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Contents

1. Remarks on Chubb on Providence)
2. Remarks on Chubb's Vindication of his true Gospel of Jesus Christ
3. Animadversions on Chubb's discourse on Miracles
4. Truth & modern-deism at variance)
5. True Deism the Basis of Christianity)

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REMARKS

ON

Mr. THOMAS CHUBB'S

VINDICATION

OF HIS

TRUE GOSPEL of *Jesus Christ*,

In the ORDER following:

SECT. I. Remarks on his Proof of *Elias's* Prayer being an angry Prayer, from its fruitableness to the *Jewish Dispensation*; which he says, seems at least, to countenance persecution.

SECT. II. On his *Scheme* as destructive of the Credit of the *Sacred Writers*.—His *True Gospel* but a Part of the *True Gospel*.—The *divine Inspiration* of the *Sacred Writers* supported.

SECT. III. His Vindication of his *Short Dissertation on Providence* consider'd.

SECT. IV. An Examination of his *new Scheme of PRAYER*; which Scheme is shewn to be evidently form'd upon his Plan of Providence, and contradictory to his *Notion of Prayer* in his *Treats*, to which he refers.

By C. FLEMING. Author of the REMARKS ON Mr. Thomas Chubb's *Short Dissertation on Providence*, and his *True Gospel of Jesus Christ asserted*.

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RAY M. A. R. S.

ON

MR. THOMAS CHURCH

VINDICATION

OF HIS

TRUSTWORTHINESS

IN THE

MANAGEMENT

OF THE

ESTATE

OF

THE

WIDOW

OF

MR.

THOMAS

CHURCH

BY

THE



A
P R E F A C E
T O T H E
R E A D E R.

A *FIRM* belief of the divine authority of the sacred writings, was the principle on which I so readily engaged to remark on Mr. Chubb's True Gospel of Jesus Christ asserted, and his Short Dissertation on Providence. To oppose and explode such

iv A Preface to the Reader.

a Persuasion, seems to me to be the design of this writer, both in that Tract, and in his Vindication of it.---

Whereas, to deny the inspiration of the sacred Writers, and to suppose their Composures to bear no Character superior to that of any profane or common Pen, is not only a certain way to render mens regard to them profane, or common; but to subject them to great contempt! since the great points of doctrine peculiar to them, can only be the matter of mere revelation. Such as the incarnation of the WORD, the public ministration, the sufferings and death of Jesus, being consequent to the appointment of the Father: or, in other words, the whole undertaking of Christ here on earth,

being

A Preface to the Reader. v

being in pursuance of his Father's will---that that one act of his obedience to death, should be the means of mercy to mankind, and dissolve the obligation to mortality. So that as by one man all died, by one man all shall be made alive. That his resurrection should be the pledge and earnest of the resurrection of the whole humane family---also the doctrine of his intercession:---and that not only all such who fear God, and work righteousness, shall be accepted of him; but the pious Christian shall be favour'd with the company of his Saviour, and the contemplation of his glory, as part of his future reward. These, and several other things, being great principles, which run thro' these writings, would render them the

subject

vi A Preface to the Reader.

subject of contempt, if not understood as matters of Divine Revelation.

THE authority of these writings should therefore be supported, in order to give them their due weight. And such is the frailty of mankind, that it stands in need of it: for although authority cannot alter the nature of Truth, yet it can and does universally add force to its influences. No wise Law-giver, or well-govern'd Kingdom or State, ever excluded authority. The antient Greeks and Romans both enjoined and prohibited, under the sanction of the will of their Gods!---and those implanted passions of hope and fear in humane nature, seem to demand it.

A Preface to the Reader. vii

I HAVE said, indeed, such is the frailty of mankind: but I much question, whether the will of the Supreme Being, consider'd as such, is not the grand security of the obedience of the most exalted finite Spirit; since the more clearly any creature discerns the perfections of the infinite mind, the more strongly will he find himself excited to execute his known purposes.---

AS to Mr. Chubb's doctrine of Providence, and of Prayer, I have now only room to say, that I think I have made it appear, that they are attended, very plainly, with hurtful consequences.

I F what I have now offer'd, shall contribute any real service to the interest

viii A Preface to the Reader.

terest of Truth, or the Redeemer's Kingdom among Men, my great end will be answer'd.

TO conclude: If my first Remarks may be allow'd to have been wrote with any considerable propriety, every one will see, who reads Mr. Chubb's Vindication, that something like these Second would be expected. ----- I shall make no other Apology.-----



O N
Mr. C H U B B 's
P R O O F
O F

E L I A S's P R A Y E R

B E I N G

An A N G R Y P R A Y E R,

F R O M

Its suitability to the *Jewish* dispensation,
which he says, seems, at least, to countenance
Persecution.

S E C T. I.

*Of the nature of the Jewish dispensation, as
encouraging an angry, persecuting spirit.*

IN my *Remarks* on Mr. THO. CHUBB's late
performance about the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*,
I professedly undertook a canvassing only of
the *VIth Sect.* of his *true Gospel*, for the reason
following, *viz.* because in that *Section*, I apprehend-
ed, he had sufficiently shook all foundation of cre-

dit to the *New Testament Writers*, yea, even to his own scheme of *the true Gospel*. For, if we can suppose with him, that St. *Matthew* cou'd be so weak as to draw a *consequence* without a *premise* to support it—* Or, that the *Evangelists* have given a description of the *Messiah* from their own *private opinions*; which *private opinions* may be looked upon by us, with the utmost neglect or contempt; if, with him, we can suppose the great apostle *Paul* giving a large account of the methods or *Reasons of Providence* with regard to the tenders of the gospel, merely as the *Reveries* of his own invention or imagination;—if we can suppose that the apostle *James* could stupidly imagine, that a miraculous interposition of *divine Power*, was the effect of an *angry, furious, revengeful* prayer of a *fiery prophet*.—These things once taken for granted, what ground of credit is left for our faith in the gospel, as a *Revelation* from God? Why may I not conclude, that these *writers* or *historians* were no more than other men? nay, that as they were illiterate, ignorant, weak men; why should I not think them utterly incapable of supporting the credit due to *Evangelists*? that is, of men supposed to be entrusted with imparting and handing down matters of *mere Revelation*; or in other Words, *the true Gospel of Jesus Christ*.

* See his Short Dissertation on Provid. Pag. 215, 216.

FOR instance, there is something very inconsistent with such ideas, in the case of St. James, and a demand to my firm assent: For, if he could imagine that *the shutting up of the clouds for three years and six months*, was the effect of *Elias's Prayer*, as a man of a fiery resentful disposition; and could urge such an instance, as a proper argument for the *Prayer of Faith*: it will certainly include in it, that St. James must have had *most rude* sentiments of the DEITY; as it supposes, God's working a *Miracle* in gratification of an inhumane, disorder'd, irascible address. This he could not but know, must be contrary to the very constitution of the *Jewish State*, as a *Theocracy*, which had receiv'd its *Magna Charta* from God, who had expressly declared by *Moses*, that *Vengeance and Recompence* belonged to himself; *Deut. xxxii. 35.* And among the laws he gave that people, this is one, *viz. Thou shalt not AVENGE, nor bear ANY GRUDGE against the Children of thy People, but thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self, Lev. xix. 18. The STRANGER that dwelleth with you, shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thy self, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God, ver. 34.* Nay, *mercy* was to be express'd to their very CATTLE or beasts of burden, *Exod. xx. 10. xxiii. 5. Deut. xxv. 4.*

INSTEAD of which Mr. *Chubb* says, “ that this
 “ infirmity and frailty of nature, which St. *James*,
 “ at least, supposeth *Elias* was *subject to*, and in-
 “ fluenced by, viz. a pious but warm, angry zeal,
 “ was suitable to that *infirm* or *imperfect* dispensa-
 “ tion of *Judaism*, *Elias* lived under, and which
 “ that dispensation seemed to *incourage*, or at least
 “ to *indulge*.”—Vind. p. 30. Nay more than this,
 he does not scruple to assert “ that *religious Perse-*
 “ *cution* appears with a much better grace in a *Jew*,
 “ than in a *Christian*; as it is more suitable to the
 “ *Jewish*, than to the *Christian Dispensation*. For
 “ a *Jew* to persecute men, on account of religion,
 “ is not greatly to be wondered at, because *Perse-*
 “ *cution* seems, at least, to be *countenanced* by his
 “ Religion.” pag. 48.

IF by the *Jewish dispensation* Mr. *Chubb* would
 be understood to mean, any *divine Precept* belong-
 ing to that dispensation, I can find none that *encou-*
raged or *indulged* a warm, angry Zeal: nor do I
 see with what propriety such a Temper can be suit-
 ed to that dispensation. The Passages I have cited
 are entirely against it——If he should refer us to
 the *Example* of the great Law-giver of the *Jews*;
 we find, that his *Meekness* was the very disposition
 of mind, which occasioned his being so highly fa-
 vour'd of the *God of the Jews*. It is said of him,

that he was meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth; Numb. xii. 3. And Jesus the Son of Sirach says, that God brought out of Jacob a merciful man, which found favour in the sight of all flesh, even Moses beloved of God, and men, whose memorial is blessed—whom he sanctified in his *faithfulness* and *meekness*, and chose him out of all men; *Ecclus.* xlv. 1, and 4. — Nay, we find, that for one instance of this *fiery Piety* †, this *warm, angry zeal* in Moses, he was denied an entrance into Canaan, *Psal.* cvi. 32, 33. *They anger'd him also at the waters of strife, that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips:* Compare *Numb.* xx. 10. *Deut.* iii. 25, 26.

IF we allow the *Jewish* dispensation to have been from God, this *infirmity* and *frailty* of nature could never be *encouraged* by it; nor could *religious persecution* appear with any *good grace* in a *Jew*; it being quite unsuitable to that dispensation, as well as to the Christian. The *Jews* were, it must be own'd, a wicked, obdurate people, and would not bear reproof; so that they are chargeable with having *kill'd the prophets*; and with having *indulged* a spirit of persecution; but then, this was so far from sitting with any *good grace* upon them, or be-

† A term Mr. Chubb has been pleas'd to use, but altogether unintelligible to me. See his *Vindication*, pag. 48.

ing *encouraged* by their constitution, that it is most evidently condemn'd by it. Oppression and Violence, yea, every degree of injustice was strictly *forbid* by their Law, but no way *indulg'd* by it.

THAT story of *Elias's* calling for fire from heaven on the *two captains* and their *fifties*, 2 Kings i. 10, 12. don't seem to strengthen this remark of Mr. *Chubb's*; altho' he would have it so understood, *Vind.* p. 28. Nor that of the Prophets of *Baal* being slain, mention'd, 1 Kings xviii. 40. See p. 29. these instances don't, I say, seem to prove "that *Elias's* piety or religious zeal was of the *warm, angry kind* which drew after it *death* and *destruction*:" the very terms, if used in earnest, militate: — There certainly must be the greatest opposition between piety or religious zeal, and that warm and angry emotion of mind which draws after it *death* and *destruction*. To clear *Elias* from this charge in the last mention'd place, 1 Kings xviii. 40. I need only refer my *Reader* to my *Remarks on Mr. Chubb*, from p. 42, to 47.—As to that of the *Captains* and their *fifties* being destroy'd by his calling for fire from Heaven, 2 Kings i. if the history be attended to without prejudice; we shall find room enough to excuse the Prophet from any charge of *impious, malevolent warmth* of Spirit. And altho' Mr. *Chubb* thinks that there was no fault at all in the two first *Captains* and their *fifties*; yet had
this

Elias's Prayer being an angry Prayer. 7

this been the case, I would ask why the third *Captain* and his *fifty* escaped with their lives, if the former were as innocent as they? and if the reason of the destruction was only the Sin of *Abaziab*? It does not appear that *Abaziab* had at all relented when he sent this *third band*——It seems to me that both *Abaziab* and his first Messengers were despisers of *Elias's* God, and were resolved to vent their rage on *Elijah*; for altho' the *first band* was remarkably destroy'd; yet the *second Captain* and his *fifty* also dared the prophet and his God, and resolutely seconded the attempt. Both the *Captains*, in all probability, were the votaries of *Baalzebub* the god of *Ekron*, and tauntingly call *Elijah man of God*. The *first* tells him the King hath said, *come down*. Now had he believ'd him to be a true prophet of God; had he remember'd *his calling for fire from heaven to consume the sacrifices*, in the notable contest between *BAAL's* prophets and he; the Captain would not have ventur'd to place the authority of his master, before that of omnipotence! but he was plainly under the influence of Mr. C—'s *pious*, and *religious zeal*, which was of the *warm* and *fiery* kind; thirsty for revenge on *Elijah*: and therefore he neglects these proper considerations, and haughtily says, *thou man of God the King hath said, come down*.——

NOR was the *second Captain's* enthusiasm, and religious zeal abated any more than his Master's, altho'

altho' God had given testimony to the mission of his prophet, and so openly confirm'd the message he had sent by him to the stupid, idolatrous *Abaziab*: But he is more resolute, and in a passion, he says, *O man of God, thus hath the King said, come down QUICKLY. Elijah* is represented as saying, *if I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty.* This is put in the form of a prayer, or an imprecation; but, I think, when we trace the several circumstances, we may warrantably understand him as answering in the prophetic Character. *Let fire come down, &c.* that is, fire will come down from heaven and destroy thee and thy fifty, if I am not deceiv'd in the *revelation* made to me. If I be a *man of God* it will; I know it will; for by the same hand, that I receiv'd the message which I deliver'd to *Abaziab*, I have been inform'd, that *such evidences* shall be given as testimonials of my divine mission.—Nor were these two instances of judgment inflicted on improper subjects, they were, most probably, impious and incorrigible bands! but *not so* the third Captain; for, he went up with his fifty, and came and *fell on his knees, and ask'd his own life, and the life of his fifty*: † upon which we are told, that the *Angel of the Lord* said to *Elijah*, Go down with him, be

† *Note*, It does not appear by the sequel that *Abaziab* sent the *third Captain* with this Message; but the contrary,—for the sentence we find confirm'd.

not afraid of him : and he went down to *Abaziab*, and confirm'd his first message——Observe, the Angel of the Lord is a *companion* for *Elijah* during this time of his being guided by a fiery religious zeal, and a piety of the angry kind! This methinks is strange! The Angel of the Lord one would have expected to have reprov'd such a malevolent disposition, had he perceiv'd it as plainly as Mr. *Chubb* has done: But we don't see any reason to think he did reprove *Elijah*, or that, by the story, *Elijah* was under the influence of this kind of destructive *irascible passion*. For the Angel of the Lord, who sent *Elijah* with the message to the King of *Samariah's* Messengers, had given him the information that *Abaziab should not recover*: And to prove to him that the message was from God, he, most probably, nay, I think we cannot but suppose, he did certainly inform him of these consequences that should attend it, as what were to be the *confirming evidences* of the truth of his prediction.

HAD this *destructive, mortal piety* been encouraged or indulg'd by the *Jewish* Dispensation, our Lord could not have rebuk'd his disciples when they would have call'd for fire from heaven, *Luk. ix. 53.*—by telling them, *that they knew not what spirit they were of*—for they might have replied, that they did know; for such kind of piety or religious

religious zeal had been *indulg'd* in *Elias*, † as a *Jew*: and they, by desiring it, only conform'd to the spirit and genius of the *Jewish* Dispensation, to which they belong'd—But this being not the case, their mistaking the story of *Elias*, prov'd that they *knew not* what spirit they were of. They saw not that the testimonies of Christ's divine mission were different from those which were given of *Elias's* mission. No judicial acts were to take place upon the lives of men, during his publick ministry, as did during *Elias's* prophesying. And yet, *Elias* himself was not warranted from that Constitution to *encourage* or *allow* an angry, destructive zeal. This spirit has been contrary to the *spirit of God* in all ages; and ever will be contrary to the spirit and genius of his faithful servants.—This *pious*, this *religious* zeal, which Mr. *Chubb* mentions, is of the DEVIL, who was a murderer from the beginning; and could never look *graceful* under any Dispensation.

BUT Mr. *Chubb* will have the word *ὁμοιοπαθής*, translated *like passions*, used by St. *James*, chap. v. ver. 17. to be confin'd to the *infirmities* and *frailties* of the mind, which he thinks, is determin'd by the subject St. *James* was treating of. His words are, St. *James*, surely, must intend something by

† See Mr. *Chubb's* vindication, p. 26.

making the following remark, viz. “ that Elias
“ was a man subject to like infirmities and frailties
“ of nature, as we are ; and the infirmities and
“ frailties St. James particularly referred to, must
“ have been exemplified in the case he was go-
“ ing to speak about, in order to render that
“ remark pertinent, or to his purpose. But the
“ infirmities and frailties of the *body*, that is, the
“ being subject to *mortality*, or to the *gout*, or
“ *stone*, or the like, could not excite *Elias* to
“ pray for a fore judgment upon *Israel* : where-
“ as the infirmities and frailties of the *mind*,
“ that is, being subject to a *warm, angry zeal*,
“ upon account of *Religion* (which was very
“ much the case of the *Jews*) might ; and
“ therefore, I think, *that* must have been the
“ case. † ”

As Mr. *Chubb* has not thought fit to take any particular notice of what I have offer'd on this Head in my *Remarks*, I humbly refer my *Reader* to the argument there stated, from pag. 38. to pag. 50. and shall not repeat what I have there advanc'd. And yet, it will be proper to take some notice of the steddiness of Mr. *Chubb's* sentiments—He has cited several *learned Authorities* about the use of the *Greek* word, translated *like-passions*. “ *Grotius*, he

† See Mr. *Chubb's* vindication, pag. 26.

“ says, renders it, *liable to death*, and *the evils of*
 “ *life.* — *Erasmus* and *Budæus* render it, *mortal*;
 “ *Elias was mortal*, or *endowed with the same con-*
 “ *dition of mortality.* — *Dr. Hammond* reads it, *E-*
 “ *lias was a man subject to the same afflictions and*
 “ *frailties* : But then he means, *frailties* either of
 “ *body or mind.* — *Vorstius* and *Leigh* render it,
 “ *subject to the like or the same passions or affecti-*
 “ *ons.* — *Stevens* renders it, *one to whom there*
 “ *are like affections, or the same, or like pertur-*
 “ *bations.* — *Scapula*, *perturbations* (he might have
 “ *added*) or *affections.*” Upon this, he says, “ *seeing,*
 “ *then, the learned* have such different readings up-
 “ *on the* *aforemention'd Greek word*, what must
 “ *we do under this perplexity?*” — pag. 23, 24.
Vindication.

THIS difficulty he has remov'd himself, in that
 passage before cited from his 26th pag. altho' I free-
 ly own, I cannot see any great variety in the read-
 ings of those learned men he has quoted, *i. e.* *suffi-*
ciently different to create any great difficulty about
 rendering the word — But suppose he could imagine
 any very *different sense* in these readings, let us see
 whether Mr. Chubb has reliev'd us, by the key he
 has given. He says, “ *it must respect the infir-*
 “ *mities of the mind*, and these infirmities must
 “ *have been exemplified* in the case he was going to
 “ *speak about*, in order to render that remark
 “ *pertinent*, or to his purpose.” Now the case
 St.

St. James was exemplifying by this instance, was evidently the fitness of their exercising the *miraculous prayer*, by which the sick were healed: And he pleads with them, in order to encourage the *prayer of Faith*, the case of *Elias*, who was a man subject to *like-infirmities*, or like-sufferings, † who had had miraculous impartments, as the effect of whose earnest prayer God *shut up the heavens for three years and six months*, in confirmation of his divine mission, and to bring the people to repentance; and can you, *q. d.* dispute his readiness to heal your sicknesses upon the prayer of faith? If we should apply *like-passions* to his bodily infirmities, it would look much more consistent with the character of *Elias*, as a righteous man, to suppose an angry prayer in him to be the effect of the *gout or stone*, than the produce of a *settled, warm, religious zeal*, which was *mortal and destructive*.—Some *paroxisms* of exquisite pain, may, for a season, convulse the mind of an upright, pious, righteous man: but this cannot be said of the temper of mind Mr. *Chubb* contends for. — On the contrary, the same word translated *like passions*, *Acts* xiv. 15. Mr. *Chubb* owns, “ he sees no reason should be applied to the mind *more than* to the infirmities of the body.” ‡ And I declare it, as my full persuasion, that it can-

† “Ομοιότης similis, et ἀδότης affectus, *actor.* 14, 15. Vid. *Pasor's Man. Nov. Test.*

‡ *Vind.* pag. 25.

not with any propriety be limited or *distinctly applied* at all, that is, either in the case of *Elias*, or of the apostles. Both *St. Paul*, and *Barnabas*, and *St. James*, appear to have used the term more generally, as describing the *species*.

IN the mouth of the former, it is as if they had said, “ O you men of *Lystra*; don't mistake us
 “ for a distinct sort of beings from your selves :
 “ We are not *Gods* or *Demons* who have assumed
 “ humane shape : but in our whole frame and con-
 “ struction of being, we are the same with you ;
 “ men of *like passions*, that is, of the same flesh and
 “ blood ; proper men.”

St. James may likewise be understood, as addressing the Christians thus, “ Attend to the instance I
 “ give you of *Elias*, and let me assure you, that
 “ altho' he was remarkably remov'd from this
 “ world at his exit, in a *chariot of fire*—and
 “ altho' he was admitted to bear a part in the *trans-*
 “ *figuration of our Lord* ; yet he was but a man,
 “ his original was in common with yours ; a man
 “ of like-passions, affections, and infirmities ! no-
 “ thing of the *Angelic nature*, but a real descen-
 “ dant of *Adam*; and he *prayed in his prayer*,” &c.

BUT to proceed, *Mr. Chubb* has not shewn how the supposition would not fix a like *odium* upon
 St.

St. James and the Christians, and of consequence, be a plea in favour of the same religious, angry zeal among Christians, which he has denied it to be at all suitable for.—It would, according to Mr. Chubb, have been as if St. James had said, “*Elias* was a man
 “ as we are, full of *warm, angry, Jewish* zeal, which
 “ would be satisfied with nothing short of *death*
 “ and *destruction!* therefore, let not that *fiery tem-*
 “ *per* in you, Christians, discourage the *prayer of*
 “ *faith*; for, tho’ he was like you, he had great
 “ success, his angry prayer was effectual, and you
 “ need be in no doubt but you will succeed also:
 “ be but *furious* in your addresses like him, and
 “ despair not of success.”—Thus must we paraphrase St. James, according to Mr. Chubb.

AFTER all this pains which Mr. Chubb has taken, he tells us, “That St. James’s epistle shews
 “ him to have been a very *worthy good man*, so far
 “ as a man is to be judged of by his writings, and
 “ one who had a much *juster* and *truer sense* of
 “ that Gospel which he was appointed to pub-
 “ lish to the world, than his LATE ADVOCATES
 “ seem to have; yet notwithstanding he may have
 “ been TOO CREDULOUS, with regard to *Elias’s*
 “ prayer, *which way soever he came by his infor-*
 “ *mation*. For, if the afflicting the people of *Is-*
 “ *rael*, in the manner referred to, had been *suita-*
 “ *ble* and *proper*, then they would, no doubt have
 “ been

“ been thus afflicted, whether the Prophet had
 “ prayed, or not; and if it had been improper,
 “ then, I think, I may venture to say, that the
 “ *importunity of ten prophets or righteous men,*
 “ would not have been sufficient to procure it;
 “ so that the PROPHE'T'S PRAYER *had little to*
 “ *do in the affair.*”†

I AM persuaded, that there is no modest man whatsoever, who will envy Mr. *Chubb* the glory of this paragraph. He has paid a Compliment to St. *James*, and owns that so far as he can judge by his writings, he seems to have been a *worthy* and *good man*; and not only so, but to have a *juster* and *truer sense* of that Gospel he was appointed to publish, than his LATE ADVOCATES seem to have! — If I may answer for his *late advocates*, we readily give St. *James* the preference; we desire to build our faith on him, as belonging to that foundation of which Christ is the *chief corner stone*. We would not be put in competition with him as to an equality of knowledge in the Christian scheme. — Mr. *Chubb's* greater *sagacity* and *penetration* could only apologize for his sinking the character of St. *James*; with his, YET NOTWITHSTANDING, *he may have been* TOO CREDULOUS, *with regard to Elias's prayer, WHICH WAY SOEVER he came by his information.*

† Vind. pag. 31.

Mr. *Chubb* understands the affair of *Elias's* prayer far better than *St. James*; and dare venture to say, “that so far from the case being pertinent to “*St. James's* argument, or the *drought* being the “effect of *Elias's* earnest prayer, that it *would have* “*been* whether he had pray'd or not, so that the “*Prophet's* prayer had little to do in the affair.” So we find *St. James* first stands chargeable with not forming right notions of God, as a just, merciful, and wise being, that would esteem an angry, cruel, vengeful spirit, as *hateful*, and its desires, as an *abomination*: but on the contrary, as one who would give audience to, and encourage such angry prayers. — He stands chargeable, likewise, with not knowing, that the *very same* benign spirit that animated and directed the *Apostles*, spake by the *Prophets*. Nay, he stands impeach'd as intirely ignorant of the *nature of prayer!* for had *St. James* seen, with that clearness which *Mr. Chubb* does, the state of the case; he would then have known, “that if the af- “flicting of the people of *Israel*, in the manner re- “ferred to, had been *suitable* and *proper*, then, “they would, no doubt, have been thus afflicted, “whether the *Prophet* had pray'd, or not; and if “it had been *improper*, that the *importunity* of *ten* “*Prophets*, or *righteous men*, would not have been “sufficient to procure it.” *St. James* therefore, seems to have understood nothing at all of the
D matter,

matter, but has reason'd very impertinently : for he, instead of bidding the Christians *pray one for another, that they might be healed* : Or telling them, *that the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up* : Or, *that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much* ; and then giving them an instance in *Elias's prayer* : instead of this, he should have told them, according to *Mr. Chubb*, that if the healing of their sick was *suitable and proper*, then they would no doubt be healed, whether they were pray'd for, or not ; and if their healing was *improper*, then the prayers of the *elders of ten Churches*, and their utmost importunity would not be sufficient to procure such healing : so that their prayers had little to do in the affair.

Mr. Chubb adds, “ that the history rather represents *Elias* as one appointed by *God*, to make known his will concerning the great drought that was to be brought upon the land, and the rain that was to follow upon it, than one, who by his earnest prayer had obtain'd this. ” †

TAKING this for granted, for argument's sake, how will *Mr. Chubb's* reasonings hold in another place, where he says, “ *St. James* surely must intend something by making the following remark, *viz.*

† *Vind.* pag. 32.

“ that

“ that *Elias* was a man subject to like infirmities
 “ and frailties of nature as we are.”—which must
 “ respect the *infirmities* and *frailties* of the *mind*,
 “ that is, the being subject to a *warm, angry zeal*
 “ upon account of *religion* might; and therefore,
 “ I think, that must have been the case. And
 “ then, I think the apostle's *words*, and his *reason-*
 “ *ing* grounded upon them, may, and that not un-
 “ naturally, be paraphras'd in the following manner.
 “ The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man
 “ availeth much. An Example of this we have in
 “ the *prayer of Elias*, who was not only one of our
 “ species, and took part of the common nature
 “ with other men; but also one in whom *the infir-*
 “ *mities* and *frailties* of humane nature were *apt to*,
 “ and *did sometimes* shew themselves. And he, in
 “ the height of his *pious*, tho' *warm, angry zeal*
 “ and *resentment* against an *idolatrous people*, pray-
 “ ed earnestly for a sore judgment upon them, *viz.*
 “ *that it might not rain; and it rained not on the*
 “ *earth by the space of three years and six months.*
 “ And when he had thus brought the foremention'd
 “ people into this *great distress*, and was thereby
 “ mov'd with *pity* towards them, *he pray'd again*,
 “ *and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought*
 “ *forth her fruit.* If then, *Elias*, when in the
 “ *warm, angry spirit and temper* of a *Jew*, prayed
 “ earnestly, and was *heard* in that he prayed; how
 “ much more may every *good and faithful disciple*

“ of *Christ*, reasonably expect to have his earnest
 “ prayers *heard* and *answered*, when he is suppo-
 “ sed to pray, not in the warm, angry zeal of *E-*
 “ *lias*, or a *Jew*, but in the *spirit* and *temper* of
 “ his *kind* and *compassionate* master? This seems to
 “ be the apostle's argument.” † And then Mr.
Chubb goes on to instance in other cases, and upon
 other occasions, wherein *Elias* was influenced by
 the like angry disposition.

HERE we must either think that Mr. *Chubb*
 is paraphrasing St. *James* as having mistook the
 whole design of the story of *Elias*: forasmuch, as
 this drought was no way brought about by this
angry prayer of his; since it would have taken
 place exactly in the same manner it did, had he
 never pray'd about it; and so his prayer will
 stand for nothing.—Or else, we must suppose
 Mr. *Chubb* willing to be understood as giving us a
true account of the story of *Elias* in this his para-
 phrase; and thereby supporting his own hypothesis,
viz. “ that this *pious, warm, angry* zeal apparent
 “ in *Elias*, was suitable to that *infirm* or *imperfect*
 “ dispensation of *Judaism* which seem'd to encour-
 “ *rage* or at least to *indulge* it.” If we understand
 him in the former sense, *viz.* that St. *James* mi-
 stook the whole story, then St. *James* will appear
 unacquainted with the *nature* and *design* of Prayer:

† Vind. pag. 26, 27.

and not only so, but Mr. *Chubb* might have spared his remarks upon *Elijah's* calling for fire from heaven on the two *Captains* and on their *fifties*: since if *Elijah* may be supposed to have known as much of the matter as Mr. *Chubb*, he must plainly perceive that his praying or *calling for fire*, was an idle insignificant thing, if he expected it to be given as the effect of his prayer: for if it was *fit* and *proper*, then it would no doubt have come and destroy'd them, whether he pray'd for it or not; but, if *improper*, then it would not *have come with all his intreaties*. Which will not support his *angry hypothesis*. But if he should intend by his paraphrase to support this his *hypothesis*, concerning the *angry destructive temper* of the Prophet, being suitable to the *Jewish Dispensation*: Then upon his own *scheme*, St. *James* must not be supposed to have mistook the case: but must be understood as introducing this angry, successful prayer, as an encouraging instance to the *Christians* exercise of the *prayer of faith*.—Which by the way, would lead us to deny that that dispensation cou'd be a *divine dispensation*; the spirit it *indulg'd* being the *spirit of the Devil*; who was a malevolent Being, and a murderer from the beginning; when at the same time we plainly perceive, as I have already hinted, both from its *Laws* and its *Law-giver*, that it manifestly inculcates a spirit of love and meekness: nay, we find God himself their *sovereign* declaring

to them, that he was the Lord, the Lord God *merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in goodness, and truth.*—Thus we have not the *least foundation* to support such an hypothesis as Mr. Chubb's about the *Jewish Dispensation*, but the very contrary.——

Mr. Chubb seems not to have examin'd his Bible with an unprejudic'd mind ; for, had he been impartial, he could not surely have charged the *Jewish Dispensation* with encouraging a persecuting, or angry destructive spirit. — Our Lord, one would think, must needs have known the genius of that Dispensation full as well as Mr. Chubb, and he tells the people in his famous sermon, Matth. vii. 12. *That for men to do to others, all things whatsoever they would that others should do to them, was the LAW and the PROPHEETS*: that is, this golden maxim was inculcated by the *Law* and the *Prophets* ; it was the doctrine of both ; the great point in view ; the scope and end of them ; and included every social virtue. Nay, in chap. xxii. he tells the *Lawyer*, that the first, chief, principal commandment was, *to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and soul, and mind* ; that is, with the utmost intenseness. And that the *second* like to it, is, *thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self* ; and that on these two hang all the *LAW and the PROPHEETS*. But the *Law* and the *Prophets* seem to take in the whole of the
Jewish

Jewish Dispensation: and if so, then the Law and the Prophets could not suspend on these two maxims or principles, and at the same time *encourage* persecution! it is impossible—*again*, as the Apostle to the *Romans* has it, ch. xiii. 8. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law.* So Gal. v. 14. *For all the (social) Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self: this is the scope of the second Table, and strictly enjoined by the Jewish Dispensation.*

I THINK the *Jewish* cannot be denied to have been a *divine dispensation*, if we will allow our *Saviour's* authority to be conclusive; he frequently refers to it as such; see Luke xvi. 29, 31.—*They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them. If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded tho' one rose from the dead.* It perhaps may be objected, that this is only the application of a *Parable*, and therefore not conclusive.—I answer, altho' it is so, yet nothing can be more plain than the *moral* of the parable it self —A rich uncharitable *Jew* is represented in a state of misery; and an afflicted, poor, and we must suppose, pious *Jew* is described in *Abraham's* Bosom, or a state of happiness. The uncharitable wretch is represented as pleading with *Abraham* to send a Messenger from the dead to inform his brethren

thren of the necessity of a different temper and conduct, if they would avoid like-misery. *Abraham* is made to answer, that *Moses* and the *Prophets* were a sufficient guide to them, if they would attend to them: which is a plain testimony against the charge of the *Jewish Dispensation's* either *encouraging* or *indulging* an angry, cruel, or a persecuting spirit. In like manner, we find our Lord giving his testimony to the divine authority of *Moses*, *Joh. v. 45, 46.* — *There is one that accuseth you, even MOSES, in whom ye trust; for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.*—So *St. Stephen* declares, *Acts vii. 35.* that God sent him, (that is *Moses*) to be a ruler and a deliverer, by the hands of the Angel which appeared to him in the bush. And, *ver. 37.* this is *that Moses* which said unto the children of *Israel*, a Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. So that if the testimony of our *Lord* and *St. Stephen* be of any weight, *Moses* had not only a divine mission, but he prophesied of Christ. In like manner, we find *Philip* telling *Nathaniel*, that they had found him of whom *Moses* in the law, and the *Prophets* did write, *Jesus of Nazareth*, the son of *Joseph*; *John i. 45.* And *St. Luke* tells us, that after our *Lord's* resurrection, he expounded to the two disciples going to *Emaus*, in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself; and in doing so, he began at *Moses,*

ses, and went through all the prophets, and expounded unto them in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself, Luke xxiv. 27.

THIS is therefore a *doctrine* plainly taught by our Lord, *viz.* that the *Jewish Writings* testified concerning him: of consequence, should we suppose that the *Evangelist* was mistaken, or that our Lord was mistaken, and that this doctrine was only the *private opinion* of the one, or the other, we may with the same reason suppose that a *private opinion* runs through the whole, and thereupon entirely reject the history as spurious.

WE must therefore take care how we interpret any part of the *Jewish Scriptures* so as to contradict this most evident truth. It will not be found sufficient to disprove the truth of this remark, about the spirit of the *Jewish Dispensation*, *viz.* that any of the *Prophets* were commission'd by God to deliver his threatenings; or even appear to be concern'd in the execution of them: or, that the Children of *Israel* were at times directed to destroy such and such People. Either *Idolatry* or other *great vices* were the ground of such appointments; and they themselves, their *Priests*, and their *Kings* when transgressors, were notorious instances of such displeasure in the great Governour of the World. He did not spare them when they revolted, but

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executed

executed Judgments upon them, and visited them with sore calamities. Such manifest reasons are there to expect, that an unbiass'd, honest, and careful attention to the *Jewish History* will convince us, that no such *angry spirit*, that draw'd after it death and destruction, was ever, either *encouraged* or *indulg'd* under that dispensation. I might go over the several *Narratives* objected to, but this is unnecessary: the ingenious Mr. *John Leland's Divine Authority of the Old and New Testament asserted*, against the *Moral Philosopher*, is a sufficient refutation of Mr. *Chubb's* hypothesis, and is likely to stand every attack that can be made against it: for *great is Truth, divine in its nature and original, and it will, it cannot but prevail.*

BUT lest some of my *Readers* may not have the happiness of seeing either this defence; or that of Mr. *Chapman's*, on the same subject, I would take this opportunity of giving an hint or two—*The disposition of the Canaanites*, &c. is objected to, as a most notorious instance, not only, of *cruelty*, but *injustice*. Mr. *Chubb* says, “ *persecution* seems, at least, to be *countenanced* by the *Jewish Religion*; and that it is no wonder a *Jew* should persecute on account of Religion; because the settlement of his Ancestors in *Canaan*, and the behaviour of many men of renown among the *Jews*, seems to *encourage* it.” *Mind.* pag. 48. Now we are expressly told, that it was
I for

for the wickedness of these people, the Canaanites, that they were dispossessed and destroy'd: see Deut. ix. 5. accordingly we find that the Children of Israel are prohibited from bowing down to their Gods, or serving them, or doing after their works—Their idolatry and wickedness was exceedingly great! therefore God determin'd to send his Angel before the Israelites, to bring them in to the land of the Ammorites and the Hittites, &c. and to cut them off; Exod. xxiii. 23, 24. In like manner, the Israelites are forbid to make any Covenant with them, or with their gods. *They shall not dwell in thy land* (says God) *lest they make thee sin against me:* ver. 32, 33.—The abominable vices of the seven Nations to be destroy'd we have a detail of, which runs almost throughout the xviii. chap. of Levit. see ver. 26, 27, 28, 29. *For all these abominations* (that is, aforementioned abominations) *have the men of the land done, which were before you; and the land is defiled—Commit ye not therefore these abominations, that the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you, for whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them, shall be cut off from among their people.* No wonder then that we find, they are strictly enjoyn'd to consume all the people WHICH THE LORD SHOULD DELIVER TO THEM, and that their eye should have NO PITY upon them; according to Deut. vii. 16. since

their abominations had render'd them unworthy of life, and absolutely unfit for humane society. This surely, cannot be call'd a *fiery piety* and an angry persecuting zeal, when the old inhabitants had forfeited all claim to humane pity or compassion by their abominations; and stood sentenc'd and devoted to destruction by the laws, not only of nature, but of civil society. Nor were the *Jews* to expect more favour themselves, if they arriv'd to the same degrees of vice and impiety. We accordingly find, that upon the *Israelites* revolting, they were likewise destroy'd with remarkable destructions. This proceeding then was entirely consistent with God's *rectoral* government of the World; — yea, such was the wickedness of men, that no other but these *judicial* methods seems likely to have preserv'd an acknowledgment of his being and perfections in the moral world, I mean among men. He had once destroy'd the humane Family, all but eight souls, on account of their universal corruption, or debasement of their powers and faculties! so he had two cities by *fire from heaven!* was this persecution? — and he now brings out an injur'd oppress'd people from one of the idolatrous nations with *signs* and *wonders*; displaying the greatness of his power, and the glories of his mercy and compassion for them: if so be, they will attend, hearken, and become obedient. And altho' they were to be the *Instruments* of his vengeance, yet this will no more suppose an angry piety,

piety, or a persecuting spirit encouraged in them; than the *same spirit* is suppos'd to be encourag'd by the Laws of nature, which would *resent* and *condemn* a man's devoting his offspring to a *brassen statue*, made hot enough to torture and consume the child, as soon as put into the arms of it; which statue should at the same time, be worshipped by him as his God!—this would appear by the light of nature as abhorrent, and monstrously inhumane! The law of nature teaches us likewise, to abhor and detest a man or a woman's *lying with a beast*; as it introduces the most shocking and horrid confusion!—I say, with the same propriety this abhorrence of iniquity may be stiled an *angry piety*, &c.—if we have a mind to cavil.

THAT the *Jewish Dispensation* encouraged or indulged a persecuting spirit, I have shewn is contrary to the Character their *Sovereign* and *Lord* gives of himself, who was known by the name of *the Lord, the Lord God merciful* and *gracious*: it was contrary to the spirit and temper of their *great prophet*: it was contrary to their most *express laws*, which forbid all hard heartedness, oppression, or cruelty, either as to their *poor*, their *neighbours* or *strangers*! On the other hand, in the words of Mr. *Leland*,* “those several precepts relating to soci-

* Pag. 127. of his *Divine Authority*, &c.

“ness

“ nels and humanity in the law of *Moses*, as can
 “ scarce be parallell’d in any laws that were given
 “ to any other nation.”

THEIR charity in lending to the poor, *Deut. xxiv.*
 13. is distinguish’d by the name of *righteousness*,
 which word, says *Maimonides*, does not merely sig-
 nify the giving to every man his own, but what
 he does out of pure love to virtue and goodness, is
 properly call’d by that name. † So they were to
 express great humanity and tenderness to strangers;
Exod. xxiii. 9. Also thou shalt not oppress a stran-
ger: for ye know the heart, or soul, of a stranger,
seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. The
 remembrance of their own oppressions, and their
 deliverance from them, should, and naturally
 wou’d excite compassion to strangers. “ Nor were
 “ they ever warranted by *their Law* to enforce the
 “ observation of it by Fire and Sword, or to use
 “ any methods of violence in order to proselyte
 “ those of any other Nation to their Religion, or
 “ to *persecute* them if they refus’d to conform to
 “ their peculiar Rites. There is not any one pre-
 “ cept in the whole Law to this purpose. It is
 “ therefore, a very wrong account that he (that is,
 “ the *Moral Philosopher*) gives of the *Jewish State*
 “ or *Religion of Moses*, when he represents it, as
 “ founded in the principles of Persecution, and as

† *Levii's Antiq. Heb. rep. vol. III. p. 183.*

“ absolutely inconsistent with Toleration, Indulgence, and Liberty of Conscience, or the rights of private Judgment——One great design for which that Polity was erected, was to establish the worship of the one true God in opposition to idolatry. This was *not only* the chief principle of their *Religion*, but the principal maxim of their state——Their possession of the land of *Canaan*, and all the advantages and privileges promised them, absolutely depended by Covenant upon their persevering in the worship of the true God.—Those therefore that were guilty of *Idolatry*, were to be regarded as Traitors and Enemies to their Country, subverting their fundamental Constitution, and that original Covenant on which their Preservation as a Community depended.—In a state so constituted, it was far from being cruel or unjust, or contrary to the liberties of mankind to punish *Idolaters* with death. ’Twas no more so in them, than it is in other Countries and States to punish high *Treason*, or a conspiracy to subvert the state, with death.—Nor is there one precept in the whole law directing or encouraging them to extirpate Idolatry, and to destroy Idolaters in other Countries, that is, beyond the bounds of *Palestine*.” *—On the contrary, “ they enter’d into Leagues and Covenants of Friendship with Idolatrous Nations.” See †

* *Leland's Divine Author*. p. 129, 130, 131, 133. † *Ib.* p. 144.

ELIAS's angry prayer, or his persecuting spirit, will not therefore, look with any manner of grace; forasmuch as such *fiery Piety* was entirely repugnant to the *dispensation* to which he, as a *Jew*, belong'd.—

I AM of opinion, that whoever reads my *Remarks on his true Gospel*, will think Mr. *Chubb* was obliged to have given some reasons why *Elias* cannot be suppos'd to have pray'd for the drought; and why we may not suppose it to have been a *compassionate prayer*, before he had with so much contradiction asserted, that the *Prophet's prayer had so little to do in this affair*. I shall conclude this section by citing Mr. *Chubb* upon the place, in his enquiry into the meaning of our Lord's words, *Mark ii. 5.*—where he has introduced this passage in *St. James* about *Elias*, which he paraphrases thus, ver. 16.

“ *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed; that is, that ye may be delivered from those afflictions which may be laid upon you for those faults. The effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous man availeth much; that is, it availeth much toward the healing of those that are afflicted as aforesaid. Ver. 17. Elias was a man subject to like-passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly, &c. Ver. 18. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, &c.* Here we see what it was
 “ that

“ that *Elias*’s prayer was effectual for ; not the
“ inflicting or removing of everlasting punishment
“ in the world to come ; but for the inflicting
“ and removing of temporary punishment here in
“ this World. ——— † ”

S E C T. H.

Of the credit of the Sacred Writings. Mr. Chubb’s true Gospel, but a part of the true Gospel. Some reasons offer’d in support of the Inspiration of the Sacred Historians.

MR. CHUBB in his *Vindication*, p. 33, 34. says, “ Truth is what I value and pursue,
“ and error is what I am not interested in ; and
“ therefore I ought to esteem him a friend, who
“ leads me to the former, and from the latter.
“ And, whereas my opponents have not entered
“ into the merits of this cause, but only have
“ attacked me in a part, in which, I suppose,
“ they thought me to be weak and unguarded ; for
“ this I do not think my self greatly obliged to
“ them ; neither, I think, is the world. Howe-
“ ver, I suppose it was thought proper, that some-

† See Mr. Chubb’s *Several Enquiries*, p. 215.

34 *Of the Credit of the Sacred Writers.*

“ *thing* should be said, that so my book might not
 “ pass without having *something* offered against it,
 “ which might be called an *answer* to it. Be-
 “ sides, if I am guilty of that great error of
 “ *defect* I am charged with, then, I think, my
 “ opponents ought, in justice to the subject, and
 “ to mankind, to have *supplied* that *defect*, by
 “ giving a full and compleat account of the matter.
 “ They ought to have shew’d what the Gospel of
 “ Christ is, in its *full extent*; that so every one
 “ might know what they have to *rely upon*; and
 “ not to have left the case, according to their ac-
 “ count of it, in the same *undetermined state*, in
 “ which they found it.”

I SHALL not presume to offer any defence of Mr. *Hallet*, he needs no such aid as mine. I shall confine my self, as near as I can, to what I apprehend I am more immediately concern’d in. And I cannot but think upon the most unprejudic’d and careful examination, that Mr. *Chubb* has done no more than trifled with the *Remarks* I have made on the *Vith Sect. of his true Gospel*. He indeed does yet insist upon those things as *private opinions*, which he had before asserted to be such: and has charged St. *James* with being *too credulous* with regard to *Elias’s* prayer: nay, he has asserted that *Elias’s* prayer had little or nothing to do in the affair: and has branded the *Jewish* Dispensation with *en-*
couraging

couraging or at least *indulging* a *fiery piety*, an *angry, religious zeal*; but has offer'd nothing in proof, save only his own *ipse dixits*. He adds, that “*There*
“ *were many persons* (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and
“ *John among others*) *who took upon them VOLUN-*
“ *TARILY to write and publish the history of*
“ *Christ's life and ministry, they not having any*
“ *SPECIAL call to that work*; so they like other
“ *Historians, blended their own sentiments with*
“ *that History, and gave their judgments on seve-*
“ *ral facts, which, as historians, they were not*
“ *concern'd to do.*” *

GRANT Mr. Chubb this, and *the Gospel of Christ* will stand for nothing but a confus'd, blend-
ed, needless tale—a parcel of busy fellows, with-
out any authority for what they did, set about *vo-*
luntarily to write the History of Christ, which they
had no *special call* to; and so, *blended* whatever
they pleas'd with it! Mr. Chubb may well call his
own Book *the true Gospel of Jesus Christ asserted*;
and his VINDICATION, *the true Gospel of Jesus*
Christ vindicated; for he has left himself as much
authority, and as great *penetration* as all of the Sa-
cred Historians put together.—In this, as far as
I am capable of judging, he has entirely given up
the whole of the Christian Revelation.† For if

* Vind. pag. 20, 21.

† N. B. I don't charge Mr. Chubb with designing this.

36 *Of the Credit of the Sacred Writers.*

these *Evangelists* wrote the history on their own heads, *having no other Authority* or call for what they did, but their own *whim* and *fancy*, the whole may be, and most probably is, a mere humane invention. And altho' Mr. *Chubb's true Gospel* is professed to be form'd on the Gospel of these Writers; we must not be surpriz'd to find it as good, nay, preferable to theirs; forasmuch as he has detected their *errors* and *private opinions*, and separated them from the true Gospel. His is a refinement on *their Gospel*, which needed great correction, being so much *blended*, and only done on their own heads, when there was no need of their writing the Gospel at all; for if there had been a necessity for such an History to be wrote, and to be wrote with an exactness proportional to its importance, then one wou'd have expected, that some of the writers would have had a *special call* to compile the History. We might reasonably be led to expect, that some one, at least, would have been under *special* and *extraordinary assistances* for this work, since the History, according to Mr. *Chubb*, would be of the greatest consequence to mankind: for he declares p. 63. of his *true Gospel*; that *Christ came not to be ministred unto, but to minister, and to give his life a RANSOM for many*: and that the great design, and end of his coming into the world, was to SAVE MENS SOULS, p. 1. This seems to be very inconsistent, viz. that the end and design of Christ's

Christ's coming into the world, of his whole public ministry, and of the giving of his life, should be for the LIFE of the world, and for the SALVATION of souls; and yet, that the History of it should be a matter of mere indifference whether it was wrote, or not! and was only wrote just according to the dint of private fancy, and blended accordingly! 'tis amazing! I could, I profess, as soon believe that God never did send his Son into the world on any such errand, as to suppose that the memoirs of such an important Event should be left indifferently to the humours of men, whether they would collate and write the history of this Advent or not; or that it should be left to mere humane judgment to compile; or suffer'd to be mix'd and blended with any thing false and spurious, according to the credulity of the Writer.—And Mr. Chubb has given me no reason why I should not wholly reject these Histories as spurious, or at least, why I should pay them so much regard as I ought to pay to his own true Gospel.—

I would here remark, that what I suppose necessary to support the credit of these Writers, is, that we are persuaded that they were under the guidance of the divine Spirit so far in compiling their Histories, as that they should introduce no falsity; be guilty of no contradictions; should insert nothing unworthy the Character of men thus guided by

38 *Of the Credit of the Sacred Writers.*

by the *Spirit of God*.—And yet, I do not suppose, that their introducing incidents which were matters of *mere indifference* in themselves, were useless to the Christians to whom they were first published. So far from this, little incidents and occurrences were of *great use* in their recollecting those facts to which they refer'd; and must help the disciples in giving their *testimonials* to the truth of them. † So that with great propriety St. *Luke* could introduce his Gospel, with telling the excellent *Theophilus*, or the *lover of God*, “ that forasmuch as many have
 “ taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration
 “ of those things which are most surely believed a-
 “ mong us, most certainly known, or fully mani-
 “ fested, as performed or done among us. Even
 “ as they, which from the beginning were eye-
 “ witnesses, and ministers of the word, (or *Logos*)
 “ have delivered them to us. It SEEMED GOOD *
 “ to me also, having had *perfect understanding of*
 “ *all things*, or, who have been a diligent follow-
 “ er of all from the very first, to write to thee, in
 “ order that thou mightest know the *certainty* of
 “ those things, words or facts, wherein thou hast
 “ been instructed (*κατηχήθης*) by word of mouth.”

† See *John* ii. 22. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the Scripture.

* Comp. *Acts* xv. 25, 28. the same expression is used.

Now

Now whether we understand by the *most excellent Theophilus* any particular person greatly esteem'd by St. Luke; or, a *lover of God*, as the word imports; there is nothing in this *Preface* that intimates to us, he was not under a divine direction. He discovers a spirit and design worthy of an *Evangelist*. He seems possessed of a high and just sense of the *importance* of the subject he was to treat upon. He expresses the certainty of the facts he was going to relate, by declaring them to be *most surely believed, known, perform'd or done* among them. He declares the opportunity he had had of information, was from those who from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word, or of Christ; and that he had *perfect understanding* of all things, or had been a diligent follower of all from the very first. No wonder then it *seemed good* to him to write his history: it could no longer be a *matter of indifference* to a faithful servant of Christ, whether he wrote it or not. When he considered himself as thus qualified, he must see that there was a *special obligation* upon him to write and publish the History of Christ's life and ministry, he being well assured, that such a *perfect understanding* would render him capable of writing a faithful narrative, and that he was under no manner of danger of
“ *blending* such sentiments, or of giving such judgment on facts, which, as an *Historian*, he was
“ not

“ not concerned to do.” But on the contrary, he found himself qualified to write such an History as should be well adapted to convey knowledge, or confirm the mind of the Christian in the belief of those things, concerning which, he had been already instructed by word of mouth, or *oral Tradition*: which WRITTEN HISTORY, the *Church*, he knew, would stand in need of, as a most certain and safe way of handing down the important contents thro’ succeeding ages. *Oral Tradition* was too uncertain a *channel* to be depended upon: it therefore behoved the *wisdom of God*, to hand down the Revelation made by his Son in authentic writings; which have born the contests of ages. And as is *the nature of truth*, so, these writings have shone with a *greater lustre*, the more they have been canvass’d and examin’d.—

How Mr. *Chubb* can exclude the *death and resurrection of Christ*, as not belonging to the Gospel, or *good news*, I cannot conceive; since he allows, *that he came to give his life a RANSOM for many*. He tells us, “ It is true *St. Paul* faith, *Rom. iv.* “ 25. that Christ was delivered for our offences, “ and was raised again for our justification; which, “ no doubt, is true, in the *Apostle’s sense*, as the “ death and resurrection of Christ were, some way “ or other, *subservient* to answer the forementioned “ purpose; but that God could not *pardon sinners*, “ without

“ without the *death* and *resurrection* of Christ; or,
“ that these were *necessary* to answer that purpose,
“ is more easily *taken for granted*, than *pro-*
“ *ved.* †

Now if Christ's being delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, be true in the Apostle's sense, as his *death* and *resurrection*, did *some way or other serve those purposes*; then every one will see, that we have a concern with the *death* and *resurrection* of Christ, as what may properly be said to belong to, or be a part of the true Gospel. Nor is it any thing to the purpose to put the Question he does, by way of objection, *viz.* whether God could have pardon'd sinners without the *death* and *resurrection* of Christ? To determine about this, is to judge *rash judgment*: 'tis to judge without evidence, or beyond evidence: and we may rest satisfied with the fitness of this Event, if we are once assured, that this is the method God has took.—Shou'd we attend to the Apostle *Paul*, he is found to be *plain* and *express* on this subject: see the *contrast* he has put between mortality introduced by the sin of *Adam*, and a resurrection from the dead by *Christ*, *Rom. v.*——

Mr. *Chubb* having gone thro', or paraphrased, the greatest part of the argument; I shall only

† *Vind.* pag. 15.

G

transcribe

transcribe his comment on two of the verses. Ver. 17.
 “ For if by one man’s offence, Death reigned by one ;
 “ much more they which receive abundance of grace,
 “ and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in
 “ life by one Jesus Christ : which is as much as if
 “ he had said, for if by one offence of Adam, death
 “ passed upon all his posterity ; much more shall
 “ they all to whom God hath super-abounded in
 “ grace, in giving his Son to death for them (even
 “ all mankind) be restored to life again thro’ him.

“ Ver. 18. THEREFORE as by the offence of
 “ one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation ;
 “ even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift
 “ came upon all men unto justification of life : which
 “ is as much as if he had said, therefore as by one
 “ offence, even Adam’s eating of the forbidden
 “ fruit, all men fell under the condemnation of
 “ death ; so by one act of righteousness or obedi-
 “ ence, viz. Christ’s obedience to death upon the
 “ Cross, all men are restored to life again.” †

THUS evident is it, not only from *St. Paul*,
 but from *Mr. Chubb*, that the death of Christ was
some way or other subservient to answer the purpose
 of our justification : nay, that it is the very ap-
 pointed way of removing the sentence of death to
 which all mankind are subject ; and of restoring all

† *His Enquiry concerning Sin*, p. 57.

to life: therefore Mr. *Chubb's* gospel is not the *true Gospel*; but a maimed account of the true Gospel; forasmuch, as he has absolutely excluded the facts of Christ's suffering, dying, rising from the dead, ascending into heaven, &c. and calls these historical facts such as are not concern'd in the *gospel of Jesus Christ*, neither in the whole, nor in part. †— So inconsistent is Mr. *Chubb*, that his *true Gospel*, and the *vindication* of it, contain the most express contradictions: for, if the *facts* of Christ's suffering, dying, rising from the dead, ascending into heaven, &c. are such facts in which the *Gospel of Christ* is not concern'd, neither in the whole, nor in part: then the *death and resurrection of Christ* could not any way be *subservient* to the purposes of delivering us from our offences; and the ascertaining of our justification. But Mr. *Chubb* by owning that Christ gave his life a *ransom* for many, and that the end of his coming was to *save mens souls*: and that his death and resurrection did some way or other *subserve* those purposes, is a direct contradiction to his saying, that these were historical facts which are not concern'd with the Gospel of Christ *either in whole, or in part*—certainly, if any thing belong'd to *good tidings*, delivering from our offences, and ascertaining our justification, must belong to them: and if the death and resurrection of Christ did some way or other *subserve* these purpo-

† True Gospel, p. 43.

ses, then they must belong to the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.——

NOR need we be in any pain about his Question, *viz.* whether God could have pardon'd sinners without the death and resurrection of Christ? since he himself has expressly asserted, that by the *death of Christ* sinners are pardon'd, that is, the condemnation is remov'd, and by this one act of obedience all men are restored to life again. Now if this be not allowed as *good news*; then by excluding his death, we exclude the *grand article* on which the penitent can found his hopes of mercy, even that which is the appointed *pledge* and *security* of his justification; and of consequence, there is nothing left in the Gospel that can discover the certainty of a resurrection to eternal life: so that this fact being excluded the true Gospel, Mr. Chubb can support no one of his three branches of the true Gospel. For, if the *death of Christ*, according to St. Paul and Mr. Chubb, be that *one act of righteousness*, by which all men are restored to life again; then, 1. Mens conforming their minds and lives to that eternal and unalterable rule of action which is founded in the reason of things; would not entitle them to the happiness of another world, *without the death of Christ*; for the reason, that all men are restored to life again by this *one act*. Nor, 2. Would *repentance* and *reformation* be any sure ground of the
divine

divine mercy and forgiveness, to men who had been guilty of any wilful violations of this righteous law. Forasmuch as St. Paul says, *Rom. v. 16. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one, that is, one act of Disobedience, to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification:* “ which is as much as if “ he had said, the Grace which God hath vouchsafed to mankind in Jesus Christ, is more abundant “ than the sentence laid upon *Adam*, as appears “ from this (*viz.*) the sentence of death which “ passed upon *Adam* was for only one single offence; “ but the gift of a future resurrection, which God “ hath given to mankind in and thro’ Christ Jesus, “ is vouchsafed to us, tho’ we have been guilty, “ not only of one, but of many offences:” † which compared with what went before, will shew, that Repentance and Reformation could have been no sure ground of the divine mercy and forgiveness to sinners, without that appointed pledge and security, *the death of Christ*; which event discovers the free gift to be of many offences to justification. Nor, 3. Can that part of the Gospel be supported of Christ’s having assured men that God has appointed a day in which he will *judge the world in righteousness*, and will *acquit or condemn, reward or punish*. For St. Paul adds, (from whom Mr. Chubb seems to have taken this part of his Gospel) that

† Enquiry concerning sin, p. 56.

of this, he hath given assurance, or offered faith (that is, this as an object of faith) unto all men, in that he hath raised him, *that is*, Christ, from the dead. So that according to *St. Paul*, if men be doubtful about the Resurrection of Christ, they can have no assurance of such a day of retribution: for if they could, then *St. Paul's* reasoning is fallacious, *viz.* whereof he has given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead, *Acts xvii. 31.* But it is his usual way of reasoning. Accordingly we find him telling the *Corinthians*, *1 epist. chap xv.* that if Christ be not risen, their preaching was vain, their faith vain, and they yet in their sins: no resurrection to life, had he not risen; and, consequently, a day could not be appointed to acquit and reward.

I PRESUME I have fairly proved *Mr. C.* justly chargeable with being *guilty of that great error of defect*; and have thus far, in justice to him, to the subject, and to mankind, supplied it. But lest *Mr. C.* should think I have not given a full and compleat account of the matter, I shall add, that I think, if we would have any thing esteem'd as true Gospel, and as such, fit to be *relied upon*, we must support the *Credit* of the *Historians*. We must not imagine that Christ's public ministry, his doctrine, life, death, resurrection, &c. in all which the *saving of mens souls* is concerned, should not
only

only be well understood by his immediate disciples and followers; but, in order to the end being answered in after-ages, this important design of divine mercy would certainly be transmitted in *undoubted* records, unmingled with *credulous stories*, or useless, trifling reflections. For, if we may suppose with Mr. Chubb, “ That to *believe in*, and to submit to be governed by the *Laws* of Christ, is what, and what alone constitutes a Christian; and that it is this which *contracts* the relation betwixt Christ and his people—that Christ stands to his people in the relation of a *Governour*, as he was appointed and sent of God to declare to men what that *rule of action* is, which they are to govern their *tempers* and *behaviours* by, and which will render them *pleasing* to their Maker.” * —

And if we add, that he came to give his life a *ransom*, as Mr. C. owns he did; we must suppose, that this *Governour* and *Saviour* of men, must have took proper care to have his *history* faithfully wrote, and convey'd down to his followers through all succeeding ages hitherto; and that his being invested with *all power*, will render him capable of doing it to the end of the world. We must be persuaded what are, and what are not the *Laws of Christ*, in order to our believing in, and submitting to them: which we cannot do, if we are uncertain about the

* True Gospel, p. 4, 5.

capacity, attention, or integrity of his HISTORIANS. We must be persuaded, that he actually capacitated some to perform the part of *Evangelists*, as well as others, that of *Apostles*, and *Prophets*.—This done, we must consider the *Evangelists* as having drawn up *the life of Christ* with a constant and steady regard to truth: and understand the *Apostles* as applying every part of the true Gospel in a manner suited to the state of those persons and churches to which they wrote; giving a farther explanation of the facts of our Lord's *sufferings, death, and resurrection, &c.* by virtue of that spirit of *wisdom and knowledge*, which he plentifully endowed them with. So that the *true Gospel*, being accommodated to the variety of cases the *Epistles* refer to, those epistles have an happy effect in directing the Christian in his enquiries concerning the purposes of divine mercy through Christ Jesus. And the careful Christian will be in no danger of mistaking *St. Paul's having left his cloak at Troas, or his parchments*, for any essential part of the true Gospel. Nor will he be offended at his declaring, *that Alexander the copper-smith had done him much evil, the Lord reward him according to his works.* To understand this as an *imprecation*, the *honest man* will see inconsistent with the Spirit of the Gospel, and of *St. Paul*: therefore he'll conclude, that it must have another meaning; he can, and he may as easily understand this as a prediction, as *Mr. Chubb* can the prayer of *Elias*

to be one.—And should he not readily understand it, he'll not be shock'd at an expression of this nature; as being persuaded that it is not any part of the *true Gospel*. The Christian will be able to see with great clearness what has a reference to inform his judgment, and regulate his temper and conduct; and that whatever has such a tendency, must be receiv'd by him as the mind of Christ his Master. He'll find himself under peculiar obligations, from the *precepts of morality* being carried to the utmost perspicuity and perfection, by the *doctrine of Christ*, and by his *Example*: and he'll be very thankful for that finish'd pattern of resignation and obedience, which his *master* has set before him. He will see the evidence of the *divine Mission* of his Lord, and look upon his whole undertaking as the effect of divine love. And from the testimony which his death gave of the *propitious nature* of God, he will look upon himself as justified; and upon the resurrection of his Saviour he will ground his hopes of the mercy of God to eternal life. Nor will he part with any one of the Books, call'd, *the four Gospels*: forasmuch as he finds, that *divine wisdom* has compassionately consulted the frailty of human nature, by their harmony adding weight to the genuineness of the *record*. No, nor with the *epistles*; since the *Apostles* have given such plain directions in what manner, and with what views to apply and accommodate the various parts of the *true Gospel*, amidst

various occurrences of duty, temptation, or difficulty. He will receive that, as belonging to the *true Gospel of Jesus Christ*, which appears to be the doctrine of his Kingdom; explanatory of any of his transactions, or of the great end for which he took flesh and tabernacled among men; whether it be from the Pen of St. *Matthew*; or of St. *Paul*, or St. *Peter*.—He is persuaded that Christ did not write any history of himself; and that therefore St. *Paul* could with as great Propriety call the *Doctrine of mercy* preached by him to the *Gentiles*, *his Gospel*, meaning the Gospel of Christ; as St. *Mark* could begin his history with saying, *the beginning of the Gospel*, &c. forasmuch as the *Gentiles* were to hear the Gospel from St. *Paul's* mouth, *Acts* xv. 7. which Gospel he expressly declares to be *the Gospel of Christ*. So that what St. *Paul* taught as the Gospel of Christ, was in reality the Gospel of Christ, notwithstanding that part which the Apostle explain'd, had not been so explicitly taught by our Saviour, during his Stay on earth. St. *Paul* had his commission from an *ascended Jesus* by the will of God the Father: See *Gal.* i. 1. comp. *2 Cor.* i. 1. The Gospel of Christ cannot therefore with any propriety be confin'd to what he expressly taught on earth, or to what is related of him in the four Evangelists, but must take in the Apostles, and their farther openings or discoveries of the nature and design of his Kingdom, through the several Epistles. To proceed,

I CANNOT think, that there are any such things *blended* in the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles, as any way tend to darken important truths. Indeed if we form our sentiments of these writings by the *schemes, opinions and systems* of OTHER WRITERS, we may soon not only find things unworthy of a divine revelation, but even an infinitude of palpable contradictions. But then, altho' the distant mock-rivulets are polluted, the genuine fountain is yet pure and healthful.—And notwithstanding Mr. C's charging it with many *defects*, I think he has not offer'd any one reason to support his charge; altho' he calls this late pamphlet of his, a *Vindication of his true Gospel*: except he would have us take that as one, p. 21. where he says (speaking of the *blendings and private opinions*). “ thus St. *Matthew* remarks, “ upon Christ's healing all that were sick, that this “ was done, that it might be fulfilled, which was “ spoken by *Esaias* the prophet, saying, *Himself* “ *took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses*, Matth. “ viii. 17. Here we see, that St. *Matthew* brings “ down that famous prophecy in the liii^d of *Isaiab*, “ and represents it as a prediction of Christ's *healing* “ *bodily diseases*; whereas great multitudes of Chri- “ stians have understood this prophecy in a very “ different, and much higher sense.” This is glorious reasoning! because *great multitudes of Christians* have understood this prophecy in a very different, and much higher sense; therefore, this cannot

be a true sense, but must be called the *private opinion* of St. *Matthew*! What does Mr. C. mean? Does he think any man of common capacities will take this for reasoning! ——— “ But he does not “ know what else to call it, that would be more “ proper.” Poor Gentleman! Let me tell him, there have been *great multitudes* of Christians, who have imagined that Christ came only to die for a certain number, a *little flock*, a *few*, absolutely destin’d to salvation from all eternity: and therefore for CHRIST to say, *that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life*; and for Peter and Paul, to declare *that God is no respecter of persons*; must be only understood to be the *private opinions* of Christ and of his Apostles, for this very reason, *viz. because great multitudes of Christians* have understood the design of his death in a *different and much lower* sense. —

But Mr. C. goes on, “ It does not appear that “ St. *Matthew* was *divinely constituted* a judge of “ the sense of scripture-prophecy, and therefore we “ can have no ground to presume that he was *di- “ vinely qualified* for such a work; so he might, “ for any thing we know, or can shew, to the con- “ trary, be *liable to err*, with respect to it. How- “ ever, whether St. *Matthew* did err, or not, with “ respect to the point in hand, is of no consequence “ to

“ to us, seeing *that point* is no part of that good
“ news, which Christ was, in a particular and spe-
“ cial manner sent of God to acquaint the world
“ with ; nor is our future safety any way concern'd
“ in it.” —

I THINK I may venture to say, that it does not appear, but that St. *Matthew* was *divinely qualified* to be a judge of *Scripture prophecy* ; and that so far as his history had any concern with it, he properly and justly applied it: so that it is but *vain* and *presumptuous* to suppose he *err'd* with regard to prophecy. To suppose he *erred* in this point, will render him a *Writer* of suspicious credit in *other points*.—So that if our *future safety* has any dependance on the *truth of Christ's Gospel*, it is of consequence to us whether St. *Matthew* did *err*, or not.—I add, the *unprejudiced Christian* will plainly discern ; that if the Apostle *Paul* when writing upon a subject concerning which he had *no commandment from the Lord*, yet, cou'd give his judgment, as one, *that had obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful* ; he must then conclude, that the *Historians* concern'd in compiling the Narratives of the *person, doctrines, actions and death* of the Saviour of the world, undoubtedly received Commandment from the Lord ; and likewise did certainly obtain *like mercy to be faithful*.—

How unintelligible must St. Paul be, if he himself was not under the guidance of a *divine Inspiration* in writing those Epistles which he sent to the churches? 1 Cor. vii. 6. *But I speak this by permission, not of commandment.*—ver. 10. *I command, yet not I, but the Lord*—ver. 12. *But to the rest speak I, not the Lord*—ver. 25. *I have no commandment of the Lord, yet I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.* Why these exceptions? and from what?—Nor did he only represent himself as under the immediate guidance of the Spirit of God, but he was persuaded that the *Jewish Scriptures* were wrote by the same Inspiration, 2 Tim. iii. 16.—'Tis no manner of objection to the conclusiveness of that *text* on the side of the *divine Inspiration* of the Scriptures, to say, that the former part of the verse has some ambiguity in the *Greek*; so that some would have it read, *All scripture given by inspiration of God, is profitable, &c.* and from hence they would infer; that any writings whatsoever, which have what is profitable for *doctrine, &c.* is therefore, with the same propriety, to be esteem'd given by the *Inspiration of God.*—It cannot be so understood: for, the particle, *πᾶσα*, all, is not a note of universality; but denotes an integer. It can only signify all *that sort of scripture* which is given by inspiration of God is profitable, &c. or as the learned *Poole* expresses it; it intends

tends thus much, *that as God does nothing in vain, so neither does he inspire men, but to render them capable of giving instruction, or of teaching others,*† &c. Nay, the context will confine it to those writings called the *holy scriptures*, which *Timothy* had known from a child. Those scriptures taught him by his *Mother* and *Grandmother* who were *Jews*; of which writings *the apostle* says, that they were able to make *Timothy* wise unto salvation, thro' faith which is in *Christ Jesus*.—*I add*, *Dr. Hammond* seems to have given the words the most natural and just construction; which is this, *All Scripture* (that is receiv'd into the Canon of the *Jewish Church*) *being inspired by God, is also profitable, &c.* θεόπνευστος, καὶ ὠφέλιμος—It was therefore all of those writings which the apostle distinguish'd by the name of *holy scriptures*, that *Timothy* had known from a child, of which he affirms them profitable for *Doctrine*, &c. So *St. Peter* gives his testimony to the writings of his beloved brother *Paul*, as being penn'd according to the wisdom GIVEN to him; 2 Pet. iii. 15.

NOR is it to be otherwise suppos'd, than that the writings of the *Old Testament* were inspired of God, since they contain the methods of his Government and Rule in the world thro' the several ages of it. And as they display his perfections in the various dispen-

† Synop. Crit. in loco.

56 *Of the Credit of the Sacred Writers.*

fations of his Providence, it was hence meet that they should be compos'd under a *divine guidance*. Besides, there is the greatest probability, that a beautiful chain of *kind design* and *purpose* actually runs thro' the whole; and stands compleat and accomplish'd in the *last Dispensation* introduc'd by the Messiah: for the *apostle* tells the *Hebrews*, that *all they who, in the several ages of the world, had obtain'd a good report thro' faith, received not the promise, God having provided, or foreseen, some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect*; Heb. xi. 39, 40. We cannot then with any propriety imagine, that the accomplishment of the *great scheme of mercy* by Jesus Christ, should be the subject of less care or attention — On the other hand, we may safely conclude, that our faith in the *New Testament writings*, is not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; forasmuch as these writings, as well as the *speech* and *preaching* of the apostles and evangelists, was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power! 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.

AN argument for the Inspiration of the Evangelists might be drawn from the consideration of those numberless *signs* and *wonders* which Jesus wrought during his publick ministry; which were so many, that St. *John* supposes a particular account of them would have been too voluminous for the world

world to have received and attended to; *John* xxi. 25. compared with xx. 30.—Does there not then appear a necessity that the writers should be under a divine guidance in order to their selecting what was most properly adapted to evidence to the world, *that Jesus is the Son of God?* so that by mens believing on him, they might have life thro' his name, according to *John* xx. 31. Nor should we think Inspiration needless to men employed in so important an affair, if we were of opinion with the *Roman Orator* who could say, that no man hath ever been truly great without the assistance of a DIVINE AFFLATUS. †

ONCE more, to suppose the great design of this Revelation not to be convey'd to us in its purity and genuine light, would be to suppose the *end* not equal to the *undertaking*: for the obscurity of the light of nature, occasioned by humane depravity, made this *Revelation* so highly fit and expedient: we cannot therefore suppose that this revival of its laws, and enforcement of its precepts, on the foot of mercy, shou'd be suffered to be corrupted and darken'd in the conveyance. This would be to frustrate the great design of the *incarnation of the Word*; and to reduce men who have the Scriptures to those prior inconveniences and disadvantages, viz. such as were *antecedent* to this Revelation: yea, it would suppose

† Nemo igitur vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit. *Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. II.*

the benefits of the mission of the Son of God confined to the *three years* of his public ministrations; and only to that spot of the world *Palestine!* a thing as incredible, as it is unworthy the divine wisdom and his extensive designs of favour to the children of men.

To suppose the *Sacred Writers* inspired, is, so far from being contrary to reason, that had their several Books been proposed to the world as their own unassisted Composures, they would justly have been rejected by the sober thinking part of mankind: forasmuch as the divinity of their subject required the assistance of the divine Spirit: it being an allow'd maxim, that *no 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.* Reason suggests this, as a truth, without considering it as the saying of the apostle. †

NOR is this any way inconsistent with the *make of man*, or with his relation to and dependence on the infinite mind. The same *Inspiration of the Almighty* that imparts understanding to man, in the ordinary proceedings of his providence, can, no

† *Note*, I might have drawn an argument from the *purity* of their language, who were some of them *illiterate men*, till the gift of tongues: and among other authors, I should have refer'd my Reader to Mr. A. BLACKWELL'S *Sacred Classics defended*; in order to have shewn, that the writings of the New Testament contain the utmost beauties of the *Greek* language; which, to me, is a poof of their *inspiration*.—

doubt, impart extraordinary degrees of wisdom and knowledge: and will do so, when any of his own purposes and designs are proper to be made known for the direction and benefit of mankind. The need of a Revelation has appeared under every dispensation: or rather, in every age of the world: not from the insufficiency of the light of nature, as being in it self more dim in any succeeding age than at first; but from the introduction of vice and prejudice, which indispose the humane faculties for a right perception of, and attention to its laws and precepts.

THE pains Mr. *Chubb* has took in his *Vindication* to expose a censorious persecuting spirit, I have no concern with; forasmuch as I have given him no occasion to complain, by any indecencies in my *remarks* upon his TRUE GOSPEL.—If he has that steady regard to truth, why is he so solicitous about what men think of him?—I desire not to sit in the seat of Judgment, or to censure the *sincerity* of any man. Only this liberty I am allow'd to take, that where I apprehend the *cause of truth*, and Christianity stands more expos'd to neglect, or are weaken'd in their obligations by the Writings of any Author whatsoever, I have then a right to censure, oppose, and detect, as far as I am capable, what I think too presumptuous and dangerous.

I SHALL trouble my reader with no more under this section, but proceed.

S E C T. III.

To take notice of Mr. Chubb's Vindication of his Short Dissertation on PROVIDENCE; wherein a particular Providence is farther explained.

MR. Chubb declares he has not, in his Dissertation on Providence, laid the foundation of his scheme of providence on the *New Testament*, as I have represented him to have done.—For which mistaken charge, *I freely and publickly ask his pardon.*—

HE, in his *short Dissertation*, p. 209, 210. says expressly, “ That God; upon some extraordinary occasions, to answer some great and good ends, should immediately interpose to bring about such events as are necessary to answer those purposes, which events would not have been brought about in the course of his general providence, is a supposition that does not appear unreasonable to me; and therefore I have no objection to it.” But when I had mentioned the *Revolution* as an extraordinary occasion for an immediate interposal, and had traced some of the extraordinary circumstances of it, he charges me with only *presuming.*—
On the other hand, *he only says,* that we have no
just

just and solid grounds for such presumption, since the event *might have been brought about*, and for any thing we know, *was brought about* in the course of God's general providence. Now Mr. Chubb ought to have shewn how his presumption is better supported than mine; and likewise, how we may distinguish between those extraordinary occasions in which God may *immediately interpose* to bring about such events as may answer *great and good* ends, which would not have been brought about in the course of his general providence; and this event of the *Revolution*: for, if it can be proved, that it was an *extraordinary occasion*, and an event attended with many peculiar circumstances of much *hazard and danger*; if it will be allow'd that *great and good* ends were brought about by it: then I think, upon his own concessions, he stands obliged to give us some *criteria* that may determine us rather to range it under the head of his *original plan and settlement*, than under those of his *immediate interposals*. The burning of the Town of *Blandford*, cannot without some difficulty be rang'd under the head of *immediate interposals*, upon Mr. C's scheme; because, he supposes them to bring about some *great and good* end; and he thinks it hard to suppose, that the *particular and special interposition* of the Deity was concern'd in bringing that great desolation upon them. I add, the latter is not a proper illustration of the former, since *moral agency* was concerned in the former, and
the

62 *Of Mr. Chubb's Dissertation on Providence.*

the *consequence* of so great importance as that of LIBERTY or SLAVERY! the apparent fate of three Kingdoms being determined on one side or the other, as the PRINCE OF ORANGE succeeded, or not. And altho' the like varying and shifting of the winds might possibly attend the *burning of Blandford*, that attended the fleet of the *Prince of Orange*, yet Mr. C. has given no reason to suppose that such various shiftings and changings of the wind was not under the immediate direction of God.—And as to *Blandford*—I know of no *Philosopher* but what is baffled in his enquiry into the origin of the winds, and the laws by which they are govern'd. It may be yet said of the wind, *that it bloweth where it listeth*.—Such a notion had the Ancients concerning the *wind*, that we find the *Greeks* used the same word for *spirit*, which they did for *wind*. And I think it was not with great *impropriety*, since its *nature* and *directions* seems not to be accounted for on those mechanical Laws which other *Phenomena* in nature are. Neither do I think that we are under any obligation to determine that the *People of Blandford* were greater sinners than those of *London*, or any other place, altho' we should suppose the shifting of the winds was under the immediate direction of God. We certainly are not; and yet there might be *ends* to be answered by it altogether worthy the divine proposal, tho' to us unknown in their immediate connection. And I should much rather suppose

pose even the burning of the Town of *Blandford* as an instance of *particular providence*, as well as that of the *Revolution*, than imagine, that either the *one*, or the *other*, belong'd to the *original scheme*, and settlement of things: and as such, would have took place accordingly, without any *immediate interposals*.

I AM of opinion with the great Dr. *S. Clarke* *,
“ that what God does always, some men childishly
“ think 'tis not he does it at all; yet nothing can
“ be more reasonable to say, than that God, upon
“ whose good pleasure all the laws and powers of
“ nature perpetually depend, does, at least, in some
“ great events, determine the influences of natural
“ causes to produce such or such particular effects.
“ Thus much we see God has put even in the power
“ of *men*, that by skilful and artificial application
“ of causes, they can in many instances determine
“ the natural powers of things to produce such ef-
“ fects, as they would not naturally have produced
“ without that guidance and direction of art: and
“ nothing can be more absurd, than to imagine
“ that God does less in the Government of the
“ world, than even some of the meanest of his
“ creatures are able to do. When therefore we see
“ *natural causes* conspire strangely, and by a long
“ series to produce some remarkable event; we

* *Serm.* Vol. VI. p. 377, 378.

“ have all the reason in the world, to believe that
 “ thing brought about, by the peculiar direction of
 “ providence; and to behave our selves according-
 “ ly in our Prayers or Thanksgivings to God.
 “ Thus we have all possible reason to believe that
 “ the wisdom of Providence govern'd the springs
 “ of the first causes of the winds and weather, and
 “ of numberless other circumstances of things, on
 “ which depended the success of the Prince of O-
 “ range's enterprize; in consequence of the success
 “ of which, we now enjoy our Religion and Li-
 “ berty, the happy effects of that seasonable and
 “ important *Revolution*, which cannot, without the
 “ greatest *ingratitude*, but be acknowledged with
 “ all thankfulness, to have been the *immediate*
 “ *work* and *singular blessing* of Providence.”

NOR can I forbear inserting a passage I have some-
 where met with of *Apuleius's*—*Postremò quod est in*
triremi gubernator, in curru rector, præcentor in cho-
ris, Lex, in urbe, Dux in exercitu; hoc est in mun-
do Deus. Which may be thus render'd—“ *finally,*
 “ what a *Pilot* is in a ship; or what *he* is that
 “ holds the reins and drives the chariot; or *he* that
 “ beats time and leads in the Consort; or as the
 “ *Law* is to a city; or the *General* in an army,
 “ this is what GOD is, in, or to the world.”

AN universal sense and apprehension of God's particular providence, or his constant immediate concern with humane affairs, has been evident, even among the idolatrous and pagan nations: witness their *Lares* or household Gods, their Gods of the highways, seas, &c. In like manner, the particular *Genius's* that their Philosophers suppos'd constantly attendant on each individual person, as Guardians and Protectors under the direction of a Supreme: these things, by the universal consent of men, suppose a particular providence; unless we can imagine this sort of innate principle being placed as an *ignis fatuus*, or false light, to mislead the whole humane Family.——

T H E R E does not appear to me any possible way of avoiding a sort of *fatality* in the doctrine of Providence, if we suppose an original settlement of things which has provided for all events, so as that they shall certainly and invariably take place: all along forbidding any *special* or *particular* Interposals. For, altho' God is suppos'd to be at the head of this original settlement, yet it makes his Government confin'd: and seems to enervate every argument of hope and trust. Nay, it describes every of his *immediate acts of power* and *divine energy* as necessitated; and of consequence, introduces an Idea of the kind Father of the universe, as the God

66 Of Mr. Chubb's *Dissertation on Providence.*

of *Fate* or necessity, but not of Providence: those establish'd laws of creation and providence being of equal date, and both confin'd to that original Constitution.—*On the contrary*, the constant immediate acts of power and divine energy are not only requisite to the well being and Government of the moral world; but innumerable instances of special aid appearing necessary from the make of man, and the circumstances of his present frailty, it seems highly congruous to the known character of the Deity, that he should frequently interpose. And I think, if we will allow of the various Revelations which he has made of himself to man, thro' the several ages of the world, he certainly has in innumerable special cases, in an especial manner interpos'd. There is an instance Mr. Chubb has mention'd in his *Enquiries*, which I shall have occasion hereafter to take notice of, which if allow'd, is a plain proof of the *special* Interposals of providence; and that is, the case of wicked *Abab*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 29. where, upon his humbling himself, the judgment threatned was averted. So was *Elias's* prayer effectual for the inflicting and removing temporal punishments. * Many more instances might be mention'd from the sacred Writings; instances which by no means seem to belong to the *original settlement*, but must be ranged under the head of particular *interposals*.

* *Chubb's Enq.* p. 215.

LET us not then attribute such events to the product of *natural causes*, or as the effects of the *course of nature*, but rather with the aforementioned excellent Writer say, that “ What men careless and
“ ignorant of the truth, usually and vulgarly stile
“ *Natural Causes*, are indeed nothing but mere in-
“ animate *Instruments* in the hands of God; and
“ the *course of nature*, as 'tis commonly called,
“ is in the truth and reality of things, a mere
“ *empty name*, any otherwise than as signifying, by
“ an abstract way of speaking, the regularity of
“ *his* operations who made and governs all things.
“ 'Tis *he alone* therefore, who *gives us richly all*
“ *things to enjoy*; even all those things, which, in
“ a vulgar and careless way of speaking, we usu-
“ ally ascribe to *natural* and *inanimate causes*;
“ which very same causes, whensoever he pleases,
“ he can make to be the instruments of our *Pu-*
“ *nishment* as well as of our *Support*. He can *make*
“ *the heavens to be brass*, and *the earth iron*: He
“ can *scorch* with *drought*, or *drown* with *moisture*,
“ or *blast* with *unwholsome winds*, in order to de-
“ stroy with *Famine*, and *make a fruitful land*
“ *barren for the wickedness of them that dwell there-*
“ *in*: Or, without removing the *Blessings them-*
“ *selves* of nature, he can at any time withdraw
“ the *benefit* and the *effect* of them. For *man li-*
“ *vetb not by bread alone, but by every word that*

“ *proceedeth out of the mouth of God*; that is, by
 “ *his blessing upon the Instruments of nature.*” †

Mr. *Chubb* says, “ that God, at the *creation*,
 “ put the natural world under the direction of cer-
 “ tain laws; and that *ever since*, he has caused it
 “ to be passively subject to those laws: but then,
 “ the *divine energy*, or those *immediate acts* of God’s
 “ power, by which the system of nature is kept
 “ together and continually upheld and preserv’d, is a
 “ part of God’s general providence.” * This I free-
 ly grant is in a sense true with regard to the *natu-
 ral world*; but it does not from hence appear, that
 that *divine energy*, and those *immediate acts* of God’s
 power may not be suppos’d under *special* directions
 of goodness, in order to serve extraordinary oc-
 casions in the *moral world*. For instance, to have
 directed the *winds* in aid and assistance to a grand
 event, so, as not to have disturbed, in the least,
 the general laws of the natural world. This seems
 to have been the case at the *Revolution*: and
 I think, may be safely concluded as such, from the
 scheme of Mr. *Chubb*. But if he wants a *criterion*
 of the *immediate special* interposal, to distinguish it
 from the *original settlement*, or from its passive sub-
 jection to creation Laws: I should be ready to ask
 him to give me the *criteria* of the manner of those

† See Dr. *S. Clarke’s* Serm. vol. X. p. 18, 19.

* Vind. pag. 50.

A particular providence farther explain'd. 69

immediate acts of God's power, or how the *divine energy* is exerted constantly, which he owns, is so, upon the *natural world*; the which was at the *creation* put under a passive subjection to certain laws?—Or, how we may suppose these *immediate acts* and the *divine energy* otherwise, than *necessarily ascertain'd* by that original settlement?—

BUT supposing this scheme of Mr. Chubb's to be a just description of God's providence over the *natural world*; and that this is ever *passively subject* to those Laws which give it direction; yet as even this *natural world* requires a constant *divine energy*, and continued *immediate acts* of God's power for its preservation and support; it will follow, that the *moral world* not being *passively subject* to those laws which were originally given for its direction, must suppose its *Rector* and *Lord* making *particular* and *special interposals* in the *natural*, in order to the well-being and safety of the *moral world*: otherwise, the preservation and support of the *natural world*, is under a more safe direction than the *moral*; which is not with me a supposable case. *Beside*, those laws in the *natural world*, and the *design* of the passive material creation, appear, to me, to be intended to subserve the welfare and happiness of the *moral**: and if so, that its various *Phenomena* should appear

* — Omnia, quæ sint in hoc mundo, quibus utantur homines hominum causa facta esse parata. Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. ii.

now and then, or upon more extraordinary occasions, under the controul and *particular direction* of the LORD of all, that is, for the benefit of the moral creation, is a matter I cannot have any doubt concerning.

BUT Mr. C. is afraid of our degrading God's workmanship, or of our supposing it imperfect, by the scheme of a *particular providence*, and *special interposals*: he thinks it to be a sort of *patching and mending*. See his *Dissertation on Providence*.—Whereas, not only the natural world constantly depends on his *divine energy* and *immediate acts* of power; but the moral creation continually *lives*, and *moves*, and *has its being in God*. And so far is this dependance on the Creator from being a proof of the *imperfection* of his work, that to be *denied* this *divine energy*, and these *immediate acts* of power, would be the total *ruin and destruction* of it.—*All being* is derived, except that of the *first cause*; therefore *all such being* must be dependent, and cannot but be so. And whereas the *moral creation* is not passively subject to the laws of its direction; the influences of divine power, or its divine energy, cannot be passively subject, or invariably directed, by any original plan in its interposals: but may, and most probably does sometimes, yea, frequently, in a *special manner* interpose.

A particular providence farther explain'd. 71

IT may be objected against this scheme of a *particular* and *special* providence, that it conveys a disagreeable Idea of God, as if he was concerned with, or regarded every trifling action or occurrence in his creation: and that this is too low a sentiment of the ever-blessed God.—It is true, this notion was suitable to the *Epicurean system* of happiness; *who placed it in a kind of indolence, and sensual enjoyment. And therefore they represented the Gods, as unconcerned about the affairs of men: solacing themselves in their gardens of pleasure.* But this is a most debasing sentiment of the Deity; and supposes that absolutely perfect Being capable of happiness; or of adding to the perfection of his own Being, by a kind of sensitive enjoyment of something without him; and, that *operation* and *influence* imply a sort of fatigue in the Deity. Whereas, he is always and necessarily active; nor can the cessation of his influences or operations imply any greater enjoyment of himself, than when their energy are most extensive. Constant operation or display of perfection, is, perhaps, an inseparable Idea of the first cause. Tho' could we conceive of his existing without any other Being, we must suppose his *blessedness* compleat; for the reason, that *all perfection* is inseparable from the Idea of God.—It has been on the above principles that some wise men have called *Preservation*, or *Providence*, a continued Creation: there being no less *energy* required

72 *Of Mr. Chubb's Dissertation on Providence.*

quired to *preserve*, than to *create*: beside the certainty, that constant active influences of goodness correspond with the Idea of God: consequently, to suppose *special* interposals, on *special* occasions, to answer great and good ends among his moral creatures, as inconsistent with the activity of his nature or perfections, is indefensible.

BUT Mr. *Chubb* returns to *Matth.* vi. 28. and thinks, that by Christ's saying—*Shall he not much more cloath you, O ye of little faith?* is not to be understood as intending its being done by a *particular* providence: for it does not appear to him, “ that any one of Christ's disciples, either in, or “ since his time, has been cloath'd by a *particular* “ *providence*, that is, by a particular and special “ interposition of the Deity, but only by the ge- “ neral providence of God; or, at least, no such “ instance has come to his knowledge.”—He adds, “ We have had no *miraculous cloathing*, that I “ have ever heard of; and as for any other way of “ cloathing mankind, it will answer no purpose to “ my *opponent*, because every other way comes “ properly under the denomination of God's ge- “ neral providence.”

MR. *Chubb* has took the greatest care not to take notice of any difficulty with which he is pressed: so that I cannot forbear charging him with very unfair
practice

practice in his *vindication*. He has pass'd over and evaded what justly demanded an Answer before he could, with any decency, call his reply a *Vindication*. He obliges me therefore here to repeat my Question, *viz.* How could the disciples apply the *much more* to themselves, without taking in a particular providence? They knew that the brute animals, and the tribes of vegetables, were, upon his scheme, *as much* the subjects of a general providence as themselves. Nay, Mr. *Chubb* says, "that God feeds the fowls of the air, and clothes the grass of the field no way, but by his *general* providence; by which *general* providence he also takes care of men." Now, how the *much more* could take place, when the *cloathing* for the grass was as certain, and in the same manner taken care of, as the *cloathing* for the disciple, I cannot understand. — But Mr. *Chubb* says, every way of cloathing but the *miraculous* way, comes properly under the denomination of God's general providence. This is another of his *ipse dixits*, for he has offer'd nothing in proof of there being no *special* interposals, or that there are not *any influences* different from those to which the natural world is *passively* subject, and *miraculous* interpositions; so that his affirmation will not be taken as conclusive. The nature of our Lord's argument plainly supposes the disciple might depend upon *special* interposals; yet Mr. *Chubb* won't own that any have ever been *miraculously*

L. cloathed:

74 *Of Mr. Chubb's Dissertation on Providence.*

cloathed: but surely our Lord may be depended upon, as giving *proper direction*; therefore there must have been *special* interposals.

Mr. *Chubb* thinks, that to suppose Christ, by telling his disciples that they should be *much more* the care of providence than the grafs of the field, or the fowls of the air, that he meant *much more*, “ is injuring, or not doing justice to Christ
“ our common master, nor *service* to his cause, but
“ the contrary; because the putting such a sense
“ upon Christ's words as is contradicted by univer-
“ sal experience and fact, as it is not the truth of
“ the case; so it gives too much countenance to *un-*
“ *believers*, and is paving the way to *infidelity*. †
—This must be his meaning, since it is not sufficient for him to tell us, “ that it was only to
“ bar his disciples from *anxious* and *unnecessary*
“ thought and concern for the things of this world;
“ God shewing a greater concern for the welfare of
“ man in the course of his general providence,
“ than for the grafs of the field, as he has provided
“ the latter for the sake of, and as a means to the
“ former.”* I think this will afford no relief to Mr. *Chubb*, nor at all support any other sense than what I have given it. For, if the disciple was to consider the grafs of the field, as provided for his sake, and as the means of his support; then his anxi-

† Vind. pag. 54.

* Pag. 56.

A particular providence farther explain'd. 75

ety will not be abated, by supposing, that God does or will abate his providential care about that, in comparison of him; inasmuch as his own welfare and support depends on that his caring for the grafs of the field, it being provided for his sake, as the established means of his support. This could not lessen, but rather encrease the disciple's anxiety if he could suppose himself as *only* to be provided for in the course of a *general providence*; and yet at the same time, there should be less expressions of the divine care about these means of his support.—To know what our Lord meant by *much more*, would have occasioned the greatest anxiety, and perplexity of thought to the Christian; for, upon the scheme of Mr. Chubb he must have understood him as saying, *that God at the creation put the natural world under the direction of certain laws; and that ever since he has caused it to be passively subject to those laws.* † And as to man, *God is disposed to do for him, whatever is proper for him to do, and will do it whether he be pious or virtuous or not.* ‡ Man, therefore, is as passively subject as the grafs of the field is, and his *fate* as inevitable as an invariable original decree and appointment could make it. So far from any ground of *anxious care*, that *no care at all* is requisite; forasmuch as whatever was proper for God to do for him, *antecedent* to a prudent care, he was disposed to do, and would do, whe-

† Vind. pag. 50.

‡ Pag. 67.

ther the disciple took any care or not. This is Mr. *Chubb's* own principle with regard to prayer (which he, at the same time, allows to be the proper means of our virtue), and must be allow'd every whit as good reasoning in the case before us. What could a *disciple* do with the *much more?* the cloathing of the grais being ascertain'd by certain laws to which the natural world is ever passively subject; and the cloathing of the disciple secured by a like fatality, he being equally subject to an original unchangeable direction. —

Mr. *Chubb* might have spared himself about *miraculous cloathing* — I have no where asserted that they were miraculously cloathed! And I now contend for a distinct kind of interposition from the miraculous, as the subject of the common Christian's faith and hope. If I can, I will express my self so as to be understood by Mr. *Chubb* — what I mean, is, *that there are frequent influences of the DIVINE ENERGY, or IMMEDIATE ACTS of God's power aiding the moral creature in the right exercise of his capacities; so that the given influences do no way oppose or offer violence to the freedom of the agent, but assist in the same direction in which the creature is in, either by adding strength, or removing part of the difficulty; so providing for the welfare or safety of the subject: and this, without offering the least violation to general laws.* Whereas, a miraculous inter-

A particular providence farther explain'd. 77

interposition, I apprehend, does not co-operate with general Laws, but operates without them, or contrary to them. Our Lord, therefore, by the *much more*, most probably design'd to excite in the disciple a proper and suitable disposition of faith or trust; that thereby he might be render'd a suitable and proper object of God's *SPECIAL care and love.*

BUT contrary to this, Mr. *Chubb* makes a supposition, by which he would illustrate what he means by a *particular providence.* "Suppose a Comet in its return from the sun were to cross the atmosphere of our earth, and God, by an immediate interposition of his power, should *turn it* out of its *natural course* to prevent the terrible destruction that otherwise would be the effect of it, this would be a particular and special providence of God." † — which is an event, not to be suppos'd ever capable of taking place, upon Mr. *Chubb's* scheme, forasmuch as God at the *creation* put the natural world under the direction of certain laws; and that, *ever since*, he has caused it to be *passively subject* to those laws. So that there has not yet been, nor ever likely to be any act of *particular and special providence*; since it would destroy this original settlement or passive subjection.

† Short dissertat. on provid. p. 208.

AND yet Mr. *Chubb* declares “ that for a man
 “ to *approve himself* to God in well doing, by put-
 “ ting on such a temper of mind, and such a be-
 “ haviour as will render him the suitable and pro-
 “ per object of divine favour ; and adds to this,
 “ his *own industry* towards the support and conti-
 “ nuance of his being ; than as God knows the
 “ *wants* and necessities he is liable to, so he has,
 “ and will, in the course of his providence, make
 “ a *plentiful provision* for their supply ; and this
 “ has generally been the case. ” †

THIS having been *generally*, but not *always* the case, surely, could not have been the product of *nature's* strict adherence to those laws to which she is passively subjected—I would here ask, what he means by God's having made, and will in the course of his providence make a *plentiful provision* for such a ones supply, if there be no particular providence ? Or with what propriety he could say this, if the same *plentiful provision* would have been made, whether he had cultivated a right temper, or used his endeavours, or not ?—

THE *much more* will be in no danger of being understood by any man of common capacity and any degree of integrity, to signify, that all prudent

† Short dissertat. on provid. pag. 223.

A particular providence farther explain'd. 79

care and endeavour after the means of present support is hereby discourag'd or relaxed among Christians in common. The seeking *first* the Kingdom of God, &c. supposes a subordinate regard to present enjoyments, and an endeavour *to provide things honest in the sight of all men*: but in the extraordinary demands of providence, as in the case of the apostles, where they were prohibited the use of common means of support, they were exhorted to depend on *extraordinary* aid. That there was something *peculiar* and *special* in the condition and circumstances of Christ's disciples, which required the *peculiar* and *special* aids of divine providence, I have shewn in my *remarks*.—They were not to provide *food* or *raiment* necessary for their journeyings, nor to premeditate what they should speak, but to rely on *special* Interposals. I might support this doctrine more largely from the sacred writings, but 'tis to little purpose attempting to confirm a doctrine from scripture, when Mr. *Chubb* can with a *puff* destroy its authority, either by ranging it under a *defect of memory*; or pronouncing it a *consequence* drawn without a *premise*; or by giving it the running Title of *private opinion*, or *too great credulity* of the Writer. Therefore, I shall add no more under this head, but proceed to consider his *scheme of prayer*; where I shall have a farther opportunity of offering reasons in proof of a *particular* providence.

S E C T.

S E C T. IV.

*Mr. Chubb's new scheme of prayer examin'd,
and shewn to be form'd on his scheme of Pro-
vidence.*

MR. *Chubb* says, “ What prayer is, and what
“ are the ends intended to be answered by it,
“ he has already shewn, in a discourse on that sub-
“ ject *, to which his Reader is referred; and in
“ which, he tells us, that his Reader will plainly
“ see, that *all prayer* is not a *farce* and a mockery,
“ upon his *principles*, as his opponent imagines it
“ to be. Tho’, by the way, he thinks, all argu-
“ ments drawn from *consequences* are justly excluded
“ out of the case. For, if what he has advanced
“ be *erroneous*, let that be shewn, and the work is
“ done, he is confuted; but, if what he has offer’d
“ be the *truth*, then no consequences, whether
“ imaginary or real, can possibly make it other-
“ wise †.”

I own, my drawing a consequence, which ap-
pears to me as naturally flowing from a principle
advanced by Mr. *Chubb*, does not therefore prove
his principle absolutely false. I may mistake in

* See my Collection of Tracts.

† *Vindication*, p. 57.

drawing the consequence. And altho' I apprehend there is an inseparable connection, yet, through the fallibility of my understanding, it may be otherwise. But then, if the consequence which I have drawn from a principle of Mr. Chubb's, has, at least, the appearance of a connection; Mr. C. ought to have shewn the want of connection, if he would have supported his argument. (The way of drawing consequences from given principles, Mr. Chubb is no perfect stranger to, in his own writings.) Now, altho' Mr. Chubb has not condescended to do this; yet I am glad to find that he is willing to refer his reader to his *own Tracts*, in support of his notion of Prayer. And as Mr. Chubb has done this, I doubt not but he'll be so honest as to be decided by his *own Authority*.

I AGREE with Mr. Chubb in his *Vindication*, concerning the design of *Prayer in general*, “ that
“ it is not intended to *affect* and *influence* the *Deity*
(that is, so as to inform him, or alter his nature)
“ but the *Petitioner* only *.” “ That *Prayer* has
“ a tendency to affect and influence *our selves*, by
“ disposing us, thereby, more and more to a con-
“ formity of mind and life to the divine pattern,
“ and the divine will †.” — “ That by frequent use
“ of it, we are rendered capable, not only of pre-

* *Vind.* p. 68.

† Page 71.

§2 Of Mr. Chubb's new scheme of Prayer.

“ *serviſg our ſelves* in that good ſtate in which we
“ are, but, alſo, of *being carried on* to a nearer
“ and ſtricter conformity of mind and life to the
“ divine mind, and the divine will; and, there-
“ fore, we ſhould be *frequent* in ſuch exerciſes *.”

BUT then I differ with him in ſuppoſing, *that God is ſo diſpoſed, as that he will do what is proper for him to do, whether we addreſs for it, or not; or, that this will generally be the caſe †.* For, if Mr. Chubb means by God's doing what is proper to be done by him, whether we addreſs him or not; that his conduct will be the very ſame towards us, in both caſes; and that our greater conformity of mind and life to the divine pattern and will muſt be equally treated by him, as without any ſuch conformity; I think I may conclude him miſtaken.—

That this is Mr. Chubb's moſt obvious ſenſe of Prayer, will be demonſtrably plain, if it be conſider'd, that this is the very reaſon he gives † why St. James may have been *too credulous* with regard to Elias's Prayer, which way ſoever he came by his information, *viz.* “ For if the afflicting of the
“ people of *Israel*, in the manner referred to, had
“ been ſuitable and proper, then they would, no
“ doubt, have been thus afflicted, whether the pro-
“ phet had prayed, or not; and if it had been im-

* *Vind.* p. 72.

† P. 71.

‡ P. 31.

“ proper,

“ proper, then, I think, I may venture to say,
“ that the importunity of *ten prophets*, or *righteous men*, would not have been sufficient to procure it: so that the Prophet's prayer had little
“ to do in the affair.”—

THIS fully evinces Mr. C—'s scheme of prayer, in his Vindication, to be a *farce* and a *mockery*; and cannot be supported either by him, or any other. Contrary to which scheme, the nature of prayer will appear capable of support; for, it may be prov'd, that prayer has, and does alter the *state* of the creature; and if so, then prayer producing such effects, will make that treatment proper for him in the course of God's providential government, which would not have been proper for him, had he restrain'd Prayer, that is, continued negligent of his God, and of himself. For altho' Prayer don't alter the Perfections of Deity, or introduce any emotions in him unworthy of his perfections; yet, for the sake of its altering the *state* and *condition* of the creature, the just and holy Being will treat the alter'd Creature in a manner different to what he would have done before such alteration: and this will be *proper* for him to do, as a wise and just Rector, or Governour of the world.

AND Mr. Chubb entirely agrees with me in this, in his *Enquiry concerning Prayer*, p. 203. He says,

84 *Of Mr. Chubb's new scheme of Prayer.*

“ God’s end in requiring this Duty, is wholly and
“ solely the good and benefit of his creatures (*viz.*)
“ that it may be a means to work in the *Petitioner*
“ a suitable frame and temper of mind, and to dis-
“ pose him to a suitable practice and conversation,
“ and so render him a suitable and proper object of
“ God’s SPECIAL care and love.”

MR. *Chubb's* scheme of Prayer in his *Vindication*, from p. 58, to 68. seems to me to exclude all exercise of trust or confidence in God’s power or mercy for any particular or special aids, tho’ in temptation or distress; *man knowing*, or suppos’d by him to know, *that God was in himself disposed to do whatever was proper for him to do, antecedent to his address, and that he would do it, whether he had addressed him, or not* *.

BUT, contrary to this, Mr. *Chubb* has described an *Object of prayer* in the largest sense, thus; “ Every
“ being is the proper object of prayer, which hears
“ our petitions, and is possessed with ability to
“ help us, and invested with a right of exercising
“ that ability; and that hath a will or disposition
“ to help us, or may be wrought upon by our
“ prayers to have such a disposition †.”—Again;
“ The sense of our Petitions to God ought to be,

* *Vind.* p. 67.

† *Several Enquiries*, p. 190, 191, 192.

“ that

“ that we desire him SO TO DISPOSE OF THINGS
“ *in the course of his Providence*, as that by our
“ honest endeavours we may obtain the good things
“ we want and pray for*.” Again, “ That the
“ most proper, prime, and unexceptionable object
“ of Prayer for *all things*, is the supreme God,
“ even the God and Father of our Lord Jesus
“ Christ; he being one in whom all the qualifica-
“ tions of a proper object take place, in the highest
“ degree. For as he is the original Fountain of
“ our Being, and of all the Blessings and Mercies
“ we either do or can enjoy; and as he perfectly
“ hears all our prayers, and knows all our wants
“ and desires; so he hath in himself an underived
“ ability, and an Almighty never-failing power to
“ help us; and hath an absolute underived right,
“ with the strongest disposition to exercise that abi-
“ lity for our good, *if we are the proper objects of*
“ *his kindness*.—And when we put up our Prayers
“ to him, *duly qualified*, we have the most rational
“ ground *to-hope for success* †.”

HENCE it will certainly follow, that altho' we must allow, that God was in himself disposed to do whatever was proper for him to do, *antecedent* to our address; yet upon the alteration made in our selves, by such acts of homage, *that* will be proper

* Enqu. p. 195:

† Page 199.

for him to do, which would not have been proper, had we not address'd him. So that whenever we put up our prayers *duly qualified*, in that *due qualification* there must be always included a firm persuasion of the Object we pray to, not only being *able*, but also *willing* to help us in every time of our need; and that Prayer rendering us the *proper objects of his kindness*, we shall have the *most rational ground to hope for success*. And forasmuch as a *duly qualified prayer* works in the Petitioner a *suitable frame and temper of mind*, and disposes him to a *suitable practice and conversation*, and so renders him a *suitable object of God's SPECIAL care and love*; so the upright Petitioner will not neglect the right use of any of his capacities, and in the use of them may expect *special assistances*, that is, where his strength is insufficient, or his *wisdom* defective; inasmuch, as he knows himself hereby become a suitable object of God's *SPECIAL care and love*.

WE cannot petition the Divine Being for relief under any want or distress, unless we suppose him the proper Object of such petition; and he cannot be so, if we have no ground of hope that he will interpose for us. Let me here add a passage from an *ingenious Divine*: — “ To set this matter in a different light, I would farther observe, *says he*, that
 “ among men there is a certain *Temper and Disposition of mind*, which a *wise Giver* expects in such
 “ as

“ as he *favours*; and that without a regard thereto,
“ *Bounty and Beneficence* would be *weakness* and *im-*
“ *prudence*. Will a wise man be as kind to the
“ careles, the perverse and the ungrateful, as to
“ the supplicant, the modest, the humble and the
“ grateful? ’Till the *eternal, unalterable relations*
“ *of things cease*, GOD can’t be supposed to love
“ the impious and disobedient, as well as the pious,
“ the penitent, the virtuous, and the supplicant *.”

THERE is then no change supposed in God, but in the Supplicant; altho’ at the same time his blessing with my food, his forgiveness of my sins, his delivering me from evil, be consider’d as the instances of his *special care and love*. I should not have been a *suitable* and *proper object* of these, had not I, by my Prayers to the supreme Being, been wrought up to a *suitable* frame and temper of mind for such instances of *special* favour. So that it can with no propriety be said, that *antecedent* to my acts of piety and devotion, by which this temper was wrought in me, it was proper for God to give me my *daily bread* as an object of his *special care and love*; or to forgive me my sins, without my thus becoming a Supplicant; or to deliver me from evil, without thus imploring his aid.—But on the contrary, when by my addresses to him I am more

* Mr. G. BENSON’S *Letter on Prayer*, p. 20.

and more transform'd into his likeness in the *temper* and *disposition* of my soul, and my life and conversation accordingly regulated; I can then come with boldness to his Throne! I can approach him as a Father! I can view all his Perfections as my *security* and *refuge* under whatever calamity! I can firmly rely on those his *Promises*, on which he has caused me to hope.

NOR does the propriety of exercising a *trust* and *hope* in GOD in our prayers, only stand supported on the reason and fitness of things, the perfect nature, the constant active preserving influences of the *Rector* of the world, and the imperfection and defect of humane strength and wisdom; but it is likewise confirmed by the EXAMPLE of our Lord's praying for himself, and the success of his Prayers. "He prayed to his Father *more earnestly*, (with " submission to his will) that he might escape that " which was the ground of his fear: *Father, if it* " *be possible, let this cup pass from me.* And as he " thus prayed with strong crying and tears, to him " that was able to save him from death; so *St. Paul* " faith, *Héb. v. 7. that he was heard, in that he* " *feared*; that is, his Father gave him strength " sufficient for his trial; for he had an angel sent " from heaven to strengthen and comfort him †."

† *Chubb's Enq. p. 186.*

As Mr. *Chubb* has referr'd all along in support of his *Vindication* to the Authority of his own Tracts, he must allow me the same leave. And here I take it for granted, that the words of St. *Paul* supported by the Comment of Mr. *Chubb*, may be relied upon as good Authority, on which an argument may be safely built. I shall therefore venture to draw from hence some Conclusions. As,

1st. HERE is an instance of the *success* of earnest prayer; he, that is Christ, prayed more earnestly, and *was heard in that he feared*; that is, his Father gave him strength sufficient for his trial. The temper of mind with which he prayed, is plainly assign'd as the reason of that *special aid*. Had he known that the Father was disposed to do, and would do the same thing, whether he prayed or not; why did he pray *more earnestly*? and with what propriety could either St. *Paul* say *that he was heard in that he feared*? or Mr. *Chubb*, that *because of this*, his Father gave him strength sufficient for his trial, that is, on account of the effect his fear had upon his mind?

2. HENCE we may collect the certainty of the doctrine of a *special* or *particular providence*. For, if Christ is to be look'd upon as an *Exemplar* and *Pattern* to Christians; his being relieved under

90 *Of Mr. Chubb's new scheme of Prayer.*

great concern and agony of mind, will be a proper *ground of confidence* to all his followers to expect that under their pressing wants and afflictions, if they pray *earnestly*, they shall likewise receive sufficient strength for their Tryal. But *St. Paul* describes the Christian as laying aside every weight, and the sin that easily besets him, and as running the race with patience that is set before him, or marked out for him, *looking to Jesus the Author, or beginner, and finisher of his faith*; that is, regarding him as an *Exemplar*: and therefore, he may expect *special aids*.

3. HENCE we may be inform'd of *one way* in which the kind Father of mankind imparts *aid* under extraordinary conflicts, *viz.* by his *heavenly messengers*. Accordingly, the same apostle tells us, *Heb. i. 14.* that they are *all ministering spirits* sent forth to minister for them who shall be *heirs of salvation*: these, by the influences they receive from *the divine Spirit*, impart strength and comfort to the children of men. So that altho' the LAW could boast of being given by the ministration of an *Angel or Angels*; we that are come to the heavenly *Jerusalem*, or enjoy the Christian doctrine, are also come to an *innumerable company of Angels*, who are *all* under the direction of the ascended Jesus; angels, principalities and powers being made subject to him! even to him who is invested with *all power*, that he might be head over all things to his Church
—when

—when he ascended on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men. — The design of whose being *made like unto his brethren*, was, St. Paul tells us, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things by, or through God — for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted; he is able to succour them that are tempted. Now if this be allow'd to be a truth, then we may plainly perceive that *particular* and *special aids* may be rationally prayed and hoped for. Else why did his suffering being tempted, enable him to succour them that were tempted? *These* to be succour'd, must intend his disciples whilst in this state, as it is the *only state of tryal and temptation*; and concerning whom, he pray'd, not that his Father would take them out of the world, but that he would keep them from the evil of it: but if our Lord knew that there was no such thing to be expected as *particular aids*, why does he so pathetically pray for them? — he knew there was, from his own experience.

4. HENCE I think my self furnished with an answer to Mr. Chubb's demand, p. 34. of his *Vindication*, namely, *what it was that the COMFORTER did FARTHER REVEAL concerning the Gospel of Christ?* And *these* which follow, are *some of the things* which he farther revealed—The *design* of those facts which enter into the History of Christ's life, his sufferings, and death, his resurrection, and

92 Of Mr. Chubb's new scheme of Prayer.

ascension—The nature and design of his Kingdom, explain'd by them in a fuller manner—those references which he made to his being invested with *all power*—his being the appointed judge—yea, the *Epistles* do further explain the *divine original* of our Lord; and prove that St. *John's* account of him must not be reckon'd his *private opinion*; they tell us, *that Christ humbled himself by taking flesh, and appearing in the form of a Servant. That tho' he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor—That he was the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created that are in the heavens, and in earth, visible and invisible, &c. that all things were created by him, and for him. That he is before all things, and that by him all things consist*; and thus does the *great apostle* most plainly refer to the *divine original* of the *Logos* or *Word* of the Father; and hereby proves, that St. *John's* introduction to his Gospel, is not the *private opinion* of St. *John*: at least, it will prove, that St. *John* is not singular in that his opinion. To proceed,

Mr. *Chubb* thinks “ that since the *fall of Anti-*
“ *christ* has been the subject of the *repeated, fervent*
“ *prayers* of a multitude of Christians for ages, and
“ have not been sufficient to influence the Deity
“ so as to prevail upon him *to do*, what otherwise
“ he would not do. It cannot then be expected
“ that the importunity of an *individual*, for the ob-
“ taining

“ taining that which is of *much less concern*, should
“ so affect and *influence God*, as to prevail upon
“ him *to do*, what otherwise he would not have
“ done, *antecedent* to such addresses.” †

HERE very unhappily for Mr. *Chubb*, the *conclusion* which he draws from his *premise* is false: his own testimony, as well as the testimony of mankind, and the reason of things prove it false. Men, individuals, have by their prayers been so influenced in their temper and conduct, as that that has been fit for God to do for them *consequent* of such addresses, which was not fit for him to have done *antecedent* to them. So that Mr. *Chubb* has only brought a difficulty against himself, if it be a difficulty. But with his leave, I would observe, that as he has no determinate Idea about what Antichrist; and only says, *there is a great opposition made to the Kingdom and Government of Christ*: It will lie on him to prove, that this opposition would not have been greater than it now is, had it not been for numberless, pious, rational addresses about the fall of Antichrist. Or he would do well to shew, that the seat of Antichrist is not chiefly among the Professors of Christianity, and that the rational, pious addresses of Christians has not narrow'd its seat, and curb'd its spread in the Christian world,

† Vind. pag. 69, 70.

94 *Of Mr. Chubb's new scheme of Prayer.*

Every one that has put up this prayer *with understanding*, has intended by it, that the spirit, temper and behaviour of professing Christians, might be more consistent with the pure doctrines, spirit, and example of Christianity; the contrary of which has prejudic'd the spread of the Gospel, and obstructed its reception in the world. And as to *external opposition*, till it can be proved that this has not been less detrimental to the *Christian world*, on account of the repeated, fervent prayers of a multitude of Christians; the *major* of Mr. Chubb's proposition will not be capable of support. Besides, I never heard that the judicious Christian meant any more by this, than by putting up that Petition, *thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven*; and yet the Petition has been put up by thousands for above 1700 years.—Nor did he ever *fix the time*, in his prayers.

BUT Mr. Chubb says, that an *individual* by his importunity cannot expect so to affect or influence God, as to prevail with him to do, what otherwise he would not have done, *antecedent* to such address. And yet he declares, “ he designs not this
“ to draw men off from prayer, or to encourage
“ carelessness or indifferency in the use of it; but
“ on the contrary, to draw men off from a *ground-*
“ *less* reliance upon it, as that which is *greatly ef-*
“ *ficacious*, and has a prevailing influence upon
“ God; whereas *prayer in general*, is intended to
“ *affect*

“ *affect* and *influence* the *Petitioner* only. He also
“ intends by it, to engage men *so to pray*, as that
“ the *true ends* of prayer may be answered upon
“ them, by *leading them* in the use of it, to have a
“ *just* and *worthy* sense of the Deity impressed up-
“ on their minds, and diligently to *labour themselves*
“ after what they petition for, of their Maker.
“ As to God, he is disposed, and therefore will do
“ what is proper for him to do, whether we ad-
“ dress for it or not ; or, at least, this will gene-
“ rally be the case.” †

WHAT he means by prayer in *general*, being intended to affect and influence the petitioner only : or by God's being so disposed as to do what is proper whether we address or not ; or, at least, that this is *generally* the case ; I say, what he means by this, short of giving up his whole argument against special Interposals, I know not—He seems in this notable paragraph, to be apprehensive, that his scheme of Prayer would weaken men's attention, and introduce carelessness and indifferency about it ; and it was, no doubt, highly proper he should caution against it, and declare he did not mean it, altho' it would be the most natural product of his scheme. For, how will men have a just and worthy sense of the Deity impressed upon their minds, which

† Vind. pag. 70, 71.

should

96 *Of Mr. Chubb's new scheme of Prayer.*

should excite them to pray to him for help and assistance, when they are well assured they shall have no help or assistance from him? they are only to be led by such prayer to *labour themselves* after what they petition for, of their maker? If they, therefore, are determin'd before hand to apply with the utmost diligence and care for the things they want, to what purpose should they pray? the end of prayer is answered. And they may be well assured, that if they use diligence, care, and industry, the *consequence of things* will be the very same whether they pray, or not. Nay, *forgive me*, they must be assured, that forasmuch as Prayer will take up some of their time, which time they might employ in labouring after what they petition for, they will determine prayer to be not only *useless* but *prejudicial* to them. And will rest themselves well satisfied, with this persuasion, *that God is dispos'd, and therefore will do, what is proper for him to do, whether they address him, or not!*—This is, surely, the essence of *Fatalism*. But without giving it any more names, I would modestly ask, whether there be not *many wants* to which we are daily liable, which our utmost diligence and industry cannot supply? for instance, would our *food* nourish us, without the blessing of God with it? would our *physick* restore and heal, by its own moment or force? would our towns or our cities be secured by our watchmen, if the Lord did not keep them? would our own persons, children and families
dwell

dwell in safety, from the terrour by night, or those evils that walk in darkness, if he that neither slumbers nor sleeps did not keep us? We can have no satisfaction from an evening prayer for *divine protection* in our sleeping hours, if we once conclude that Prayer is only to *affect* and *influence* our selves to labour diligently for those things we petition for of our Maker: forasmuch, as I know of no opportunity we have during our sleeping hours, of using any capacity in our defence and safety. Methinks, every time sleep closes our eyes, we are most evidently put intirely into the hands of providence, and have a naked and absolute dependence on the watchful *eye of heaven*. We cannot then, with so much sense of safety, lie down without asking the divine protection, and committing our selves to it; as we can when we have done it. But this we might do, when once persuaded that if it was proper we should rest in safety and peace, we should do so, whether we so committed our selves, or not: and if it was not proper, the most devout resignation would be of no manner of service to us. And whereas we are only to be influenced by the prayer to a *diligent endeavour* after what we pray for, it would be ridiculous for us to ask protection and preservation when we were entering upon a state of inattention and rest. —

BEFORE Mr. *Chubb* had confin'd the nature and end of Prayer, as he has done in his comment upon the *Lord's prayer*, methinks he should have prov'd the propriety of confining that petition, *lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, to moral evil; as he has done, without making the least ceremony about it. † I say, I think he ought to have told us how we might put up this Petition for our not being led into insensible natural evils or dangers, and that he would deliver us from such, without meaning any more, than that we determined to guard against unforeseen dangers, and when disabled by any calamitous circumstance, we would endeavour to extricate our selves out of it—*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, according to Mr. *Chubb*, intends no more than this,

“ O God, we know thou temptest no man to sin,
 “ neither can be tempted thy self; and when any
 “ man is tempted of evil, it must be left to his
 “ choice, whether he will maintain his innocency, or
 “ not. So that when we invoke thee not to lead us in-
 “ to temptation, but to deliver us from evil, it is on-
 “ ly an idle compliment we pay thee, for we mean
 “ nothing at all by it, we know thou hast no con-
 “ cern at all in the affair, it belongs only to our
 “ selves.

† Vind. pag. 66.

I SHOULD likewise have thought it proper for Mr. *Chubb* to have shewn, that what is analogous to *pity* and *compassion* in men, and which enters into the excellency of the humane character, may not be suppos'd in the *first cause*, consistently with perfection of nature. If we may safely take our sentiments of prayer from Jesus the Son of God, we shall find several strong intimations that *pity* and *compassion* may be excited in the Deity by earnest prayer. That parable of the *unjust Judge*, mentioned, *Luke xviii. 1—8.* appears to teach a doctrine somewhat like this; and is plainly adapted to inspire men with this Sentiment. So likewise, the natural tenderness and compassion excited in a Father, by the petitions of his Son, is mention'd by our Lord, as but faint representations of the Divine compassion. *Mat. vii. 7—12.*—His own agony, his prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, plainly suppose, that he was possessed of a firm persuasion, that his Father might be influenced by such address: and the success of it, that is to say, *his being heard in that he feared*, is a proof of the thing supposed; *Luke xxii. 43, 44.* compared with *Heb. v. 7.*

I FREELY own with Mr. *Chubb*, that to suppose, that God will, at any time, act *improperly*, by way of return to his creatures, for their having complimented him with their petitions, is too gross

and absurd to be admitted *. But then we must allow, that a Prayer which is influential on our selves, is a proper motive to dispose him to do what he would not have done, as what was not proper for him to do, antecedent to such Addresses.

IT is worthy our observation, that Mr. *Chubb* has took a deal of pains to shew how an angry prayer in *Elias*, which brought *destruction* along with it, was suitable to the *Jewish* Dispensation; and makes this to be the sentiment not only of St. *James*, but also of our Lord †, in that notable case of two of his disciples desiring *fire from heaven*, as *Elias* did; which he rebuked, by telling them, *that they knew not what spirit they were of*: which, says Mr. *Chubb*, “ is the same as to say, that tho’ such
 “ a kind of piety or religious zeal had been in-
 “ dulged in *Elias*, or a *Jew*, yet it was not to be
 “ encouraged in a Christian.” — And after all, he makes this to be only the *private opinion* of our Saviour, when he tells us, “ that if the afflicting of
 “ the people in the manner referred to had been
 “ proper, then they would, no doubt, have been
 “ thus afflicted, whether the prophet had prayed,
 “ or not; and if it had been *improper*, then, he
 “ thinks, he may venture to say, that the impor-
 “ tunity of *ten prophets*, or *righteous men*, would

* *Vind. p. 74.*

† P. 27, 29.

“ not have been sufficient to procure it: so that the
“ *prophet's prayer* had little to do in the affair.”
Which is as much as to say, that such a kind of
piety, and religious zeal, had not been indulg'd in
Elias; altho' our Lord told the disciples that it
had.—Can any thing appear more plain, than that
Mr. *Chubb* has been guilty of these contradictions
merely to support a favourite scheme? No reason-
able thinking man, who has form'd any just no-
tions of God, can suppose, that either the number,
the length, or the matter of our Prayers, tho' deli-
ver'd with great emotions of Zeal and Affection,
can alter the determinations of Providence, or ren-
der us more the objects of God's *special* love and
favour, unless they be sincere, and form the temper,
or regulate the Practice. But should a man be once
persuaded that the ends of prayer answer'd upon him
would not render him a more proper object of God's
special love and care, and, of consequence, make
that fit for God to do for him, which would not
have been fit, *antecedent* to such address; he would
want the grand motive to prayer: and notwithstand-
ing he might possibly be convinced it was his duty
to praise God, as to the *original* settlement; yet as
to praying to him, or supplicating his aid and
mercy, he must be persuaded would be to no pur-
pose, since he could have no ground of hope that
the original settlement of things would admit of any
alteration in the divine proceeding: so that instead
of

of his hope and trust being excited, by means of which his greater love to God, and delight in him would be produced, he would want that essential part of devotion by which his piety and virtue would be increas'd. The kind parent of mankind has evidently recommended an application to him, and acts of affiance and dependance on him, by making himself known to such, as the God that *beareth*, by his *answering*, prayers. He has made it the interest of his Creatures to unbosom themselves before him, and has always made good his word of promise, *that he will be found of them that seek him!* and the testimony of good men in all ages proves, that they who put their trust in him *shall never be ashamed*. There is, what the sacred writings call, a sort of *fellowship* or *communion* to be had with the Father in our addresses: nor can this be stiled *Enthusiasm* by any man who has experienced the pleasure which arises from an intimate and close acquaintance and friendship with his fellow-creature. All friendship, that is humane, is only to be supported upon mutual and reciprocal expressions of it: and if light and knowledge, comfort and aid, is experienced to be communicated reciprocally between humane minds, it cannot be supposed but there may be an open access to the Father of Spirits; and altho' the impartments are not mutual or reciprocal, as they are between two created minds, yet the finite Spirit must be allow'd to receive *great advantage* by cultivating
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an intimacy with the infinite mind ; and may expect, that the more it is form'd into a resemblance of the all-perfect Being, the more its interests, safety and welfare is secured.—I said before, all humane Friendships appear to be supported upon mutual and reciprocal expressions of them. *Self-love*, or a desire of good, being a governing principle implanted in humane nature ; it will therefore follow, that a persuasion of God's readiness to employ his perfections, or active powers in our favour, is a necessary and rational motive to our endeavours after an acquaintance with him. The apprehension of his inherent-excellencies, or an original Establishment, as I said above, may be, and no doubt would be esteemed a ground of admiration and reverence ; but nothing short of a persuasion of his *natural perfections* being actually employed for the impartment of all needful *aid and support, comfort and happiness* of the creature, can be a foundation of fear and hope, confidence and trust. This consideration added to that of his possessing all *possible perfection*, must render him the object of our supreme affection, love, and delight.—

THE most wicked and profligate of mankind, that make a jest of praying to the *Almighty*, cannot help giving their testimony to the fitness and importance of such religious actions, when at any time they are in distress, and apprehend themselves out of
the

the reach of humane assistance: more particularly, when they think themselves leaving this world, and entering upon an unseen, and to them an entirely unknown State of existence. They can then, with great earnestness, pray, *Lord, have mercy upon us!*— But were they firmly persuaded that God was always disposed to do what was fit, *antecedent* to such address, and that he would do it, whether they address'd, or not; even these unhappy wretches would think it a piece of mockery, and would refuse to invoke him, or in other words, *incense* him, by such an empty, unmeaning Compliment.

SHOULD we now understand Mr. *Chubb* as directing the *Petitioner* to possess himself of this sentiment, *viz.* “ that God was in himself disposed to do whatever was proper for him to do, *antecedent* to his address, and that he *would do it*, whether he addressed him or not;” a man under a firm persuasion of this, would readily conclude, that his petitions would be as *vain*, as they were useless. How could he implore aid in distress, if he was persuaded, that whether he did petition or not, what was proper for God to do for him, *antecedent* to this address, would be done for him whether he prayed or not? So that any such aid he wanted; which was not proper then, altho' he prayed ever so earnestly, and was ever so much alter'd for the better in his own temper and disposition, *such aid still*
would

would continue to be improper; and therefore it would be to no purpose, that he should either *pray*, or *pray earnestly* for such aid. Which sentiment, I apprehend to be repugnant to the sense of all men, that have ever in earnest offered their petitions to the Deity.—The Apostle to the *Hebrews* expressly declares of *prayer*, or *coming to God*, that if it be an acceptable address, *the supplicant must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him*. So that altho' we are not to think our prayers will alter the nature of God, yet we may, yea, we must believe that if we *diligently seek him*, his conduct towards us will be directed and influenced by such seeking. And that by such asking, *we shall receive*; by such seeking, *we shall find*; and by such knocking, *it shall be open'd to us*; which receiving, and finding, and opening, would not have been the proper vouchsafements of the Deity, had we not thus attended to prayer, that is, ask'd, and sought, and knock'd.—

NEITHER will this authorize us to expect that every Blessing we thus ask, and seek for shall be granted. No; this we refer to the direction of *infinite wisdom and goodness*, being well assured that such a *believing Prayer* will be heard and answered in such a manner as may best suit our welfare. For as “ *Petitions for mercy* teach us our own weak and

P

“ make

106 *Of Mr. Chubb's new scheme of Prayer.*

“ make us *look for help from above*†”.—But then,
“ we are not to look on this, as a state of Retribution,
“ and therefore, many things that might gratify
“ us, are at present with-held, as unfit for us *”.—

GOD is address'd by the *Psalmist* as the God that *heareth prayer*, *Psal. lxxv. 2. O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.* And this he grounds upon the experience he had had of the *particular instances* of divine providence, in which, *answers* were given to prayer ; *Psal. xviii. 6. xxx. 2, 8, 11. xxxi. 22. xxxiv. 6.* Yea, he refers to the success of Prayer as experienc'd by former generations, *Psal. xxii. 4, 5. Our Fathers cried unto thee, and were delivered*—And in this Mr. Chubb acquiesces ; nay, he seems to have carried the matter somewhat farther in his *Enquiry*, for he, under his *first* head of acceptable prayer, observes, “ that the
“ ground or reason of God's approving or disap-
“ proving of any action, is the state and condition
“ of the action it self, and not the state and con-
“ dition of the person that performs it, antecedent
“ to that performance — he instances in *David*,
“ a man after God's own heart, who did evil in the
“ fight of the Lord, in the case of *Uriah the Hit-*
“ *tite* ; all his goodness did not change the nature
“ of his bad acts, nor yet change God's disposition

† Mr. G. Benson's Letter on Prayer, p. 27. * Ib. p. 28.

“ to disapprove them. They were as bad, and
“ God disapproved them as much, in *David*, as
“ in any other man. So on the other side, if
“ a *bad* man performs a *good* action; as the state
“ of the person does not change the nature of that
“ action, so neither does it, nor can it change
“ God's disposition to *approve* that action; because
“ God always approves, that which is the proper
“ object of his approbation, as all good actions
“ are, let them be performed by good or bad men.
“ Thus *Abab* was a *very bad* man, a man that sold
“ himself to work wickedness in the sight of the
“ Lord.—and yet when he humbled himself be-
“ fore the Lord at the divine Threat, all his wicked-
“ ness did not make that action bad, neither did it
“ change God's disposition to approve it; for as
“ the action was good in it self, so God approved
“ it even in wicked *Abab*, and averted the evil
“ threatned for his sake, 1 *Kings* xxi. 29.—†

HERE Mr. *Chubb* has very explicitly shewn, that the act of prayer it self, without including an habit of right disposition, may alter the conduct of the Deity towards us, and not imply any change at all in GOD's disposition, or in the universal rectitude of his nature: and of consequence, *that* becomes proper for God to do, which was not pro-

† *Chubb's* Enq. p. 206.

per *antecedent* to such address; and therefore, would not have took place, had not such addresses been made to him.

I CANNOT imagine why Mr. *Chubb* has chose to express himself so extravagantly concerning prayer in his *Vindication*, unless it was that he discern'd it best tallied with, and was somewhat necessary to the support of his *Scheme of Providence*. But if he will admit his own explication of the nature and design of prayer, as good authority, he must see, a necessity of admitting *special interposals*, and that the *moral world* is governed by a *particular providence*, which admits of frequent interposals. For if *acts* themselves alter the *direction of things* towards men, in the methods of the divine government; and the alteration of the divine treatment depends upon the alteration of men's conduct; then we cannot imagine, these *interposals* to be ascertain'd upon an *original plan*, inasmuch as they are under such contingent directions.

I SHALL only just add under this head, that Prayer, the fervent prayer of a righteous man, is not only *available* for a man's self, by rendering him a more suitable and proper object of God's *special care* and love; but such Prayer has always been, and is yet *available* for others. A man cannot pray earnestly for another, but he must feel the ardour
of

of a *divine compassion* seasoning his prayer; in which temper he bears an high resemblance of his Maker: and of consequence, we may expect that the great respect the Deity has to such a temper, will render it fit he should *honour* and *encourage* it, by regarding and answering such intercessions. He has always done so; and no wonder he has, for the *wise man* tells us, *that the prayer of the upright is his DELIGHT*. So that upon the whole, altho' we must think of God as always disposed to do whatever is proper for him to do; yet we must not think that the same thing was proper for him to do, *antecedent* to our addressing him, as was proper after we had addressed him; or that he *would do it*, whether we addressed him or not.—No; so far from this, we must look upon Prayer as an *appointed means* of our safety and happiness: that it is necessary to the forming in us right tempers and dispositions, and so qualifying us for being the objects of God's *special care* and *love!* and, that an humble reliance, and steady trust in him for *aid* and *protection*, is necessary to the rendering our prayers acceptable to him; and that *without SUCH FAITH, it is impossible to please God.*

IN the run of this argument, I have not asserted, that in the method of divine providence, there is a constant answer *in kind*, given to the pious Petitioner; nor that men must expect *miracles* to be wrought

wrought for them, in order for their relief under their necessities and distresses.—MIRACLES seem to have been of a nature too sublime and sacred to be wrought on any account short of an *attestation* to a person's divine mission, who had a *message* or *revelation* to deliver immediately from God: or, to vindicate the singular piety of men, who have asserted the *divine rights* against idolatry *. But the

* If I thought Mr. Chubb would allow the *Old Testament* History, as good Authority, I might largely point out the instances of *special Interposals*, evidently distinguishable from *miraculous* ones. But not being certain of this, I shall only refer my Reader to one such distinction, *wiz.* *The feeding the Israelites with Manna from heaven for forty years*: in which time their condition and circumstances render'd them incapable of any other than a miraculous support. Which must be esteem'd miraculous: for, which way soever we suppose it convey'd, the food was not only simular in its form, but was suited to the distinct taste and relish of every one of them.—And to preserve their trust in God, and prevent their *anxiety* about the morrow, none of it would keep longer than the day it was gather'd; except *that* on the *sixth day*, which discover'd a *special interposal*, to mark out, and provide for their weekly rest. This way of supporting the *Israelites*, was evidently *miraculous*; and appears design'd to confirm their faith in the *one* true and living God, that thus remarkably cared for them.

AND as to an instance of *particular providence*, which discovers it self, as plainly distinguished from the *miraculous*, I apprehend that may be taken for one, mentioned *Lew. xxv.* concerning the *Sabbatical Year*, in which the land was to have rest: in order to which God declares, *ver. 21. that he would command*

the aid and relief of the *humble supplicant*, in all such cases where his *given capacities* would not have been sufficient, is a view of Providence very consistent with his being a suitable and proper object of God's *special care* and *love*.

THAT this is the case, is apparent from Mr. Chubb's own words: for in giving us a detail of mens ends in practising this Duty of *Prayer*, his *fourth* is this; *viz.* " That they may obtain the
" things prayed for. This is supposed (says he) in
" the very performance: for to address God for the
" obtaining of a thing, and yet not to propose the
" obtaining of that thing as the end of that ad-
" dress, is absurd †."

NEVERTHELESS, Mr. Chubb's account of prayer is entirely the reverse of this in his *Vindication*, as may be seen in that foremention'd passage of his about *Elias's* prayer, " That if the afflicting of the
" people of *Israel*, in the manner referred to, had
" been *suitable* and *proper*, then they would, no

command a blessing upon the land in the sixth year, so that it should bring forth fruit for three years.—In the former case, there appears something quite above, and independent on any laws of nature; in the latter, the *laws of nature*, by which the earth brought forth her fruit, are *aided* by a divine special energy, and made to produce *threefold* what it would have done, in a *passive subjection* to an original settlement.

† *Enquiry*, pag. 205.

“doubt have been thus afflicted, whether the Pro-
 “phet had prayed, or not; and if it had been
 “improper, then, I think, I may venture to say,
 “that the *importunity of ten prophets, or righteous*
 “*men,* would not have been sufficient to procure
 “it; so that the *prophet's prayer* had little do to in
 “the affair.”—And that in our addresses to the
 Almighty “we must suppose him dispos'd in him-
 “self to do, whatever was proper for him to do,
 “*antecedent* to our address, and that he *would do it,*
 “whether we address'd him, or not.”—Which are
 opposite and contradictory accounts of prayer: the
 one, proposes the obtaining of a thing for which we
 address God as the end of that address: the other,
 declares that Prayer has no manner of tendency to
 procure any *aid* or *benefit* pray'd for; but whatever
 would be done by Almighty God as proper for him
 to do *antecedent* to the address, *would be done* equal-
 ly whether we address'd for it, or not!—Whether
 Mr. *Chubb* will now own that *all prayer* is a *farce*
 and a mockery upon his principles, or not, I can-
 not tell—But if what I have offered be suffici-
 ent to prove that what he has advanced in his Vin-
 dication, is *erroneous*, then, in his own words,
 † *the work is done, and he is confuted.*—I shall
 leave it with my *Reader* to judge, whether this be
 the case or not.

† *Enquiry*, pag. 57.

F I N I S.





