a coldness, very shining perhaps, but shining like the moon in a frosty night, which leaves all things as barren and dreary as they were before. No; God's truth alone can claim the honor of being COMFORTABLY TRUE for *eternity*. And *that* is the kind of truth, which man's nature wants, or which leads to the proper end of man. All atheistical, deistical, and other speculations, founded upon human reason, are not only dark, intricate, and perplexed, but leave the man just as *miserable* as they found him. On the other hand, if the Christian *is not* and *cannot* be mistaken, in his trust upon God; if the Bible shall be owned at last for a divine revelation; if the testimonies of holy men in all ages will at length be proved fully authentic: *where*, it may be asked, *shall those bold worms appear*, who could find out nothing by themselves that was true for *eternity*, and yet could reject what had every evidence of eternal truth, which *its* nature or *their* nature could justly demand; and who destitute of all comfort in the knowledge they pretended to find, renounced the peace of God proposed in his word, because it *surpassed their low understanding*, though it could not have been God's peace if it had not? If such be their wisdom, is it not a most dangerous wisdom to themselves, and a most unprofitable one to any beside?—Either way, it is certain, the Christian is safe and will be no loser; while the infidel can get nothing before him, if even his notions could be true: whereas, being found false, annihilation will become his desirable gain; if that can be called *gain*, which is nothing in itself and brings a man to nothing.

But the real Christian is not dragged, like the evil Spirit in the

gospel, through *dry places, seeking rest and finding none* : He is privileged to enjoy the *refreshing dew* from above, and both to believe and know whom he hath believed. He credits God's revelation of *his* divine nature, and he receives God's testimony concerning *his own* ; and in believing he finds an admirable *suitableness* between God's *declaration* and those spiritual *wants*, for the accommodation of which that declaration was given. He sees, that the word witnesses of the Spirit who gave it ; and he feels, that the Spirit witnesses the truth of his own word. He has a testimony *without him*, in which thousands of evidences have concurred ; and a testimony *within him*, which likewise has been confirmed by the concurrent experience of thousands, in all ages and countries of the world. He sees, he knows, he enjoys, the truth. He does not speculate, like an astronomer gazing after a distant star, which he can never reach ; but he perceives a *light shining into a dark place*, the *dawning of the day*, and the *rising of the true day-star*, or sun of righteousness *in his heart*. It glimmered first ; then broke forth illustrious : And *his path shall shine more and more to the perfect everlasting day* in his soul. What joy is it to perceive this, even now, in a body of perverseness and corruption, in a world of sin and iniquity. But O what shall be the happiness, the rapture, the transport ; when this dark dull veil shall be removed, and the believer, face to face, shall behold Him, whom he loved, and sought, and hoped for, below ! What a glow of admiration and delight shall possess his soul ; when he shall see all, that he is capable of seeing in glory ; when he shall enjoy all that his nature can enjoy, of everlasting bliss ! With what astonishment shall he survey the world of spirits ; with what pleasure shall he call them his friends ! What wonders of grace, life, harmony and glory, shall break in upon his enraptured soul on every side ! Especially, when he shall behold his dear *Redeemer*, crowned with ineffable splendor, smiling upon him with love and benignity, and blessing him with the complete participation of his kingdom ! Then shall the *blessed Spirit*, who conducted him through the wretchedness of time, pour the full gladness of Heaven into his soul, by giving him such communion with the everlasting and everglorious *Trinity*, as will excite ineffable adoration to each of the *divine persons* for their respective offices, and to the *whole Godhead* for the glorious covenant of salvation, world without end.

TO FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, three divine Persons in one and the same JEHOVAH, as to the TRINITY in UNITY ; and to the one JEHOVAH, existing in the three Persons of FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, as to the UNITY in TRINITY ; be all *Honor, Grace, and Glory*, ascribed, by all *Creatures*, through all ages. Amen.

THE END















