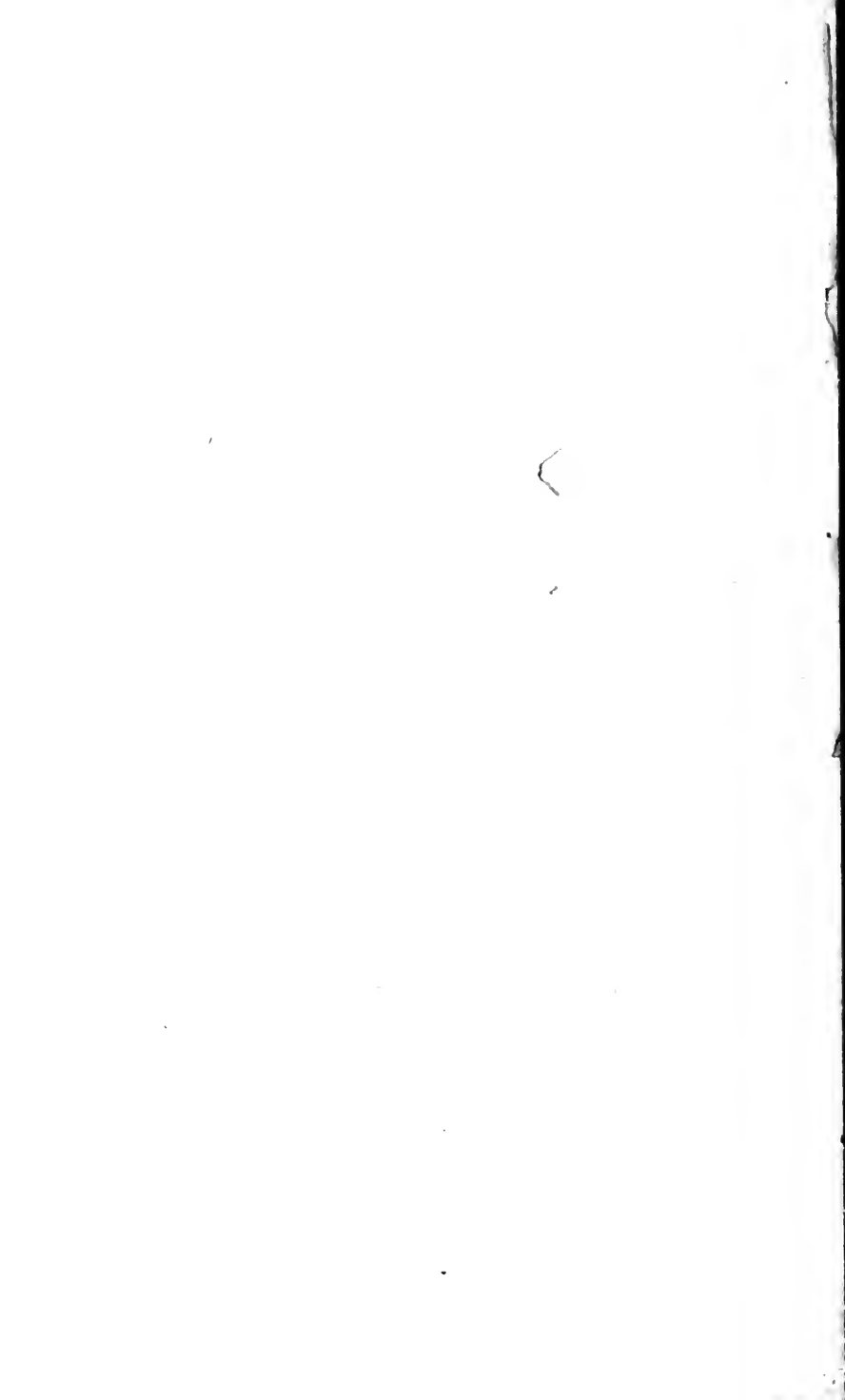


2



A SHORT and EASY
METHOD
WITH THE
DEISTS,
WHEREIN THE
CERTAINTY
OF THE
Christian Religion

Is demonstrated by *Infallible Proof* from

FOUR RULES,
WHICH ARE

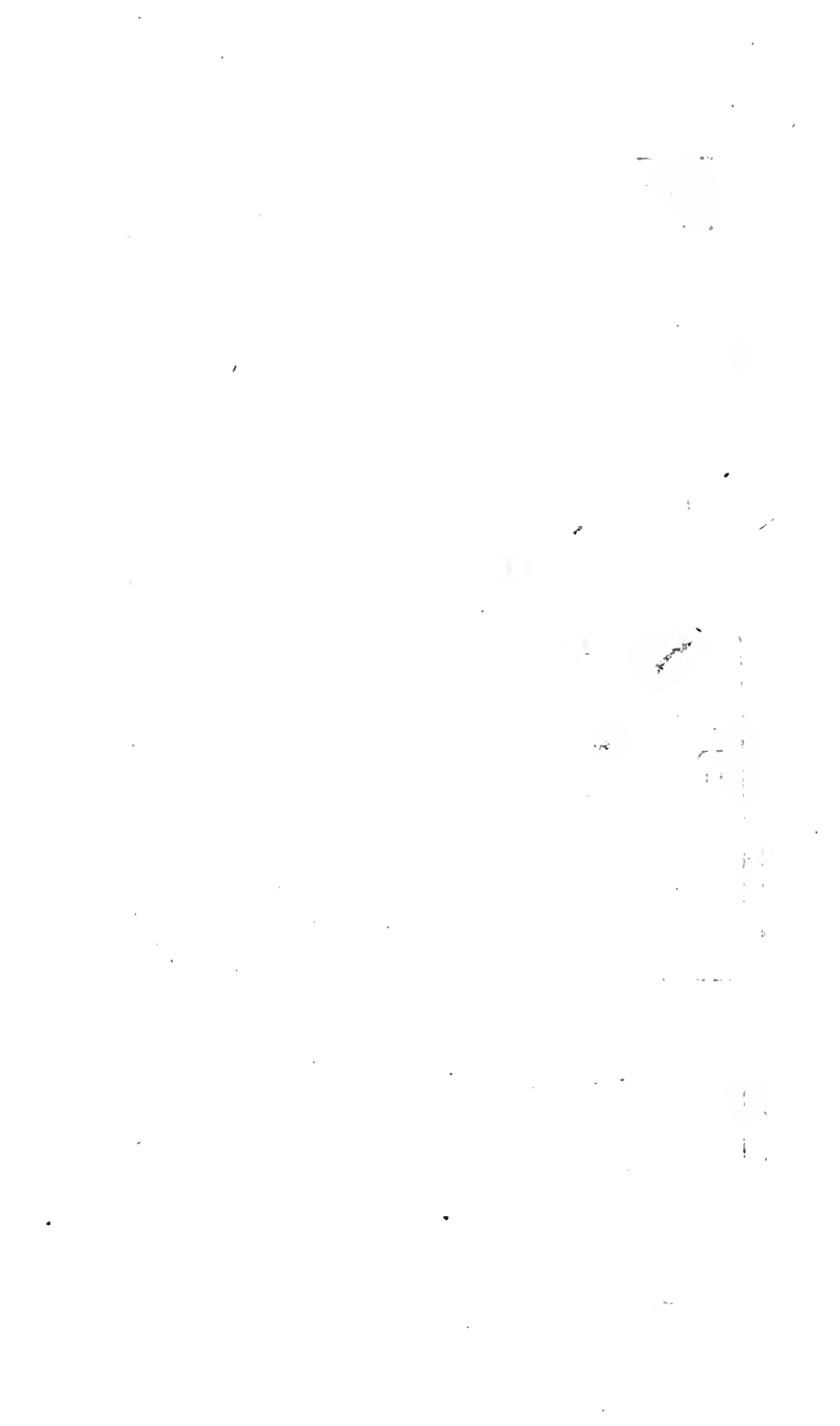
Incompatible to any *Imposture* that ever
yet has been, or that can *possibly* be.

In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

The Ninth Edition.

L O N D O N:

Printed for GEORGE STRAHAN, at the *Golden-Ball*, against the *Royal-Exchange*, in *Cornhill*. 1745.





T H E
P R E F A C E.

I.



Have been desired to say something more concerning Apollonius Tyanæus, hereafter mentioned, p, 41. tho' it lies upon the Deists to produce him, if they dare pitch upon him as an Instance, to which they are fairly invited: But herein only shew their Modetty; they are bathful in the Face of an Argument, but where a Jest, a Grin, or a Laugh, will carry it off, they are unmerciful, and triumph clamorously. They have brought upon the Stage no Competitor to our Bleis'd Saviour, equal to their Apollonius. Therefore I named him, and provoked them (but I cannot) to bring it to a Tryal. For the sake therefore of some Readers, who may not know the Story, I will here give this short Account of him.

First then, let it be observed, That what Account we have of Apollonius Tyanæus, is from Philostratus, who lived an Hundred Years after the Time in which this Apollonius is said to have flourished.

Whence had Philostratus this? He says, from the Book of one Damis, who had been a Companion of Apollonius's. How came Philostratus by this Book? He says, that an Acquaintance of Damis's brought the Empress Julia to the Knowledge of his Commentaries, which till then had not been published. (I give it you in the Words of Mr. Blount's Translation.) And that the Empress commanded Philostratus to transcribe those Commentaries, and bestow some pains on the Relations contained in them. What Pains was this Only to transcribe? No, that was small Pains, and not fit to be imposed upon so great an Orator as Philostratus, it was the Office of a Clerk. But, it seems, this Book of Damis's was so poorly wrote, as not fit to be exposed to view, at least of the Empress, who, as Philostratus tells us, was much addicted to the Study of Rhetorick. For (says he) Damis had given a plain but unelegant Description of them, i. e. of the *Acts* of Apollonius. Therefore the Pains that Philostratus took, he tells us, was upon the Relations of Apollonius that were in the Commentaries of Damis. And to fit them for the Ear of an Empress, who loved Rhetorick, aliàs, romancing and fine Stories. So that we are not sure we have one Word of the Commentaries of
 Damis.

Damis. *But this we are sure of, That we have them only as they were new dressed, and vamped by an Orator, to please the Fancy of a Rhetorical Lady.*

But, which is more, Philostratus does not pretend, that he confined himself to the Commentaries of Damis. For he tells us, (ibid. l. i. c. 3.) That in composing these Books of his, he had gathered together the dispersed Relations of Apollonius into one Volume. And names another Author, one Mæragenes, who had wrote four Books concerning Apollonius. But he says, that there is no Credit to be given to them. Why? Because (says he) Mæragenes, in his Books, seemeth to be altogether ignorant of his (Apollonius's) Actions. It seems they were not so romantick, as the Commentaries of Damis, and so less fit for an Entertainment to the Empress. But they do not seem to be the less true for that. And Philostratus gives another Reason against them, i. e. They were not for his Purpose, which was, to compose something new and surprizing, to gratify the Empress.

Let me observe here, That this was an Age, wherein the Melesæica, or feigned Romantick Stories, were much in Vogue: Such as Heliodorus's Ethiopicks, The Amours of Clitophon and Leucippe, &c. And it is very probable, that Philostratus living, as he tells, at Court, would endeavour not to be out of the Fashion.

And indeed, if he had been to compose a Romance, to have appeared like any thing of Truth, he could not have introduced it upon less Au-

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thority, and *more* precarious a Foundation than this which he has given for his Hero, Apollonius.

So extremely slight, that some very learned Men have, not without Reason, doubted whether ever there was such a Man as this Apollonius.

It is true that Origen (contr. Cels.) does mention him. But so he did likewise the Recognition of St Clement, (Tom. iii. Comment. in Genes. in Philocal. c. 23.) which now are taken for granted to have been wrote only in his Name. And it is no strange thing, that some wise and learned Men may be imposed upon, in Matters of this Nature.

But neither wise nor foolish, that have Eyes in their Heads, can be imposed upon in the four Marks hereafter given, p. 5. whereby to ascertain the Truth of any Matter of Fact. And the Deists not daring to bring the Matter of Fact of Apollonius to the Test of these Rules: All that they can possibly infer from their Legends, is That perhaps they may be true. Whereas, they must acknowledge, unless they will deny the Certainty of all their Senses, That the Matters of Fact of Moses, and of Christ, are certainly, undubitably, and infallibly true.

And there is almost the same Certainty, That the Case of Apollonius must be false. Because, as Men cannot be imposed upon in such notorious Matters of Fact: It is next to the same Impossibility, That they should forget them; at least so soon as were these which are told of Apollonius

lonius. For Example, his freeing the City of Ephesus from the Plague. His vanishing out of the Presence of Domitian, and his Court, when he was arraigned before him. And his familiar Converse with many other Kings, and Wonders done before them; and the mighty Estimation, even to Adoration, which he is thereby said to have obtained all over the World.

Now is it possible, That all this could be so totally forgot, as that no Mention at all should be made of it for a hundred Years after these things were said to be done? Insomuch that Philostratus complains, in the Introduction to his Legend, (l. i. c. 1.) That whereas Pythagoras and other ancient Philosophers, who had lived many Ages before, were still remembred with great Veneration, yet that Apollonius, who, as he says, Came nearer to Divine Wisdom than Pythagoras himself, is not yet known among Men ---- tho' he lived neither very long ago, nor yet very lately.

Was it possible, that the Death of so famous a Person should not have been greatly noticed? And his Sepulchre honoured and visited? Yet Philostratus tells there was no Certainty of the Place where he died: That some said it was at Ephesus; some at Rhodes; and some at Crete. And that his Sepulchre could no where be found. To help this, some bestowed an Epotheosis upon him. And would have it, That he was taken up into Heaven. But did any body see it? No, That is not so much as alledged, Nor could Philostratus believe it, who said that

he had travelled far and near to find out his Sepulchre, but could not bear of it.

And if he was so universally famous as Philostratus has represented him, could Mœragenes have wrote his Life, and be altogether ignorant of his Actions, as Philostratus has accused him? Mœragenes wrote before Philostratus; and therefore had better Reason to know. And if Philostratus had transmitted to us the Commentaries of Mœragenes, as well as what Helps he took out of those of Damis, or fathered upon him, we should, no Doubt, have had a more moderate Account of Apollonius; since Philostratus does confess, that for that only Reason he had rejected the Books of Mœragenes. And if they were in being when he wrote, he was under a Necessity of saying something against them (tho' what he has said confirms them the more) because they gave the Lye so notoriously to his new Romance of Apollonius.

But now, to sum up all, let us suppose to the utmost, that all this said Romance were true, what would this amount to? Only that Apollonius did such things, What then? What if he were so virtuous a Person, as that God should have given him the Power to work several Miracles? This would no ways hurt the Argument that is here brought against the Deists: Because Apollonius set up no new Religion, nor did he pretend that he was sent with any Revelation from Heaven, to introduce any new sort of Worship of God. So
that

that it is of no Consequence to the World, whether these were true or pretended Miracles: Whether Apollonius was an honest Man, or a Magician: Or whether ever there was such a Man or not. For he left no Law or Gospel behind him, to be received upon the Credit of those Miracles which he is said to have wrought. And therefore, if he did work such, it is no Prejudice to the Truth, either of the Law or the Gospel. So that this whole Parallel betwixt Apollonius and Christ, is altogether impertinent, and shews at once the Impotence as well as Malice of those who propose it.

2. This brings me from Apollonius, to his new Editor amongst us, Charles Blount. For I find my self obliged to account for what I have said of him, p. 41. I have been told, (since the first Edition of this) That it has disoblged some Friends (far from my Intention) who for Relation or Acquaintance had a Regard to the Person of Mr Blount, tho' not to his Principles; and think that I have used him too coarsly, he being a Gentleman.

But when it is considered, how he has treated our Blessed Lord and Saviour, like the Soldiers who bowed the Knee to Him, and spit in his Face; Who cried, Hail, King of Jews! to mock him the more outrageously. That not only in his Comments upon this History of Apollonius, but in his Great Diana, his Oracles of Reason, and in all his Works, he set himself, with his whole Might, to oppose and ridicule the Birth, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, and
all

all that is said of our Christ and God, in the Holy Gospel, and all Revealed Religion; of which I could give Instances out of Number, but they are not fit to be heard by Christian Ears; and it would gratify the Deists but to have them named.

Again considering, that his most pernicious Books (many of which were well nigh lost) are of late, carefully collected and re-printed, (to the Scandal of a Christian Country) and dispersed, to poison the Nation; I say, all this being duly considered, I have no Apology to make, for calling this Man execrable: Nor can I retract or compound it, seeing it is come to this, that either his blasphemous Works, (who set himself at the Head of the Deists, and after whom they now copy) or else the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, must remain execrable.

Nor would I give better Quarter to the greatest King upon Earth, who should do the same: But, after the Example of our holy Apostle, I would say, I do say, let him, or an Angel from Heaven, who durst thus presume, be accursed.

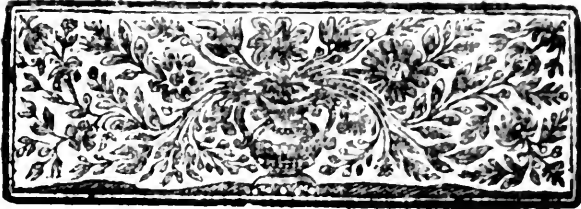
If Mr Blount had meddled only with the Argument, and opposed what he could, in that Method; I would have thought him worthy of civil Treatment; as I will any other of the Deists, who shall answer the Reasons I have here set down. And if he can overthrow them, and give me better on his Side, I confess I shall then be tempted to turn Infidel with him. And to this I invite them, I provoke them. But if they will not (as there is little Appearance that they will)

will) then, let them never more value themselves as Men of Sense, at least, let none others do so, while they refuse to be determined by Reason.

But, if instead of Reason, they have Recourse, like Mr Blount, to their old Topick of Buffoonry, and shew their Parts in witty Satire, and scorn, and laugh out — Priest-Craft — for an Hour together; let them enjoy the Fruit of their Labours, and what they justly deserve to be the Admiration of Fools, and Contempt of all wise and good Men. And so I leave them.

Anno 1677 J. 417





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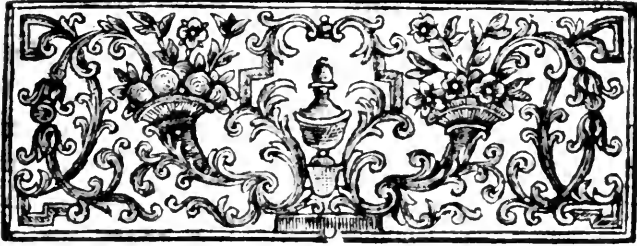
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A Short and Easy

METHOD

WITH THE

DEISTS.

S I R,

I.



IN answer to your's of the Third Instant, I much condole with you, your unhappy Circumstances, of being placed amongst such Company, where, as you say, you continually hear the Sacred *Scripture*, and the Histories therein contained, particularly of *Moses* and of *Christ*, and all *Revealed* Religion turned into Ridicule, by
Men

Men who set up for *Sense* and *Reason*. And they say, That there is no greater Ground to believe in *Christ*, than in *Mahomet*; that all these Pretences to *Revelation* are *Cheats*, and ever have been among *Pagans*, *Jews*, *Mahometans*, and *Christians*; That they are all alike Impositions of *Cunning* and *Designing Men*, upon the *Credulity*, at first, of *simple* and *unthinking* People, till their Numbers increasing, their *Delusions* grew *popular*, came at last to be established by *Laws*; and then the Force of *Education* and *Custom* gives a *Byass* to the Judgments of *After-Ages*, till such *Deceits* come really to be believed, being received upon *Trust* from the *Ages* foregoing, without examining into the *Original* and *Bottom* of them. Which these our modern Men of *Sense*, (as they desire to be esteemed) say, That they only do, that they only have their *Judgments* freed from the slavish Authority of *Precedents* and *Laws*, in Matters of *Truth*, which, they say, ought only to be decided by *Reason*; tho' by a prudent Compliance with *Popularity* and *Laws*, they preserve themselves from *Outrage*, and *Legal Penalties*; for none of their Complexion are addicted to *Sufferings*, or *Martyrdom*.

Now, Sir, that which you desire from me, is, some short Topic of *Reason*, if such can be found, whereby, without running to *Authorities*, and the intricate Mazes of *Learning*, which breed long Disputes, and which these Men of *Reason* deny by wholesale, though they

they can give no *Reason* for it, only suppose that *Authors* have been Trump'd upon us, *Interpolated*, and *Corrupted*, so that no Stress can be laid upon them, tho' it cannot be shewn wherein they are so *Corrupted*; which, in Reason, ought to lie upon them to prove, who alledge it; otherwise, it is not only a *Precarious*, but a *Guilty Plea*: And the more, that they refrain not to quote Books on their side, for whose Authority there are no better, or not so good Grounds. However, you say, it makes your Disputes endless, and they go away with Noise and Clamour, and a Boast, That there is nothing, at least nothing *Certain*, to be said on the *Christian* Side. Therefore you are desirous to find some *One Topick of Reason*, which should demonstrate the Truth of the *Christian* Religion, and at the same time, distinguish it from the *Impositions* of *Mahomet*, and the Old *Pagan* World: That our *Deists* may be brought to this *Test*, and be either oblig'd to renounce their *Reason*, and the common *Reason* of *Mankind*, or to submit to the clear Proof, from *Reason*, of the *Christian* Religion; which must be such a *Proof*, as no *Imposition* can pretend to, otherwise it cannot prove the *Christian* Religion not to be an *Imposition*. And, whether such a Proof, one single Proof, (to avoid Confusion) is not to be found out, you desire to know from me.

And you say, that you cannot imagine, but there must be such a *Proof*, because every *Truth* is in itself *Clear*, and *One*; and there-

fore that *One* Reason for it, if it be the true Reason, must be sufficient; and, if *sufficient*, it is better than *many*, for *Multiplicity* confounds, especially to weak Judgments.

Sir, you have impos'd an hard Task upon me, I wish I could perform it. For tho' *every Truth* is *One*, yet our *Sight* is so feeble, that we cannot (always) come to it *directly*, but by many *Inferences*, and laying of things together.

But I think, that in the Case before us, there is such a *Proof* as you require, and I will set it down as *Short* and *Plain* as I can.

II. First then, I suppose, that the *Truth of the Doctrine of CHRIST* will be sufficiently evinced, if the *Matters of Fact*, which are recorded of him in the *Gospels*, be *True*; for his *Miracles*, if *True*, do vouch the *Truth* of what he delivered.

The same is to be said as to *Moses*. If he brought the Children of *Israel* through the *Red-Sea*, in that *miraculous* Manner, which is related in *Exodus*, and did such other wonderful things as are there told of him, it must necessarily follow, that he was sent from *GOD*: These being the strongest Proofs we can desire, and which every *Deist* will confess he wou'd acquiesce in, if he saw them with his Eyes. Therefore the Stress of this Cause will depend upon the Proof of these *Matters of Fact*.

I. And the Method I will take, is, *First*, To lay down such *Rules* as to the *Truth of Matters*

Matters of Fact, in General, that where they All meet, such *Matters of Fact* cannot be *false*. And then, *Secondly*, To shew that all these *Rules* do meet in the *Matters of Fact*, of *Moses*, and of *Christ*; and that they do not meet in the *Matters of Fact* of *Mabomet*, of the *Heathen Deities*, or can possibly meet in any *Imposture* whatsoever.

2. The *Rules* are these, 1st. That the *Matters of Fact* be such, as that *Sens* outward *Senses*, their *Eyes* and *Ears*, may be *Judges* of it, 2. That it be done *Publickly*, in the *Face* of the *World*. 3. That not only *publick* *Monuments* be kept up in *memory* of it, but some outward *Actions* to be perform'd. 4. That such *Monuments* and such *Actions* or *Observances* be *Instituted*, and do commence from the *Time* that the *Matter of Fact* was done.

3. The *Two* first *Rules* make it impossible for any such *Matter of Fact* to be impos'd upon *Men*, at that *Time* when such *Matter of Fact* was said to be done, because every *Man's Eyes* and *Senses* would contradict it. For Example, Suppose any *Man* shou'd pretend, that *Yesterday* he divided the *Thames*, in *Presence* of all the *People* of *London*, and carried the whole *City*, *Men*, *Women*, and *Children*, over to *Southwark*, on *dry Land*, the *Waters* standing like *Walls* on both *Sides*; I say, it is morally impossible that he could persuade the *People* of *London*, that this was true, when every *Man*, *Woman*, and *Child*, could contradict him,

and say, That this was a notorious Falshood, for that they had not seen the *Thames* so divided, or had gone over on dry Land. Therefore I take it for Granted, (and I suppose, with the Allowance of all the *Deists* in the World) that no such Imposition could be put upon Men, at the *Time* when such *publick Matter of Faët* was said to be done.

4. Therefore it only remains that such *Matter of Faët* might be invented some time after, when the Men of that Generation, wherein the Thing was said to be done, are all past and gone; and the Credulity of after Ages might be impos'd upon, to believe that Things were done in former Ages, which were not.

And for this, the *Two* last *Rules* secure us as much as the *Two* first *Rules*, in the former Case; for whenever such *Matter of Faët* came to be invented, if not only *Monuments* were said to remain of it, but likewise that publick *Actions* and *Observances* were constantly used ever since the *Matter of Faët* was said to be done, the Deceit must be detected, by no such *Monuments* appearing, and by the Experience of every *Man*, *Woman*, and *Child*, who must know that no such *Actions* or *Observances* were ever us'd by them. For Example, Suppose I should now invent a story of such a Thing, done a Thousand Years ago, I might, perhaps, get some to believe it; but if I say, that not only such a Thing was done, but that from that Day to this, every Man, at the Age of *Twelve* Years, had a *Joint* of his little *Finger*

ger cut off; and that every Man in the Nation did want a *Joint* of such a *Finger*; and that this *Institution* was said to be Part of the *Matter of Fact* done so many Years ago, and vouch'd as a *Proof* and *Confirmation* of it, and as having descended, without Interruption, and been constantly practis'd, in memory of such *Matter of Fact* all along, from the Time that such *Matter of Fact* was done: I say, it is impossible I should be believ'd in such a Case, because every one could contradict me, as to the *Mark* of cutting off a *Joint* of the *Finger*; and that being Part of my original *Matter of Fact*, must demonstrate the whole to be false.

III. Let us now come to the *Second Point*, to shew, that the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses*, and of *Christ*, have all these *Rules*, or *Marks*, before mention'd; and that neither the *Matters of Fact* of *Mahomet*, or what is reported of the *Heathen Deities*, have the like; and that no *Imposture* can have them all.

1. As to *Moses*, I suppose it will be allow'd me, That he could not have persuaded 600000 Men, that he had brought them out of *Egypt*, through the *Red-Sea*; fed them 40 Years, without *Bread*, by miraculous *Manna*, and the other *Matters of Fact* recorded in his Books, if they had not been true. Because every Man's *Senses* that were then alive, must have contradicted it. And therefore he must have impos'd upon all their *Senses*, if he could have made them believe it, when it was *false* and no

such Things done. So that here are the *First* and *Second* of the above-mentioned *Four* Marks.

For the same Reason, it was equally impossible for him to have made them receive his *Five* Books, as Truth, and not to have rejected them, as a manifest *Imposture*; which told of all these Things as done before their *Eyes*, if they had not been so done. See how positively he speaks to them, *Deut. xi. 2. to ver. 8. And know you this Day, for I speak not with your Children, which have not known, and which have not seen the Chastisement of the Lord your God, his Greatness, his mighty Hand, and his stretched out Arm, and his Miracles, and his Acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt, unto Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, and unto all his Land, and what he did unto the Army of Egypt, unto their Horses, and to their Chariots; how he made the Water of the Red-Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you; and how the Lord hath destroyed them unto this Day: And what he did unto you in the Wilderness, until ye came into this Place; and what he did unto Dathan, and Abiram, the Sons of Eliab, the Son of Reuben, how the Earth opened her Mouth, and swallowed them up, and their Households, and their Tents, and all the Substance that was in their Possession, in the midst of all Israel. But your Eyes have seen all the great Acts of the Lord, which he did, &c.*

From hence we must suppose it impossible that these Books of *Moses*, (if an *Imposture*) could have been invented and put upon the
 People

People who were then alive, when all these things were said to be done.

The utmost therefore that even a *Suppose* can stretch to, is, That these Books were wrote in some Age after *Moses*, and put out in his Name.

And to this, I say, That if it was so, it was impossible that those *Books* should have been receiv'd, as the *Books* of *Moses*, in that Age wherein they may have been suppos'd to have been first invented. Why? Because they speak of themselves as deliver'd by *Moses*, and kept in the *Ark* from his time. *And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the Words of this Law in a Book, until they were finished; that Moses commanded the Levites who bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this Book of the Law, and put it in the Side of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a Witness against thee, Deut. xxxi. 24, 25, 26.* And there was a *Copy* of this *Book* to be left likewise with the *King*. *And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the Throne of his Kingdom, that he shall write him a Copy of this Law in a Book, out of that which is before the Priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the Days of his Life: That he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the Words of this Law, and these Statutes, to do them, Deut. xvii. 18, 19.*

Here you see that this *Book* of the *Law* speaks of itself, not only as an *History*, or *Relation*, of what things were then done: But a

the *standing* and *Municipal Law* and *Statutes* of the *Nation* of the *Jews*, binding the *King* as well as the *People*.

Now, in whatever Age after *Moses*, you will suppose this *Book* to have been *Forged*, it was impossible it cou'd be receiv'd as Truth; because it was not then to be found, either in the *Ark*, or with the *King*, or any where else: For when first *Invented*, every body must know, that they had never heard of it before.

And therefore they cou'd less believe it to be the *Book* of their *Statutes*, and the standing *Law* of the *Land*, which they had all along received, and by which they had been *Governed*.

Cou'd any Man, now at this Day, invent a *Book* of *Statutes*, or *Acts of Parliament* for *England*, and make it pass upon the Nation as the only *Book* of *Statutes* that ever they had known? As impossible was it for the *Books* of *Moses*, (if they were invented in any Age after *Moses*) to have been receiv'd for what they declare themselves to be, *viz.* The *Statutes* and *Municipal Law* of the Nation of the *Jews*: And to have persuaded the *Jews*, that they had *Own'd* and *Acknowledg'd* these *Books*, all along from the Days of *Moses*, to that Day in which they were first invented, that is, that they had *Own'd* them before they had ever so much as *Heard* of them. Nay, more, the whole Nation must, in an Instant, forget their former *Laws* and *Government*, if they cou'd receive these *Books*, as being their *Former Laws*. And they cou'd
not

not otherwise receive them, because they vouch'd themselves so to be. Let me ask the *Deists* but this One short Question, was there ever a *Book of Sham-Laws*, which were not the *Laws of the Nation*, *Pain'd* upon any *People*, since the World began? If not, With what Face can they say this of the *Book of Laws of the Jews*? Why will they say that of them, which they confess impossible in any *Nation*, or among any *People*?

But they must be yet more Unreasonable. For the Books of *Moses* have a further Demonstration of their Truth, than even other *Law-Books* have: For they not only contain the *Laws*, but give an *Historical Account* of their *Institution*, and the *Practice* of them from that Time: As of the *Passover* in Memory of the *Death* of the *First-Born* in *Egypt*: And that the same Num. viii.
17, 18. Day, all the *First-Born* of *Israel*, both of Man and *Beast*, were, by a perpetual *Law*, dedicated to *God*: And the *Levites* taken for all the *First-Born* of the *Children* of *Israel*. That *Aaron's Rod* which budded, was kept in the *Ark*, in Memory of the *Rebellion*, and wonderful *Destruction* of *Korab*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*; and for the Confirmation of the *Priesthood* to the *Tribe of Levi*. As likewise the *Pot of Manna*, in Memory of their having been fed with it 40 Years in the *Wilderness*. That the *Brasen-Serpent* was kept (which remained to the Days of *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 4.) in Memory of that wonderful *Deliverance*

rance by only *Looking* upon it, from the *Biting of the Fiery-Serpents*, Num. xxi. 9. The Feast of *Pentecost*, in Memory of the dreadful *Appearance of God* upon Mount *Hore*, &c.

And besides these *Remembrances of particular Actions and Occurrences*, there were other solemn *Institutions* in Memory of their Deliverance out of *Egypt*, in the *General*, which included all the Particulars. As of the *Sabbath*, Deut. v. 15. Their *daily Sacrifices, and Yearly Expiation*; their *New-Moons*; and several *Feasts and Fasts*. So that there were *Yearly, Monthly, Weekly, Daily Remembrances, and Recognitions* of these things.

And, not only so, but the *Books* of the same *Moses* tell us, that a particular *Tribe* (of *Levi*) was *Appointed and Consecrated by God*, as his *Priests*; by whose *Hands* and none other, the *Sacrifices of the People* were to be offer'd; and these solemn *Institutions* to be celebrated. That it was *Death* for any other to approach the *Altar*. That their *High-Priest* wore a *Glorious Mitre*, and *Magnificent Robes of God's own Contrivance*, with the miraculous *Urim and Thummim* in his *Breast-plate*, whence the *divine Responses* were given.

Numbers
xxvii. 21.

Deut. xvii:
8. to 13.
1 Chr. xxiii
4.

That at his *Word*, the *King*, and all the *People* were to go out, and to come in. That these *Levites* were likewise the *Chief Judges*, even in all *Civil Causes*, and that it was *Death* to resist their *Sentence*. Now when-

ever it can be suppos'd that these *Books of Moses*

Moses were forged, in some Ages after *Moses*, it is impossible they cou'd have been received as True, unless the *Forgers* could have made the whole Nation believe, that they had received these *Books* from their *Fathers*, had been instructed in them when they were *Children*, and had taught them to their *Children*; moreover, that they had all been circumcised, and did circumcise their *Children*, in pursuance to what was commanded in these *Books*; that they had observed the yearly *Passover*, the weekly *Sabbath*, the *New Moons*, and all these several *Feasts*, *Fasts*, and *Ceremonies*, commanded in these *Books*: That they had never eaten any *Swines* Flesh, or other *Meats* prohibited in these *Books*: That they had a magnificent *Tabernacle*, with a visible *Priesthood* to *Administer* in it, which was confined to the *Tribe* of *Levi*; over whom, was placed a glorious *High-Priest*, cloth'd with great and mighty *Prerogatives*; whose *Death* only cou'd deliver those that were fled to the *Cities* of *Refuge*. And that these *Priests* were their ordinary

Num. xxxv.
25, 28.

Judges, even in *Civil* Matters: I say, was it possible to have persuaded a whole *Nation* of Men, that they had *Known* and *Practised* all these Things, if they had not done it? Or, *Secondly*, To have received a *Book* for Truth, which said they had *practised* them, and appeal'd to that *Practise*? So that here are the *Third* and *Fourth* of the *Marks* above-mentioned.

But

But now let us descend to the utmost Degree of *Supposition*, viz. That these Things were *Practised*, before these *Books* of *Moses* were *Forged*; and that these *Books* did only *impose* upon the *Nation*, in making them believe, That they had kept these *Observances* in Memory of such and such Things, as were inserted in those *Books*.

Well then, let us proceed upon this *Supposition*, (however groundless) and now, will not the same *Impossibilities* occur, as in the former Case? For, *First*, This must suppose that the *Jews* kept all these *Observances* in Memory of *Nothing*, or without knowing any thing of their *Original*, or the *Reason* why they kept them. Whereas these very *Observances*, did express the *Ground* and *Reason* of their being kept, as the *Passover*, in Memory of God's *Passing-over* the *Children* of the *Israelites*, in that Night wherein he slew all the *First-born* of *Egypt*, and so of the rest.

But, *Secondly*, Let us *suppose*, contrary both to *Reason*, and *Matter of Fact*, That the *Jews* did not know any *Reason* at all, why they kept these *Observances*; yet was it possible to put it upon them, That they had kept these *Observances* in Memory of what they had never heard of before that Day, whensoever you will suppose that these *Books* of *Moses* were first *Forged*? For Example, suppose I shou'd now forge some *Romantick* Story, of strange Things done 1000 Years ago, and in
Confirmation

Confirmation of this, should endeavour to persuade the *Christian* World, That they had all along, from that *Day* to this, kept the *First-Day* of the *Week*, in *Memory* of such an *Hero*, an *Appollonius*, a *Barcosbas*, or a *Mahomet*; and had all been *Baptized* in his Name; and *Swore* by his Name, and upon that very *Book* (which I had then *forged*, and which they never saw before) in their publick *Judicatures*; that this *Book* was their *Gospel* and *Law*, which they had ever since that *Time*, these 1000 Years past, *universally* receiv'd and own'd, and none other. I would ask any *Deist*, whether he thinks it *possible*, that such a *Cheat* cou'd pass, or such a *Legend* be receiv'd as the *Gospel* of *Christians*; and that they could be made believe, that they never had had any other *Gospel*? The same Reason is as to the *Books* of *Moses*; and must be, as to every *Matter of Fact*, which has all the *Four Marks* before-mentioned; and these *Marks* secure any such *Matter of Fact* as much from being *invented* and *impos'd* in any after *Ages*, as at the *Time* when such *Matters of Fact* were said to be done.

Let me give one very familiar Example more in this Case. There is the *Stonbenge* on *Salisbury-Plain*, every body knows it; and yet none knows the Reason why those Great *Stones* were set there, or by whom, or in memory of what.

Now suppose I shou'd write a Book To-morrow, and tell there, That these *Stones* were
set

set up by *Hercules, Polyphemus, or Caragantua*, in memory of such and such of their Actions, And, for a further Confirmation of this, shou'd say, in this *Book*, That it was wrote at the *Time* when such Actions were done. and by the very *Actors* themselves, or *Eye-Witnesses*. And that this *Book* had been received as *Truth*, and quoted by *Authors* of the greatest *Reputation* in all *Ages* since. Moreover, that this *Book* was well known in *England*, and enjoy'd by *Act of Parliament*, to be taught our *Children*, and that we did teach it our *Children*, and had been taught it ourselves when we were *Children*. I ask any *Deist*, Whether he thinks this could pass upon *England*! And whether, If I, or any other, should insist upon it, we should not, instead of being believ'd, be sent to *Bedlam*?

Now let us compare this with the *Stonehenge*, as I may call it, or *Twelve* great *Stones* set up at *Gilgal*, which is told in the ivth *Chapter* of *Joshua*. There it is said, *ver. 6.* that the Reason why they were set up, was, that when their *Children*, in after *Ages*, should ask the Meaning of it, should be told them.

And the Thing, in Memory of which they were set up, was such as cou'd not possibly be impos'd upon that *Notion*, at that *Time*, when it was said to be done, it was as wonderful and miraculous as their Passage thro' the *Red-Sea*.

And withal, free from a very poor Objection, which the *Deists* have advanc'd against that
Miracle

Miracle of the *Red-Sea*: Thinking to save it by a *Spring-Tide*, with the Concurrence of a *strong Wind*, happening at the same Time; which left the *Sand* so dry, as that the *Israelites* being all *Foot*, might pass thro' the *Ousey* Places and *Holes*, which it must be supposed the *Sea* left behind it: But that the *Egyptians*, being all *Horse* and *Chariots*, stuck in those *Holes*, and were entangled, so as that they cou'd not march so fast as the *Israelites*: And that this was all the Meaning of its being said, That God took off their (the *Egyptians*) *Chariot-Wheels*, that they drove them heavily. So that they wou'd make nothing *extraordinary*, at least, not *miraculous*, in all this Action.

This is advanc'd in *Le Clerc's Dissertations upon Genesis*, lately printed in *Holland*, and that Part with others of the like Tendency, endeavouring to resolve other *Miracles*, as that of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, &c. into mere *Natural Causes*, are put into *English* by the well known T. BROWN, for the *Edification* of the *Deists* in *England*.

But these Gentlemen have forgot, that the *Israelites* had great *Herds* of many Thousand *Cattle* with them; which wou'd be apter to *stray*, and fall into those *Holes*, and *Ousey* Places in the *Sand*, than *Horses* with *Riders*, who might direct them.

But such *precarious*, and *silly Supposes*, are not worth the Answering. If there had been no more in this *Passage* thro' the *Red-Sea* than

than that of a *Spring-Tide*, &c. It had been impossible for *Moses* to have made the *Israelites* believe that Relation given of it in *Exodus*, with so many Particulars, which themselves saw, to be true.

And all those *Scriptures* which magnify this Action, and appeal to it as a full Demonstration of the miraculous Power of God, must be reputed as *Romance* or *Legend*.

I say this, for the Sake of some Christians, who think it no Prejudice to the Truth of the *Holy Bible*, but rather an Advantage, as rendering it more easy to be believ'd, if they can solve whatever seems *Miraculous* in it, by the Power of *second Causes*: And so to make all, as they speak, *Natural*, and *Easy*. Wherein, if they cou'd prevail, the *natural* and *easy* Result wou'd be, not to believe one Word in all thoir *Sacred Oracles*. For if things be not, as they are told in any *Relation*, that *Relation* must be *false*. And if *false* in *Part*, we cannot *Trust* to it, either in *Whole*, or in *Part*,

Here are to be excepted. *Mis-Translations*, and *Errors*, either in *Copy*, or in *Press*. But where there is no Room for supposing of these, as where all *Copies* do agree; there we must either *Receive* all, or *Reject* all. I mean in any Book that pretends to be written from the *Mouth of God*. For in other common *Histories*, we may *believe* Part, and *reject* Part, as we see Cause.

But to return. The *Passage* of the *Israelites* over *Jordan*, in Memoy of which those
Stones

Stones at Gilgal were set up, is free from all those little *Carpings* before mentioned, that are made as to the *Passage thro' the Red-Sea*. For Notice was given to the *Israclites* the Day before, of this great *Miracle* to be done, *Jesh.* iii. 5. It was done at Noon-day, before the whole *Nation*. And when the *Waters of Jordan* were divided, it was not at any *Low Ebb*, but at the Time when that River *over-flowed*, all his *Banks*, ver. 15. And it was done, not by *Winds*, or in length of Time, which *Winds* must take to do it: But all on the sudden, as soon as the *Feet of the Priests that bare the Ark* were dipped in the *Brim of the Water*. Then the *Waters* which came down from above, stood and rose up upon an *Heap*, very far from the *City Adam*, that is beside *Zaretan*; And those that came down toward the *Sea of the Plain*, even the *Salt-Sea*, failed, and were cut off: And the *People* passed over, right against *Jericho*. The *Priest* stood in the midst of *Jordan*, 'till all the *Armies of Israel* had passed over. And it came to pass, when the *Priests that bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord*, were come up, out of the *Midst of Jordan*, and the *Soles of the Priests Feet* were lift up upon the *Dry-land*, that the *Waters of Jordan* returned unto their *Place*, and flowed over all his *Banks* as they did before. And the *People* came up out of *Jordan*, on the *Tenth Day of the first Month*, and encamped in *Gilgal* on the *East Border of Jericho*. And those *Twelve Stones* which

they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. And he spake unto the Children of Israel, saying, When your Children shall ask their Fathers in Time to come, saying, What mean these Stones? Then shall ye let your Children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry Land. For the Lord your God dried up the Waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over; as the Lord your God did to the Red-Sea, which He dried up, from before us, until we were gone over. That all the People of the Earth might know the Hand of the Lord, that it is Mighty: That ye might fear the Lord your God for ever. Chap. iv. from ver. 18.

If the Passage over the Red-Sea, had been only taking Advantage of a Spring-Tide, or the like; How would this teach all the People of the Earth, that the Hand of the Lord was Mighty! How would a Thing, no more remarkable, have been taken Notice of thro' all the World! How would it have taught Israel to fear the Lord, when they must know, that notwithstanding, of all these big Words, there was so Little in it! How could they have believ'd, or receiv'd a Book, as Truth, which they knew, told the Matter so far otherwise, from what it was!

But, as I said, this Passage over Jordan, which is here compar'd to that of the Red-Sea, is free from all those Cavils that are made, as to that of the Red-Sea, and is a further Attestation

Attestation to it, being said to be done in the same Manner as was that of the *Red-Sea*.

Now, to form our Argument, let Us suppose, that there never was any such Thing as that *Passage* over *Jordan*. That these Stones at *Gilgal* were set up, upon some other Occasion, in some After-Age. And then, that some designing Man invented this Book of *Joshua*, and said, that it was wrote by *Joshua* at that Time. And gave this *Stonage* at *Gilgal*, for a *Testimony* of the *Truth* of it. Would not every Body say to him, We know the *Stonage* at *Gilgal*, but we never heard before of this Reason for it: Nor of this *Book* of *Joshua*: Where has it been all this while? And *Where*, and *How* came you, after so many Ages, to find it? Besides, this Book tells Us, that this *Passage* over *Jordan* was ordain'd to be taught our *Children*, from Age to Age: And therefore, that they were always to be *Instructed* in the Meaning of that *Stonage* at *Gilgal*, as a *Memorial* of it. But we were never taught it, when we were *Children*; nor did ever teach our *Children* any such Thing. And it is not likely, That could have been forgotten, while so remarkable a *Stonage* did continue, which was set up for that, and no other End.

And if, for the Reasons before given, no such *Imposition*, could be put upon Us, as to the *Stonage* in *Salisbury-Plain*; How much less could it be as to the *Stonage* at *Gilgal*?

And if where we know not the *Reason* of a bare naked *Monument*, such a *Sham-Reason* cannot be imposed; How much more is it impossible to impose upon Us, in *Actions* and *Observances*, which we *celebrate* in Memory of particular *Passages*? How impossible to make Us *forget* those *Passages* which we daily *Commemorate*; and persuade Us, that we had always *kept* such *Institutions* in Memory of what we never heard of before; that is, that We knew it, before we knew it!

And if we find it thus impossible for an *Imposition* to be put upon Us, even in some Things, which have not all the *Four-Marks* before-mentioned: How much more impossible is it, that any *Deceit* should be in that Thing, where all the *Four-Marks* do meet!

This has been shewed in the *First Place*, as to the *Matters of Fact* to *Moses*.

2. Therefore, I come now (*Secondly*) to shew. that, as in the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses*, so likewise, all these *Four Marks* do meet in the *Matters of Fact*, which are recorded, in the *Gospel*, of Our Blessed *Saviour*. And my Work herein, will be the shorter, because all that is said before, of *Moses* and his Books, is every Way applicable to *Christ* and His *Gospel*. His *Works*, and *Miracles*, are there said to be done *publickly*, in the Face of the World, as He argued to his Accusers, *I spake openly to the World, and in Secret have I said Nothing*, John xviii. 20. It is told, *Acts* ii. 41. that Three Thousand at one Time; and, *Acts*

iv. 4. that above Five Thousand at another Time, were converted, upon Conviction of what themselves had seen, what had been done publickly before their Eyes, wherein it was impossible to have imposed upon them. Therefore here were the two First of the *Rules* before-mentioned.

Then for the Two second: *Baptism*, and *the Lord's Supper*, were instituted as perpetual *Memorials* of these Things; and they were not instituted in After-Ages, but at the very Time, when these Things were said to be done; and have been observed without Interruption, in all Ages through the whole Christian World, down all the Way, from that Time to this. And *Christ* Himself did ordain *Apostles*, and other *Ministers*, of His *Gospel* to *Preach*, and *Administer*, these *Sacraments*; and to *Govern* His *Church*: And that *always*, *even unto the End of the* Matth. xxviii. 20. *World*. Accordingly they have continued by regular *Succession* to this Day: And, no Doubt, ever shall, while the Earth shall last. So that the Christian *Clergy* are as notorious a *Matter of Fact*, as the *Tribe of Levi* among the *Jews*. And the *Gospel* is as much a *Law* to the *Christians*, as the *Books of Moses* to the *Jews*: And it being Part of the *Matters of Fact* related in the *Gospel*, that such an *Order of Men*, were appointed by *Christ*, and to *continue to the End of the World*; consequently, if the *Gospel* was a *Fiction*, and invented (as it must be) on some Ages after *Christ*; then, at that

C 3

Time,

Time, when it was first invented, there could be no such *Order of Clergy*, as derived themselves from the Institution of *Christ*; which must give the *Lye* to the *Gospel*, and demonstrate the whole to be *False*. And the *Matters of Fact* of *Christ* being pressed to be *True*, no otherwise than as there was, at that Time (whenever the *Deists* will suppose the *Gospel* to be *Forged*) not only publick *Sacraments* of *Christ's* Institution, but an *Order of Clergy*, likewise of his Appointment, to *Administer* them: And it being impossible there could be any such Things before they were *Invented*, it is as impossible that they should be *Received* when *Invented*. And therefore, by what was said above, it was as impossible to have imposed upon Mankind in this Matter, by inventing of it in *After-Ages*, as at the Time when those Things were said to be done.

3. The *Matters of Fact* of *Mahomet*, or what is Fabled of the *Deities*, do all want some of the aforesaid *four* Rules, whereby the Certainty of *Matters of Fact* is demonstrated. First, for *Mahomet*, he pretended to no *Miracles*, as he tells us in his *Alcoran*, c. 6, &c. and those which are commonly told of him pass among the *Mahometans* themselves, but as *Legendary Fables*; and as such, are rejected by the *Wise* and *Learned* among them; as the *Legends* of their *Saints* are in the *Church of Rome*. See Dr *Prideaux's* *Life of Mahomet*, Page 34.

But, in the next Place, those which are told of him, do all want the *Two* first *Rules* before-

before-mention'd. For his pretended Converſe with the *Moon*; his *Merſa*, or Night-Journey from *Mecca* to *Jeruſalem*, and thence to *Heaven*, &c. were not performed before any Body. We have only his own Word for them. And they are as groundleſs as the Deluſions of *Fox*, or *Muggleton*, among ourſelves. The ſame is to be ſaid (in the ſecond Place) of the *Fables* of the *Heathen Gods*, of *Mercury's* ſtealing Sheep, *Jupiter's* turning himſelf into a *Bull*, and the like; beſides the *Folly*, and *Unworthineſs*, of ſuch *ſenſeleſs* pretended *Miracles*. And moreover, the *Wife* among the *Heathens* did reckon no otherwiſe of theſe, but as *Fables*, which had a *Mythology*, or *Myſtical* Meaning in them, of which ſeveral of them have given us the *Rationale*, or *Explication*. And it is plain enough that *Ovid* meant no other by all his *Metamorphoſes*.

It is true, the *Heathen Deities* had their *Prieſts*: They had likewiſe *Feaſts*, *Games*, and other *publick Inſtitutions*, in Memory of them. But all theſe want the Fourth *Mark*, viz. That ſuch *Prieſthood* and *Inſtitutions* ſhould *Commence* from the Time that ſuch Things as they Commemorate, were ſaid to be done; otherwiſe they cannot ſecure After-Ages from the *Impoſture*, by detecting it, at the Time when firſt *Invented*, as hath been argued before. But the *Bacchanalia*, and other *Heathen Feaſts*, were inſtituted many Ages after what was reported of theſe Gods, was ſaid to be done, and therefore can be no *Proof*

of them. And the *Priests* of *Bacchus*, *Apollo*, &c. were not *Ordained* by these supposed *Gods*: But were appointed by others, in *After-Ages*, only in *Honour* to them. And therefore these *Orders* of *Priests* are no *Evidence* to the *Truth* of the *Matters of Fact*, which are reported of their *Gods*.

IV. Now to apply what has been said, You may challenge all the *Deists* in the *World* to shew any *Action* that is *Fabulous*, which has all the four *Rules*, or *Marks*, before-mentioned. No, it is impossible. And (to resume a little what is spoke to before) the *Histories* of *Exodus*, and the *Gospel*, could never have been received, if they had not been true; because the *Institution* of the *Priesthood* of *Levi* and of *Christ*; of the *Sabbath*, the *Passover*, of *Circumcision*, of *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*, &c. are there related, as descending all the *Way* down from those *Times*, without *Interruption*. And it is full as impossible to persuade *Men*, that they had been *Circumcised*, *Baptized*, had *Circumcised*, or *Baptized* their *Children*, celebrated *Passovers*, *Sabbaths*, *Sacraments*, &c. under the *Government* and *Administration* of a certain *Order* of *Priests*, if they had done none of these *Things*, as to make them believe that they had gone through *Seas* upon *Dry-Land*, seen the *Dead* raised, &c. And without believing of these, it was impossible that either the *Law*, or the *Gospel*, could have been received.

And

And the Truth of the *Matters of Fact* of *Exodus* and the *Gospel*, being no otherwise pressed upon Men, than as they have practised such *publick Institutions*; it is appealing to the *Senses* of Mankind for the *Truth* of them: And makes it impossible for any to have invented such Stories in After-Ages, without a palpable Detection of the Cheat, when first invented; as impossible as to have imposed upon the *Senses* of Mankind, at the Time when such *publick Matters of Fact* were said to be done.

V. I do not say, that every thing which wants these four *Marks* is *False*: But, that nothing can be *False* which has them *All*.

No manner of Doubt, that there was such a Man as *Julius Cæsar*, that he fought at *Pharſalia*, was killed in the *Senate-House*: And many other *Matters of Fact* of Antient times, tho' we keep no *publick Observances* in Memory of them

But this shews that the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses*, and of *Christ*, have come down to Us better guarded, than any other *Matters of Fact*, how true soever.

And yet our Deists who would laugh any Man out of the World, as an irrational *Brute*, that should offer to deny *Cæsar* or *Alexander*, *Homer* or *Virgil*, their *publick Works* and *Actions*; do, at the same time, value themselves as the only Men of *Wit* and *Sense*, of *Free*, *Generous*, and *Unbyassed Judgments* for
ridiculing

ridiculing the Histories of *Moses* and *Christ*, that are infinitely better attested, and guarded with infallible Marks, which the others want.

VI. Besides that, the Importance of the Subject, would oblige all Men to enquire more narrowly into the one, than the other: For what Consequence is it to me, or to the World, whether there was such a Man as *Cæsar*, whether he beat, or was beaten at *Pharsalia*, whether *Homer* or *Virgil*, wrote such Books, and whether what is related in the *Iliads* or *Æneids*, be *True*, or *False*? It is not Two-Pence up or down to any Man in the World. And therefore, it is worth no Man's while to enquire into it, either to *Oppose*, or *Justify* the *Truth*, of these Relations.

But our very *Souls* and *Bodies*, both this *Life* and *Eternity*, are concerned in the *Truth* of what is related in the *Holy Scriptures*; and therefore, Men would be more inquisitive to search into the *Truth* of these, than of any other Matters of *Fact*; examine, and sift them narrowly; and find out the *Deceit*, if any such could be found: For it concerned them *Nearly*: and was of the last *Importance* to them.

How unreasonable then is it to reject these *Matters of Fact*, so sifted, so examined, and so attested, as no other *Matters of Fact* in the World ever were; and yet, to think it the most highly *Unreasonable*, even to *Madness*, to deny other *Matters of Fact*, which have
not

not the thousandth Part of their *Evidence*, and are of no *Consequence* at all to Us, whether *True* or *False*.

VII. There are several other *Topicks*, from whence the Truth of the *Christian Religion* is evinced, to all who will Judge by *Reason*, and give themselves leave to *Consider*. As the *Improbability* that Ten or Twelve *poor illiterate Fishermen*, should form a Design of converting the whole World to believe the *Delusions*; and the *Impossibility* of their effecting it, without Force of *Arms*, *Learning*, *Oratory*, or any one visible Thing that could recommend them! And to impose a *Doctrine*, quite opposite to the *Lusts* and *Pleasures* of Men, and all *worldly Advantages*, or *Enjoyments*! And this, in an Age of so great *Learning*, and *Sagacity*, as that, wherein the *Gospel* was first Preached! That these *Apostles* should not only undergo all the *Scorn* and *Contempt*, but the severest *Persecutions* and most cruel *Deaths* that could be inflicted, in Attestation to what themselves knew to be a meer *Deceit*, and *Forgery*, of their own Contriving! Some have suffered for *Errors* which they thought to be *Truth*: But never any for what themselves *knew* to be *Lies*. And the *Apostles* must know what they taught to be *Lies*, if it was so, because they spoke of those things which they said, they had both *seen* and *heard*, had *looked upon*, and handled with their *Hands*, &c.

Acts iv. 20.
1 John i. 1.

Neither

Neither can it be said, that they, perhaps, might have proposed some temporal Advantages to themselves, but missed of them, and met with *Sufferings*, instead of them: For if it had been so, it is more than probable, that when they saw their Disappointment, they would have discovered their *Conspiracy*; especially when they might not have only saved their *Lives*, but got great *Rewards* for doing of it. That not one of them should ever have been brought to do this.

But this is not all. For they tell us, that their *Master* bid them expect nothing but *Sufferings* in this World. This is the Tenor of all that *Gospel* which they taught. And they told the same to all whom they *Converted*. So that here was no Disappointment.

For all that were *Converted* by them, were *Converted* upon the certain Expectation of *Sufferings*, and bidden *prepare* for it. *Christ* commanded his *Disciples* to take up their *Cross* daily, and follow Him; and told them, that in the World they should have *Tribulation*: That whoever did not forsake *Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Lands*, and their very *Lives*, could not be his *Disciples*: That he, who *sought to save his Life* in this World, should *lose* it in the next.

Now that this despised *Doctrin*e of the *Cross* should prevail so *Universally* against the *Allurements* of *Flesh* and *Blood*, and all the *Blandishments* of this World; against the *Rage* and *Persecution* of all the *Kings* and
Powers

Powers of the Earth, must shew it's *Original* to be *Divine*; and its *Protector Almighty*. What is it else, could *conquer* without *Arms*, persuade without *Rhetorick*; overcome *Enemies*; disarm *Tyrants*; and subdue *Empires* without *Opposition*.

VIII. We may add to all this, the Testimonies of the most bitter *Enemies* and *Persecutors* of *Christianity*, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to the *Truth* of the *Matter of Fact* of *Christ*, such as *Josephus*, and *Tacitus*; of which the First flourished about *Forty* Years after the *Death* of *Christ*, and the Other, about *Seventy* Years after: So that they were capable of examining into the *Truth*, and wanted not *Prejudice* and *Malice* sufficient to have inclined them to deny the *Matter of Fact* itself, of *Christ*: But their *Confessing* to it, as likewise *Lucian*, *Celsus*, *Porphyry*, and *Julian*, the *Apostate*; the *Mahometans* since, and all other *Enemies* of *Christianity*, that have arisen in the *World*, is an undeniable *Attestation* to the *Truth* of the *Matter of Fact*.

IX. But there is another *Argument* more strong and convincing, than even this *Matter of Fact*. More than the *Certainty* of what I see with my *Eyes*. And which the *Apostle Peter* called a *more sure Word*, that is, *Proof* that what he saw and heard upon the *Holy Mount*, when our *Blessed Saviour* was *Transfigured* before him, and two other of the *Apostles*:

Apostles: For having repeated that Passage as a Proof of that whereof they were *Eye-Witnesses*, and heard the *Voice* from *Heaven* giving Attestation to our Lord *Christ*, 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 18. He says, ver. 19. *We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy*, for the Proof of this *Jesus* being the *Messiah*, that is, the *Prophecies* which had gone before of *Him*, from the Beginning of the World; and *All* exactly fulfilled in *Him*.

Men may dispute an *Imposition* or *Delusion*, upon our outward *Senses*. But how can that be *False*, which has been so long, even from the Beginning of the World, and so *Often* by all the *Prophets*, in several Ages, foretold; how can this be an *Imposition*, or a *Forgery*?

This is particularly insisted on, in the *Method with the Jews*. And even the *Deists* must confess, that the Book We call the *Old Testament*, was in being, in the Hands of the *Jews*, long before our *Saviour* came into the World. And if they will be at the Pains to compare the *Prophecies* that are there of the *Messiah*, with the Fulfilling of them, as to *Time*, *Place*, and all other *Circumstances*, in the *Person*, *Birth*, *Life*, *Death*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*, of our Blessed *Saviour*, will find this Proof, what our *Apostle* here calls it, a *Light shining in a dark Place*, until the *Day-dawn*, and the *Day-star* arise in your *Hearts*. Which God grant. Here is no Possibility of *Deceit* or *Imposture*.

Old *Prophecies*, (and all so agreeing) could not have been contrived to countenance a new *Cheat*: And nothing could be a *Cheat*, that could fulfil all these.

For this, therefore, I refer the *Deists* to the *Method with the Jews*.

I desire them likewise, to look there, *Señt. XI.* and consider the *Prophecies* given so long ago, of which, they see the Fulfilling at this Day, with their own Eyes, of the State of the *Jews*, for many Ages *past*, and at *present*; without a *King*, or *Priest*, or *Temple*, or *Sacrifice*, scattered to the four *Winds*, *Sifted* as with a *Sieve*, among all *Nations*; yet *preserved*, and always so to be, a distinct People, from all others, of the whole Earth. Whereas; those Mighty *Monarchies* which Oppressed the *Jews*, and which Commanded the *World*, in their Turns; and had the greatest Human Prospect of Perpetuity, were to be extinguished, as they have been, even that their Names should be blotted out from under Heaven.

As likewise, That as Remarkable of our *Blessed Saviour*, concerning the *Preservation* and *Progress* of the *Christian Church*, when in her *Swaddling Cloaths*, consisting only of a few poor *Fishermen*. Not by the *Sword*, as that of *Mahomet*, but under all the *Persecution* of *Men* and *Hell*; which yet should not prevail against Her.

But though I offer these, as not to be slighted by the *Deists*, to which they can shew

shew nothing equal in all prophane History; and in which it is impossible any Cheat can lie; yet I put them not upon the same Foot as the *Prophecies* before-mentioned, of the *Marks* and *Coming* of the *Messiah*, which have been since the *World* began.

And that General Expectation of the whole Earth, at the Time of His Coming, insisted upon in the *Method* with the *Jews*, Sect. V. is Greatly to be Noticed.

But, I say, the foregoing *Prophecies* of our *Saviour*, are so strong a *Proof*, as even *Miracles* would not be sufficient to break their Authority.

I mean, if it were possible that a *True Miracle* could be wrought, in *Contradiction* to them. For that would be for *God* to *contradict* Himself.

But no *Sign*, or *Wonder*, that could possibly be solved, should shake this *Evidence*.

It is this that keeps the *Jews* in their *Obstinacy*. Though they cannot deny the *Matters of Fact* done by our *Blessed Saviour*, to be truly *Miracles*, if so done as said. Nor can they deny that they were so done, because they have all the *Four Marks* before mentioned. Yet they cannot yield! Why? Because they think that the *Gospel* is in *Contradiction* to the *Law*. Which, if it were, the Consequence would be unavoidable, that *Both* could not be *True*. To solve this, is the Business of the *Method* with the *Jews*. But the *Contradiction* which they suppose, is in their *Comments* that they put upon the *Law*; especially they expect a *Literal Fulfilling*

filling of those *Promises* of the *Restoration* of *Jerusalem*, and outward *Glories* of the *Church*, of which there is such frequent mention in the Books of *Moses*, the *Psalms*, and all the *Prophets*. And many *Christians* do expect the same; and take those *Texts* as *Literally* as the *Jews* do. We do *Believe*, and *Pray*, for the *Conversion* of the *Jews*. For this *End* they have been so miraculously *Preserved*, according to the *Prophecies* so long before of it. And when that *Time* shall come, as they are the most *Honourable* and *Ancient* of all the *Nations* on the *Earth*, so will their *Church* Return to be the *Mother Christian Church*, as she was at First; And *Rome* must Surrender to *Jerusalem*. Then all *Nations* will Flow thither; and even *Ezekiel's Temple* may be *Literally Built There*, in the *Metropolis* of the whole *Earth*; which *Jerusalem* must be, when the *Fulness* of the *Gentiles*, shall meet with the *Conversion* of the *Jews*. For no *Nation* will then contend with the *Jews*, no *Church* with *Jerusalem* for *Supremacy*. All *Nations* will be ambitious to draw their *Original* from the *Jews*, whose are the *Fathers*, and from whom, as concerning the *Flesh*, *Christ* came.

Then will be fulfilled that outward *Grandeur* and *Restoration* of the *Jews* and of *Jerusalem*, which they expect, pursuant to the *Prophecies*.

They pretend not that this is limited to any particular *Time* of the *Reign* of the *Messiah*.

fiab. They are sure it will not be at the beginning; for they expect to go through great *Conflicts* and *Tryals* with their *Messiah*, (as the *Christian Church* has done) before his *Final Conquest*, and that they come to *Reign* with him. So that this is no *Obstruction* to their *Embracing of Christianity*. They see the same things fulfilled in us, which they expect themselves; and we expect the same things they do.

I tell this to the *Deists*, lest they may think that the *Jews* have some stronger *Arguments* than they know of; That they are not persuaded by the *Miracles* of our *Blessed Saviour*, and by the fulfilling of all the *Prophecies* in him, that were made concerning the *Messiah*.

As I said before, I would not plead even *Miracles* against these.

And if this is sufficient to persuade a *Jew*, it is much more so to a *Deist*, who labours not under these *Objections*.

Besides, I would not seem to clash with that (in a sound Sense) reasonable *Caution*, used by *Christian Writers*, not to put the Issue of the *Truth* wholly upon *Miracles*, without this addition, when not done in *Contradiction* to the *Revelations* already given in the *Holy Scriptures*.

And they do it upon this Consideration, That tho' it is impossible to suppose, that *God* would work a real *Miracle*, in contradiction to what he has already *Revealed*: Yet,
Men

Men may be imposed upon by *False* and *Seeming Miracles*, and *Pretended Revelations*, (as there are many Examples, especially in the *Church of Rome*) and so may be shaken in the *Faith*, if they keep not to the *Holy Scriptures* as their *Rule*.

We are told, 2 *Theff.* ii. 9. of him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all Power, and Signs, and Lying-wonders. And *Rev.* xiii. 14. xvi. 14. and xix. 20. of the Devil and *False-Prophets* working *Miracles*. But the Word, in all these Places, is only *Σημεῖα* Signs, that is, as it is rendered, *Matth.* xxv. 24. which, tho' sometimes it may be used to signify *Real Miracles*, yet not always, not in these Places. For though every *Miracle* be a *Sign* and a *Wonder*, yet every *Sign*, or *Wonder*, is not a *Miracle*.

X. Here it may be proper to consider a common *Topick* of the *Deists*, who when they are not able to stand out against the Evidence of *Faith*, that such and such *Miracles* have been done: Then turn about, and deny such Things to be *Miracles*, at least, That we can never be *Sure*, whether any wonderful Thing that is shewn to us, be a *True* or a *False Miracle*.

And the Great Argument they go upon, is this, That a *Miracle* being that which exceeds the *Power of Nature*. We cannot know what exceeds it, unless we knew the utmost *Extent* of the *Power of Nature*: And

no Man pretends to know that; therefore, that no Man can *certainly* know whether any *Event* be *miraculous*. And, consequently, he may be *cheated* in his Judgment betwixt *True* and *Falsi-Miracles*.

To which, I answer, That Men may be so *Cheated*. And there are many Examples of it.

But that though we may not always *Know* when we are *Cheated*, yet we can *Certainly* tell, in many Cases, when we are *not Cheated*.

But though we do not know the utmost *Extent* of the *Power* of *Nature*, perhaps, in an *One Thing*: Yet it does not follow, that we know not the *Nature* of any thing, in some *measure*; and that certainly too. For Example, though I do not know the utmost *Extent* of the *Power* of *Fire*, yet I *Certainly* know, That it is the *Nature* of *Fire* to *burn*. And that when proper *Fuel* is administered to it, it is *Contrary* to the *Nature* of *Fire* not to *Consume* it. Therefore, if I see *Three Men* taken off the *Street*, in their common wearing *Apparel*, and without any *Preparation*, cast into the midst of a *Burning Fiery Furnace*; and that the *Flame* was so *Fierce*, that it *Burnt* up those *Men* that threw them in; and yet, that these who were thrown in, should walk up and down in the *Bottom* of the *Furnace*, and I should see a *Fourth Person* with them of *Glorious Appearance*, like the *Son of God*. And that these *Men* should come up again out of the *Furnace*, without any *Harm*, or so much as the
Smell

Smell of Fire upon themselves, or their *Cloaths*, I could not be deceived in thinking there was a Stop put to the *Nature of Fire*, as to these Men; and that it had its Effect upon the Men whom it *Burned*, at the same Time.

Again, Tho' I cannot tell how *Wonderful* and *Sudden* an *Increase of Corn* might be produced by the Concurrence of many *Causes*, as a *Warm Climate*, the *Fertility of the Soil*, &c. Yet this I can *Certainly* know, That there is not that *Natural Force* in the *Breach* of two or three *Words*, spoken to *multiply* one small *Loaf of Bread*, so *fast*, in the *Breaking* of it, as *Truly* and *Really*, not only in *Appearance* and *Shew* to the *Eye*, but to fill the *Bellies* of several *Thousand hungry Persons*; and that the *Fragments* should be much more than the *Bread* was at first.

So niether in a *Word* spoken, to raise the *Dead*, cure *Diseases*, &c.

Therefore, though we know not the utmost *Extent* of the *Power of Nature*; yet we can certainly know what is *Contrary* to the *Nature* of several such Things as we do Know.

And therefore, though we may be *Cheated* and imposed upon in many *Seeming-Miracles* and *Wonders*; yet there are some Things, wherein we may be *Certain*.

But further, the *Deists* acknowledge a *God*, of an *Almighty Power*, who made all Things.

Yet they would put it out of his *Power*, to make any Revelation of his Will to Mankind. For we cannot be *Certain* of any *Miracle*, How should we know when *God* sent any thing *Extraordinary* to us?

Nay, How should we know the *Ordinary* Power of *Nature*, if we knew not what *exceeded* it? If we knew not what is *Natural*, How do we know there is such a thing as *Nature*; That all is not *Supernatural*, all *Miracles*, and so *disputable*, till we come to downright *Scepticism*, and doubt the *Certainty* of our *outward Senses*, whether we *See*, *Hear*, or *Feel*; or all be not a *miraculous* Illusion!

Which, because I know the *Deists* are not inclined to do, therefore I will return to pursue my Argument upon the *Conviction* of our *outward Senses*. Desiring only this, That they would allow the *Senses* of other Men to be as *Certain* as their own. Which they cannot refuse, since without this, they can have no *Certainty* of their own.

XI. Therefore, from what has been said, the Cause is summed up shortly in this, That tho' we cannot *See* what was done before our *Time*, yet by the *Marks* which I have laid down concerning the *Certainty* of *Matters of Fact* done before our *Time*, we may be as much assured of the *Truth* of them, as if we saw them with our *Eyes*; because whatever *Matter of Fact* has all the *Four Marks* before-mentioned, could never have been *Invented*

vented and Received but upon the Conviction of the *outward Senses* of all those who did receive it, as before is demonstrated. And therefore this *Topick* which I have chosen, does stand upon the *Conviction* even of *Mens outward Senses*. And since you have confined me to *one Topick*, I have not insisted upon the other, which I have only named.

XII. And now it lies upon the *Deists*, if they would appear as Men of *Reason*, to shew some *Matter of Fact* of former Ages, which they allow to be *True*, that has greater *Evidence* of its *Truth*, than the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses*, and of *Christ*: Otherwise they cannot, with any shew of *Reason*, reject the one, and yet admit of the other.

But, I have given them greater Latitude than this, for I have shewn such *Marks* of the *Truth* of the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses* and of *Christ*, as no other *Matters of Fact* of those Times, however *True*, have, but these only: And I put it upon them to shew any *Forgery*, that has *All* these *Marks*.

This is a short *Issue*. Keep them close to this. This determines the *Cause* all at once.

Let them produce their *Appollonius Tyanæus*, whose Life was put into *English* by the execrable *Charles Blount* *, and compared with all

* *The Hand of that Scornor, which durst write such outrageous Blasphemy against his Maker, the Divine Vengeance has made his own Executioner. Which I would not have mentioned, (because the like Judgment has befallen others) but that the*
Theistical.

the *Wit* and *Malice* he was Master of, to the *Life* and *Miracles* of our Blessed *Saviour*.

Let them take Aid from all the *Legends* in the Church of *Rome*, those *Pious Cheats*, the forest *Disgraces* of *Christianity*; and which have bid the fairest, of any one *Contrivance*, to overturn the *Certainty* of the *Miracles* of *Christ*, and his *Apostles*, and whole *Truth* of the *Gospel*, by putting them all upon the same *Foot*; at least, they are so understood by the *Generality* of their *Devotees*, tho' *Disowned* and *Laughed at* by the *Learned*, and Men of *Sense* among them.

Let them Pick and Chuse the most probable of all the *Fables* of the *Heathen Deities*, and see if they can find, in any of these, the Four *Marks* before-mentioned.

Otherwise let them submit to the *Irrefragable Certainty* of the *Christian Religion*.

XIII. But if, notwithstanding of all that is said, the *Deists* will still contend, That all this is but *Priest-Craft*, the *Invention* of *Priests*, for their own *Profit*, &c. then they will give us an *Idea* of *Priests*, far different from

Theistical-Club, have set this up as a Principle; and printed a *Vindication* of this same *Blount*, for murdering of himself, by way of *Justification* of *Self murder*. Which some of them have since, as well as formerly, *horridly practised* upon themselves. Therefore this is no common *Judgment* to which they are delivered, but a *visible Mark* set upon them, to show how far *God* has forsaken them; and as a *Caution* to all *Christians*, to beware of them, and not to come near the *Tents* of these wicked Men, lest they perish in their *Destruction*, both of *Soul* and *Body*.

from what they intend: For then we must look upon these *Priests*, not only as the *Cunningest* and *Wiseſt* of *Mankind*, but we ſhall be tempted to adore them as *Deities*, who have ſuch Power, as to impoſe, at their Pleaſure, upon the Senſes of *Mankind* to make them believe, that they had practiſed ſuch *Publick Inſtitutions*, Enacted them by *Laws*, Taught them to their *Children*, &c. when they had never done any of theſe Things, or ever ſo much as heard of them before: And then, upon the Credit of their Believing that they had done ſuch Things as they never did, to make them further Believe, upon the ſame Foundation, whatever they pleaſed to impoſe upon them, as to Former Ages: I ſay, ſuch a *Power* as this, muſt exceed all that is *Human*; and, conſequently, make us rank theſe *Priests* far above the Condition of *Mortals*.

2. Nay, this were to make them out-do all that has ever been related of the *Infernal Powers*: For though their *Legerdemain* has extended to deceive ſome unwary Beholders; and their Power of working ſome ſeeming Miracles has been great, yet it never reached, nor ever was ſuppoſed to reach ſo far, as to deceive the Senſes of all *Mankind*, in Matters of ſuch *Publick* and *Notorious* Nature as thoſe of which we now ſpeak, to make them believe, that they had enacted *Laws* for ſuch *Publick Obſervances*, continually Practiſed them, Taught them to their *Children*, and had been Inſtructed in them
 themſelves,

themselves, from their *Childhood*, if they had never *Enacted, Practised, Taught, or been Taught* such Things.

3. And as this exceeds all the *Power of Hell and Devils*, so is it more than ever *God Almighty* has done since the *Foundation of the World*. None of the *Miracles* that He has shewn, or *Belief* which He has required to any thing that he has *Revealed*, has ever contradicted the *outward Senses* of any one Man in the *World*, much less of all *Mankind* together. For *Miracles* being Appeals to our *outward Senses*, if they should overthrow the *Certainty* of our *outward Senses*, must destroy, with it, all their own *Certainty*, as to us ; since we have no other way to judge of a *Miracle* exhibited to our *Senses*, than upon the Supposition of the *Certainty* of our *Senses*, upon which we give credit to a *Miracle*, that is shewn to our *Senses*.

4. This, by the way, is a yet unanswered Argument against the *Miracle of Transubstantiation*, and shews the Weakness of the Defence which the *Church of Rome* offers for it, (from whom the *Socinians* have licked it up, and, of late, have Gloried much in it amongst us) That the Doctrines of the *Trinity*, or *Incarnation*, contain as great seeming Absurdities as that of *Transubstantiation*: For I would ask, Which of our *Senses* it is which the Doctrines of the *Trinity* or *Incarnation* do contradict? Is it our *Seeing, Hearing, Feeling, Taste, or Smell*? whereas, *Transubstantiation*

tiation does contradict all of these. Therefore the *Comparison* is exceedingly *short*, and out of Purpose. But to Return.

If the *Christian Religion* be a *Cheat*, and nothing else but the *Invention of Priests*; and carried on by their *Craft*, it makes their *Power* and *Wisdom* greater, than that of *Men, Angels, or Devils*; and more than God Himself ever yet shewed or expressed, to *Deceive* and *Impose* upon the *Senses of Mankind*, in such *Publick* and *Notorious Matters of Fact*.

XIV. And this *Miracle*, which the *Deists* must run into to avoid these recorded of *Moses* and *Christ*, is much greater, and more astonishing than all the *Scriptures* tell of *Them*.

So that these Men, who laugh at all *Miracles*, are now oblig'd to account for the greatest of all, how the *Senses of Mankind* could be imposed upon in such *publick Matters of Fact*.

And how then can they make the *Priests* the most *contemptible* of all *Mankind*, since they make *Them* the sole *Authors* of this the *greatest of Miracles*.

XV. And since the *Deists* (these Men of *Sense* and *Reason*) have so *vile* and *mean* an *Idea* of the *Priests* of all *Religions*, why do they not recover the World out of the *Possession* and *Government* of such *Blockheads*? Why do they suffer *Kings* and *States* to be led by *Them*; to establish their *Deceits* by
Laws

Laws, and inflict *Penalties* upon the *Opposers* of them? Let the *Deists* try their Hands; they have been trying, and are now busy about it. And free *Liberty* they have. Yet have they not prevailed, nor ever yet did prevail in any *Civilized* or *Generous* Nation. And though they have some *Inrodes* among the *Hottentots*, and some other the most *Brutal* Part of *Mankind*, yet are they still exploded, and *Priests* have and do prevail against them, among not only the *Greatest*, but *Best* Part of the World, and the most *Glorious* for *Arts*, *Learning*, and *War*.

XVI. For as the *Devil* does ape *God*, in His *Institutions* of *Religion*; His *Feasts*, *Sacrifices*, &c. so likewise in His *Priests*, without whom, no *Religion*, whether *True* or *False*, can stand. *False* Religion is but a Corruption of the *True*. The *True* was before it; though it be followed close upon the Heels.

The *Revelation* made to *Moses*, is elder than any *History* extant in the *Heathen* World. The *Heathens*, in Imitation of him, pretended, likewise to their *Revelations*: But I have given those *Marks* which distinguish them from the *True*: None of them have those *Four* Marks before-mentioned.

Now the *Deists* think all *Revelations* to be equally *Pretended*, and a *Cheat*: And the *Priests* of all *Religions* to be the same *Con-trivers* and *Jugglers*; and therefore they proclaim

claim War equally against all, and are equally engaged to bear the Brunt of all.

And if the Contest be only betwixt the *Deists* and the *Priests*, which of them are the Men of the greatest *Parts* and *Sense*, let the *Effects* determine it; and let the *Deists* yield the *Victory* to their *Conquerors*, who, by their own Confession, carry all the World before them.

XVII. If the *Deists* say, That this is because all the World are *Blockheads*, as well as those *Priests* who govern them; that all are *Blockheads*, except the *Deists*, who vote themselves only to be *Men of Sense*. This, (besides the Modesty of it) will spoil their great and beloved *Topick*, in behalf of what they call *Natural Religion*, against the *Revealed*, viz. appealing to the *Common Reason of Mankind*: This they set up against *Revelation*; think this to be sufficient for all the Uses of Men, here or hereafter, (if there be any after State) and therefore that there is no Use of *Revelation*: This *Common Reason* they advance as *Infallible*, at least, as the *surest* Guide, yet now cry out upon it, when it turns against them; when this *Common Reason* runs after *Revelation*, (as it always has done) then *Common Reason* is a *Beast*, and we must look for *Reason*, not from the *Common Sentiments of Mankind*, but only among the *Beaux*, the *Deists*.

XVIII. Therefore, if the *Deists* would avoid the *Mortification*, (which will be very uneasy to them) to *yield* and *submit* to be *Subdued* and *Hewed* down before the *Priests*, whom of all Mankind, they *Hate* and *Despise*; if they would avoid this, let them confess, as the Truth is, that *Religion* is no Invention of *Priests*, but of *Divine* Original: That *Priests* were Instituted by the same *Author* of *Religion*; and that their *Order* is a *Perpetual* and *Living* Monument of the *Matters of Faët* of their *Religion*, Instituted from the *Time* that such *Matters of Faët* were said to be done as the *Levites* from *Moses*; the *Apostles*, and succeeding *Clergy*, from *Christ*, to this Day. That no *Heathen Priests* can say the same: They were not appointed by the *Gods* whom they served, but by others in *After-Ages*: They cannot stand the *Test*, of the *Four Rules* before-mentioned, which the *Christian Priests* can do, and they *only*. Now the *Christian Priesthood*, as Instituted by *Christ* Himself, and continued by *Succession* to this Day, being as *Impregnable* and *Flagrant* a *Testimony* to the Truth of the *Matters of Faët* of *Christ*, as the *Sacraments*, or any other *Publick Institutions*: Besides that, if the *Priesthood* were taken away, the *Sacraments*, and other *Publick Institutions*, which are administered by their *Hands*, must fall with them: Therefore the *Devil* has been most busy

buffy, and bent his greatest Force, in all Ages against the *Priesthood*, knowing, that if *That* goes down, *All* goes with it.

XIX. With the *Deists*, in this Cause, are joined the *Quakers*, and other of our *Dissenters*, who throw off the *Succession* of our *Priesthood* (by which only it can be demonstrated) together with the *Sacraments* and *publick Festivals*. And if the *Devil* could have prevailed to have these dropt, the *Christian Religion* would lose the most *Undeniable* and *Demonstrative* Proof for the Truth of the *Matter of Fact* of our *Saviour*, upon which the Truth of his *Doctrine* does depend. Therefore we may see the *Artifice* and *Malice* of the *Devil*, in all these Attempts. And let those wretched *Instruments* whom he *ignorantly*, (and some, by a misguided *Zeal*) has deluded thus to undermine *Christianity*, now at last look back and see the *Snare* in which they have been taken: For if they had prevailed, or ever should, *Christianity* dies with them. At least, it will be rendered *precarious*, as a thing of which no *Certain* Proof can be given. Therefore let those of them, who have any *Zeal* for the Truth, bless God that they have not prevailed; and quickly leave them; and let all others be aware of them.

And let us Consider and Honour the *Priesthood*, *Sacraments*, and other *Publick Institutions* of *Christ*, not only as *Means* of *Grace*,
and

and *Helps* to *Devotion*, but as the *Great Evidence* of the *Christian Religion*.

Such *Evidences* as no *pretended Revelation* ever had, or can have. Such as do plainly distinguish it from all foolish *Legends* and *Impostures* whatsoever.

XX. And now, last of all, if one Word of Advice would not be lost, upon Men who think so unmeasurably of themselves, as the *Deists*, you may represent to them, what a Condition they are in, who spend that *Life* and *Sense*, which God has given them, in *Ridiculing* the Greatest of His *Blessings*, His *Revelations* of *Christ*, and by *Christ*, to Redeem those from *Eternal Misery*, who shall *Believe* in Him, and *Obey* his *Laws*. And that God, in His *Wonderful Mercy* and *Wisdom*, has so Guarded His *Revelation*, as that it is past the Power of *Men* or *Devils* to *Counterfeit*: And that there is no *Denying* of them, unless we will be so absurd, as to deny not only the *Reason*, but the *Certainty* of the *outward Senses*, not only of *One*, or *Two*, or *Three*, but of *Mankind* in General. That this Case is so very Plain, that Nothing but Want of Thought can hinder any to discover it. That they must yield it to be so Plain, unless they can shew some *Forgery*, which has all the *Four Marks*, before set down. But if they cannot do this, they must quit their Cause, and yield a *Happy Victory* over themselves: Or else sit down under all that

that *Ignominy*, with which they have loaded the *Priests*, of being, not only the most *Per-
nicious*; but (what will *gall* them more) the most *Inconsiderate*, and *Inconsiderable* of *Man-
kind*.

Therefore, let them not think it an Under-
valuing of their *Worthiness*, that their whole
Cause is comprised within so narrow a Com-
pass: And no more Time bestowed upon it
than it is worth.

But let them, rather, reflect, how far they
have been all this Time from *Christianity*;
whose *Rudiments* they are yet to learn! How
far from the *Way of Salvation*! How far the
Race of their Lives is run, before they have set
one Step in the Road to Heaven. And there-
fore, how much Diligence they ought to use,
to redeem all that Time they have lost, lest they
loose themselves for ever; and be convinced, by
a dreadful Experience, when it is too late, That
the *Gospel* is a Truth, and of the last Conse-
quence.





A LETTER *from the* AUTHOR
of the Short Method with
the Deists and Jews.

SIR, I have read over your Papers with great Satisfaction, and I heartily bless God with *you*, and for *you*, that He has had Mercy upon *you*, and opened *your Eyes*, to see the wondrous Things of his Law, to convince *you* of these irrefragable Proofs He has afforded for the *Truth* and *Authority* of the *Holy Scriptures*, such as no other *Writing* upon Earth can pretend to, and which are incompatible with any *Forgery* or *Deceit*. He has given *you* likewise that *True Spirit* of *Repentance* to bring forth the Fruits thereof, that is, to make what *Satisfaction* you can, for the Injuries you have done to *Religion*, by answering what has been published formerly by *yourself* against it, and being *converted*, *you* endeavour to *Strengthen* your *Brethren*.

I. *Creation.*

You have laid the true Foundation of the *Being* of God, against the *Atheist*: Of His
Creation

Creation of the World, and Providence, against the Asserters of blind Chance. If all be *Chance*, then their *Thoughts* are so too, and there is no *Reasoning* or *Argument* in the *World*.

Others, because they know not what to say, suppose the *World*, and all *Things* in it, to have been from *Eternity*, and to have gone on, as now, in a constant *Succession*, of *Men* begetting *Men*, *Trees* springing from *Trees*, &c. without any *Beginning*.

But if it was always as it is now, then every *Thing* had a *Beginning*, every *Man*, *Bird*, *Beast*, *Tree*, &c. And what has a *Beginning*, cannot be without a *Beginning*.

Therefore as it is evident, that nothing can make itself, it is equally evident, that a *Succession* of *Things made*, must have a *Beginning*. A *Succession* of *Beginnings* cannot be without a *Beginning*; for that would be literally a *Beginning* without a *Beginning*, which is a *Contradiction* in *Terms*.

II. *Providence.*

And to deny *Providence* in the *first Cause*, is the denying of a *God*: Whence had we our *Providence*: For we find we have a *Providence* to *forecast* and *contrive* how to *preserve* and *govern* that which we *make* or *acquire*: Therefore there must be a *Providence* much more *eminently* in *God*, to *preserve* and *govern* all the *Works* which He has *made*. He that made the *Eye*, does he not *see*? And

He who put *Providence* into the Heart of *Man*, has He none Himself.

And the Glory of his *Wisdom* and *Power* seems greater to us, in the *Acts* of His *Providence*, than even in those of *Creation*, especially in His *Governing* the *Actions* of *Free-Agents*, without taking from them the *Freedom* of their *Will* to do as they list, and turning their very *Evil* into *Good*, by the *Almightiness* of His *Wisdom*. We see great Part of this every *Day* before our Eyes, in His turning the *Counsels* of the *Wise* into *Foolishness*, and trapping the *Wicked* in the Works of *their own* Hands. This strikes us more sensibly, and is nearer to us than the making of a *Tree* or a *Star*; and we *feel* that over-ruling *Power* in His *Providence*, which we *contemplate* in His *Creation*.

When the *Sins* of *Men* are increased to provoke *God* to take *Vengeance*, He permits the *Spirit* of *Fury* to incline their *Wills* to *War*, and *Destruction* of each other, and *Nation* rise up against *Nation*; and when in his *Mercy* he thinks the *Punishment* is sufficient, he *calms* their *Rage*, like the *Roaring* of the *Sea*, and there is *Peace*. And they are so *Free-Agents* in all this, that they think it is all their own doing; and so really it is, tho' under the unseen *Direction* of a *Superiour* *Power*.

But not only in the *Publick* Transactions of the *World*, His *Providence* is observable; there is no *Man*, who has taken Notice of his
his

his own Life, but must find it as to his very *private Affairs*, a *Thought* sometimes *darting* into his *Mind*, to rid him out of a *Difficulty*, or shew him an *Advantage*, which he could not find in much *considering* before. At other Times a Man's *Mind* is so *clouded*, as if his *Eyes* were shut, that he cannot, *see his Way*: Again, several *Events* which he thought most *Funest*, and his utter *Ruin*, he finds afterwards to be much for the *best*, and that he had been *undone*, if that had not happened which he *feared*. On the other Hand, many Things which he thought for his great *Benefits* he has found to be for his *Hurt*. This shews a *Providence*, which sees further than we can, and disposes all our *Actions*, though done in the full *Freedom* of our own *Will*, to what *Events*, either *Good* or *Bad* for us, as He pleases.

III. *Revelation.*

But these Considerations from the *Creation* and *Providence* though *Admirable* and *Glorious*, are within the *Oracles* of *Reason*, and are but *Earthly Things* in Comparison of those *Heavenly Things*, which *God* has revealed to *Man* at *sundry Times*, and in *divers Manners*, and are recorded in the *Holy Scriptures*, and which otherwise it was impossible for *Man* to have known. *For what Man is he that can know the Council of God? Or who can think what the Will*

Wisd. ix. 13.
14, 15, 16.

of the Lord is? For the Thoughts of mortal Men are miserable, and our Devices are but uncertain; for the corruptible Body presseth down the Soul, and the earthly Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind that museth upon many Things; and hardly do we guess aright at Things that are upon Earth, and with Labour do we find Things that are before us: But the Things that are in Heaven, who hath searched out?

This then must be purely the Subject of Revelation; but when the Deist is come thus far, he is entered into a wide Field; for all Religions, Jewish, Heathen, Christian, and Mahometan, pretend to Revelation for their Original.

To clear this Point, was the Design of the *Short Method with the Deists*, which gave the first Opportunity to our Conversation.

The Heathen and Mahometan Religions not only want those Marks (there set down) which ascertain the Truth of Fact, but their Morals and Worship are impure, and inconsistent with the Attributes of God; as the Indulgence of Fornication, and Uncleannefs among the Heathen, and their Human Sacrifices, (most abhorrent to the God of Holiness and Mercy) and the filthy Obscenity of their very Sacra; besides the great Defect of their Morals, which knew no such Thing as Humility, Forgiveness of Injuries, Loving their Enemies, and returning Good for Evil. Some of their Philosophers spoke against revenging
of

of Injuries, as bringing greater Injury to ourselves, or not worth the While; but not upon the Account of *Humanity* and *Love* to our Brethren, and doing them *Good*, though they did *Evil* to us; and by the Word *Humilitas*, they meant only a *Lowness* and *Dejection* of *Mind*, which is a *Vice*; but they had no Notion of it as a *Virtue*, in having a *low* Opinion of *one's self*, and in *Honour* preferring others before us: This they thought a *Vice*, and *Abjection of Spirits*. You may see *Pride* and *Self-Conceit* run through all their *Philosophy*, besides their *Principle* of increasing their *Empire*, by *Conquering* other *Countries* who did them no Harm, whom they called *Barbarians*.

Into this Class comes likewise the *Sensual PARADISE* proposed by *Mahomet*, and his *Principle* of propagating his *Religion* by the *Sword*.

The *Jewish Religion* has all the *Certainty* of *Fact*, and its *Morals* are *Good*; but because of the *Hardness* of their *Hearts*, they came not up to the *Primitive Purity*, as in Case of *Polygamy* and *Divorce*, wherein our *Enfess'd Saviour* reduces them to the *Original*, That from the *Beginning* it was not so; and in several other Cases mentioned in his *Sermon* upon the *Mount*.

Therefore the *Perfection* of *Morals*, and of the true *Knowledge* of *God*, was reserved for the *Christian Religion*, which has, in more abundant Manner, than even the *Jewish*, the

infallible *Marks* of the *Truth* of the *Facts*, in the *Multitude* and *Notoriety* of the *Miracles* wrought by our *Blessed Saviour*, beyond those of *Moses*. Which fully answers the *Objection* of the *Jews*, that *Christ* wrought his *Miracles* by *Beelzebub*: For then, as he said to them, *By whom do your Children cast out Devils?* Was it by the *Spirit of God*, or *Beelzebub*, that *Moses* and the *Prophets* wrought their *Miracles*?

Then from the *Purity* and *Heavenliness* of his *Doctrine*, all levelled to destroy the *Kingdom of Satan*, those wicked **PRINCIPLES**, and *Idolatrous* **WORSHIP** which he had set up in the *World*; the other *Answer* of our *Blessed Saviour* concludes *demonstratively*, of a *Kingdom divided against itself*, That if *Satan* cast out *Satan*, to promote that *Doctrine* which *Christ* taught, we must alter our *Notion* of the *Devil*, and suppose him to be *Good*, and his *Kingdom* must then be at an *End*; which we see not yet done, for *Wickedness* still *Reigns* in the *World*.

IV. *Object. As to the Holy Trinity.*

Against these Things *Reason* has Nothing to object, but then *Prejudices* are raised up against what is *Revealed*, as being of Things that are above our *Reason*, and out of its *Reach*; as chiefly the *Doctrine* of the *Blessed Trinity*.

In answer to which we may consider, that if such Things were not above our *Reason*, there needed no *Revelation* of them, but only a bare *Proposal* of them to our *Reason*, made by any Body, without any *Authority*, and their own *Evidence* would carry them through.

In the next Place, we must acknowledge that there are many Things in the *Divine Nature* far out of the Reach of our *Reason*. That it must be so: For how can *Finite* comprehend *Infinite*? Who can *think* what *Eternity* is? A *Duration* without *Beginning*, or *Succession* of *Parts* or *Time*! Who can so much as *imagine*, or frame any *Idea* of a *Being*, neither made by itself, nor by any other? Of *Omnipresence*? Of a boundless *Immensity*, &c.

Yet all this, *Reason* obliges us to allow, as the Necessary Consequences of a *First Cause*.

And where any Thing is Established upon the full Proof of *Reason*, there ten thousand *Objections* or *Difficulties*, though we cannot *Answer* them, are of no Force at all to overthrow it. Nothing can do that, but to refute those *Reasons* upon which it is *Established*; till when, the *Truth* and *Certainty* of the *thing* remains *Unshaken*, tho' we cannot *Explain* it, nor *solve* the *Difficulties* that arise from it.

And if it is so, upon the Point of *Reason*, much more upon that of *Revelation*, where
the

the subject *Matter* is above our *Reason*, and could never have been found out by it.

All to be done in that Case, is, to satisfy ourselves of the *Truth* of the *Fact*, that such Things were *Revealed* of *God*, and are no *Imposture*. This is done, as to the *Holy Scriptures*, by the *Four Marks* before-mentioned.

And as to the *Contradiction* alledged in *Three* being *One*, it is no *Contradiction*, unless it be said, that *Three* are *One*, in the self-same *Respect*: For in divers *Respects*, there is no Sort of *Difficulty*, that *One* may be *Three*, or *Three Thousand*; as *One Army* may consist of many *Thousands*, and yet it is but *One Army*: There is but *One Human Nature*, and yet there are *Multitudes* of *Persons* who partake of that *Nature*.

Now it is not said, that the three *Persons* in the *Divine Nature* are one *Person*; that would be a *Contradiction*: But it is said, that the three *Persons* are one *Nature*. They are not *Three* and *One*, in the same *Respect*; they are *Three* as to *Persons*, and *One* as to *Nature*. Here is no *Contradiction*.

Again, that may be a *Contradiction* in one *Nature*, which is not so in another: For Example, it is a *Contradiction*, that a *Man* can go two *Yards* or *Miles*, as soon as one, because *Two* is but *One* and another *One*: Yet this is no *Contradiction* to *Sight*, which can reach a *Star*, as soon as the *Top* of a *Chimney*; and the *Sun* darts his *Rays* in one *Instant* from *Heaven* to *Earth*: But more than all these

these is the Motion of *Thought*, to which no *Distance* of *Place* is any Interruption ; which can arrive at *Japan* as soon as at a *Yard's* Distance ; and can run into the *Immensity* of *Possibilities*.

Now there are no *Words* possible, whereby to give any *Notion* or *Idea* of *Sight* or *Light* to a Man born *Blind* : And, consequently, to reconcile the Progress of *Sight* or *Light* to him from being an absolute *Contradiction* ; because he can measure it no otherwise than according to the *Motions* of *Legs* or *Arms*, for he knows none other : Therefore we cannot charge that as a *Contradiction* in one *Nature*, which is so in another, unless we understand both *Natures* perfectly well : And therefore we cannot charge that as a *Contradiction* in the *Incomprehensible* Nature of being *Three* and *One*, though we found it to be so in our *Nature* ; which we do not, because, as before said, they are not *Three* and *One* in the same *Respect*.

Now, let us consider further, that though there is no *Comparison* betwixt *Finite* and *Infinite*, yet, we have nearer *Resemblances* of the *Three* and *One* in *God*, than there is of *Sight* to a Man born *Blind* : For there is Nothing in any of the other four *Senses* that has any *Resemblance* at all to that of *Seeing*, or that can give such a Man any *Notion* whatever of it.

But we find in our own *Nature*, which is said to be made after the *Image* of *God*, a
 very

very near *Resemblance* of *His Holy Trinity*, and of the different *Operations* of each of the *Divine Persons*.

For Example, to *know* a Thing *Present*, and to *Remember* what is *Past*, and to *Love* or *Hate*, are different *Operations* of our *Mind*, and performed by different *Faculties* of it. Of these, the *Understanding* is the *Father* Faculty, and gives *Being* to Things, as to Us; for what we *know* not, is to Us as if it *were* not: This answers to *Creation*. From this *Faculty* proceeds the *Second*, that of *Memory*, which is a *Preserving* of what the *Understanding* has *Created* to Us. Then the *Third* Faculty, that of the *Will*, which *Loves* or *Hates*, proceeds from *Both* the *Other*, for we cannot *love* or *hate* what is not first *created* by the *Understanding*, and *preserved* to us by the *Memory*.

And though these are different *Faculties*, and their *Operations* Different, that the *Second* proceeds from the *First*, or is *Begotten* by it; and the *Third* proceeds from the *First* and *Second* in *Conjunction*, so that one is *before* the other, in *Order of Nature*, yet not in *Time*; for they are all *Con-genial*, and one is as soon in the *Soul* as the other; and yet they make not *Three Souls*, but *One Soul*. And though their *Operations* are *Different*, and the one *Proceeds* from the *Other*, yet no *One* can *Act* without the *Other*, and they all *Concur* to every *Act* of *Each*; for in *Understanding* and *Remembering*, there is a *Concurrent Act* of the *Will* to *Consent* to such *Understanding*,

derstanding, or *Remembering*; so that no *One* can *Act* without the *Other*; in which *Sense*, none is *Before* or *After* the other, nor can any of them *Be*, or *Exist*, without the other.

But what we call *Faculties* in the *Soul*, we call *Persons* in the *Godhead*; because there are *Personal* Actions attributed to *Each* of them: As that of *Sending*, and being *Sent*, to take *Flesh*, and be *Born*, &c.

And we have no other *Word*, whereby to Express it; we speak it after the *Manner* of Men; nor could we Understand, if we heard any of those *Un-speakable Words*, which Express the *Divine Nature* in its proper *Essence*; therefore we must make *Allowances*, and *Great* ones, when we apply *Words* of our *Nature*, to the *Infinite* and *Eternal Being*. We must not argue *Strictly* and *Philosophically* from them, more than from *God's* being said to *Repent*, to be *Angry*, &c. They are *Words ad Captum*, in *Condescension* to our weak *Capacities*, and without which, we could not understand.

But this, I say, That there are nearer *Resemblance* afforded to us of this *Ineffable Mystery* of the *Holy Trinity*, than there is betwixt one of our outward *Senses* and another; than there is to a *blind Man*, of *Colours*, or of the *Motions* of *Light*, or *Sight*: And a *Contradiction* in the one will not infer a *Contradiction* in the other; tho' it is impossible to be solved, as in the Instance before given of a *Man* born *blind*, till we come to *Know* both *Natures* *Distinctly*.

And

— And if we had not the *Experience* of the Different *Faculties* of our *Mind*, the *Contradiction* would appear *Irreconcilable* to all our *Philosophy*, how *Three* could be *One*, each *Distinct* from the other, yet but one *Soul*: One *Proceeding* from, or being *Begot* by the Other; and yet all *Co-eval*, and none *Before* or *After* the other: And as to the difference betwixt *Faculties* and *Persons*, *Substance* and *Subsistence*, it is a *puzzling* Piece of *Philosophy*. And tho' we give not a *Distinct Subsistence* to a *Faculty*, it has an *Existence*, and one *Faculty* can no more be *Another*, than one *Person* can be *Another*: So that the Case seems to be alike in Both, as to what concerns our present Difficulty of *Three* and *One*; besides what before is said, That by the Word *Person*, when applied to *God* (for want of a *Proper* Word, whereby to express it) we must mean something infinitely different from *Personality* among *Men*. And therefore from a *Contradiction* in the one (suppose it granted) we cannot charge a *Contradiction* in the other, unless we *understand* it as well as the other; for how else can we draw the *Parallel*?

What a Vain Thing is our *Philosophy*, when we would *Measure* the *Incomprehensible Nature* by it! When we find it *Non-plussed* in our own *Nature*, and that in many *Instances*. If I am *All* in one *Room*, is it not a *Contradiction* that any *Part* of *Me* should be in another *Room*? Yet it was a common
Saying

Saying among *Philosophers*, that the *Soul* is *All in All*, and *All* in every *Part* of the *Body*: How is the same *Individual Soul* Present, at one and the same *Time*, to *Actuate* the distant *Members* of the *Body*, without either *Multipliation* or *Division* of the *Soul*? Is there any *Thing* in *Body* can bear any *Resemblance* to this, without a manifest *Contradiction*? Nay, even as to *Bodies*, is any *Thing* more a *Self-Evident Principle*, than that the *Cause* must be before the *Effect*? Yet the *Light* and *Heat* of the *Sun* are as *old* as the *Sun*; and supposing the *Sun* to be *Eternal*, they would be as *Eternal*.

And as *Light* and *Heat* are of the *Nature* of the *Sun*, and as the *Three Faculties* before-mentioned, are of the *Nature* of the *Soul*, so that the *Soul* could not be a *Soul* if it wanted any of them; so may we, from *small Things* to *Great*, apprehend, without any *Contradiction*, that the *Three Persons* are of the very *Nature* and *Essence* of the *Deity*; and so of the same *Substance*, with it; and though one *Proceeding* from the other, (as the *Faculties* of the *Soul* do) yet that all *Three* are *Con-substantial*, *Coeternal*, and of *necessary Existence* as *God* is; for that these *Three* are *God*, and *God* is these *Three*. As *Understanding*, *Memory*, and *Will*, are a *Soul*, and a *Soul* is *Understanding*, *Memory*, and *Will*.

I intend (God willing) to Treat of this Subject more largely by itself; but I have said thus much here, to clear the Way from that *Objection* of rejecting *Revelation*, (though

we are *Infallibly* sure of the *Fact*) because of the supposed *Contradiction* to our *Reason*, in comparing it with our *Earthly* Things.

V. *Of the Differences among Christians.*

But now, that from all the Proofs of the *Certainty* of the *Revelation* we are come to fix in *Christianity*, our Labour is not yet at an End: For here you see *Multiplicity* of *Seets* and *Divisions*, which our *Blessed Saviour* foretold should come, for the Probation of the *Elect*; as some *Canaanites* were left in the Land to teach the *Israelites* the Use of *War*, lest by too profound a Peace, they might grow *Lazy* and *Stupid*, and become an easy *Prey* to their *Enemies*. So might *Christianity* be lost among us; if we had nothing to do, it would *Dwindle* and *Decay*, and *Corrupt* by Degrees, as *Water* stagnates by standing still: But when we are put to *Contend Earnestly*, for the *Faith*, it *Quickens* our *Zeal*, keeps Us upon our *Guard*, *Trims* our *Lamp*, and *Furbishes* the *Sword* of the *Spirit*, which might otherwise *Rust* in its *Scabbard*. And it gives great Opportunity to shew Us the *Wonderful Providence* and *Protection* of *GOD* over his *Church*, in *Preserving* Her against a *visibly* unequal *Force*:

Phil. i. 29. And in this *Contest*, to some this *High Privilege* is *Granted in the* *Bekalf* of *Christ*, *not only to believe on Him*, *but also to Suffer for His Sake*. These go to
make

make up the *Noble Army of Martyrs, and Confessors, for ever Triumphant in Heaven.* Others Conquer even here on *Earth, that God's Wonderful Doings* may be known to the *Children of Men.*

But as he who Builds a *Tower,* ought first to compute the *Expence,* and he who goes to *War,* to consider his *Strength;* so our *Blessed Saviour* has Instructed Us, That he who will be his *Disciple,* must resolve beforehand to take up his *Cross* daily, to *forsake Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Lands, and Life itself,* when he cannot keep them with the *Truth and Sincerity* of the *Gospel.* Therefore we must put on the *whole Armour of God, that we may be able to stand in the evil Day, and having overcome all, to stand;* for we *wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, against wicked Spirits in high Places.*

And what is it we *Wrestle* for? For the *Great Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the Flesh, &c.*

VI. *The Doctrine of Satisfaction.*

Here is the *Foundation* of the *Christian Religion,* That when *Man* had *Sinned,* and was utterly unable to make any *Satisfaction* for his *Sin,* *God* sent his own *Son* to take upon *Him* our *Flesh,* and in the same *Nature* that

F

Offended,

Offended, to make full *Satisfaction* for the *Sins* of the whole World, by His Perfect *Obedience*, and the *Sacrifice of Himself* upon the Cross.

Some say, What need any *Satisfaction*? Might not *God* forgive without it? It would shew greater *Mercy*. But these Men consider not, that *God* is not only *Just*, but He is *Justice* itself; *Justice* in the *Abstract*; He is *Essential Justice*. And *Justice*, by its *Nature*, must exact to the *utmost Parting*, else it were not *Justice*: To *Remit* is *Mercy*, it is not *Justice*: And the *Attributes* of *God* must not *Fight* and *Oppose* each other; they must all stand *Infinite* and *Compleat*. You may say then, how can *God* Forgive at all? How can *Infinite Mercy* and *Justice* stand together?

This Question could never have been Answered, if *God* Himself had not shewed it to Us in the wonderful *Oeconomy* of our *Redemption*: For here is His *Justice* satisfied to the least *Iota*, by the perfect *Obedience* and *Passion* of *Christ*, (who is *God*) in the same *Human Nature* that *Offended*. Here is *Infinite Wisdom* expressed in this *Means* found out for our *Salvation*; and *Infinite Mercy* in Affording it to us. Thus all His *Attributes* are *Satisfied*, and *Filled* up to the *Brim*: They *Contradict* not, but *Exalt* each other. His *Mercy* Exalts and Magnifies His *Justice*: His *Justice* Exalts his *Mercy*, and both His infinite *Wisdom*.

Here is a View of *God*, beyond what all the *Oracles* of *Reason* could ever have found out, from his *Works* of *Creation*, or Com-

mon *Providence*! These shew His *Works*, but this His *Nature*, it is *Himself*! The very Face of *God*! Before which the *Angels* veil their *Faces*, and *Desire* to *Look* into this *Abyss* of *Goodness*, and *Power*, and *Wisdom*, which they will never be able to *Fathom*, but still *Feed* upon, and *Search* farther and farther into it, with *Adoration*, to *Eternity*! And they *Worship* our *Manhood* thus taken into *God*! And *Rejoice* to be *Ministring Spirits* to Us, while upon *Earth*.

This you and I have talked over at *Large*; and this I gave you as the *Sum* and *Substance*, the *Alpha* and *Omega* of the *Christian Religion*. And now I repeat it as the surest *Criterion* to guide a *Man*, in the *Difficulty* before Us, that is, in the *Choice* of a *Church*, in the midst of all that *Variety* there is among *Christians*. Whoever hold not this *Doctrine*, join not with them, nor bid them *God Speed*.

VII. *The Socinians.*

This will save you from the *Socinians*, or the *Unitarians*, as they now call themselves in *England*, who expressly *deny* this *Doctrine*: For they *Deny* the *Doctrine* of the *Holy Trinity*, and the *Divinity* of *Christ*, upon which it is founded. They consider *Christ* no otherwise than a meer *Man*; and propose Him only as a *Teacher* and *Good Example* to Us. But then they are confounded with all their *Pretence* to *Wit* and *Reason*, to give

any Account for His *Death*, which was not necessary to *Teaching*, or being an *Example*: That, an *Angel*, or a *Prophet* might have been. Then they say, That he *Died* to Confirm the *Truth* of His *Doctrine*: But set this *Doctrine* of *Satisfaction* aside, and He taught nothing New, except the Improvement of some *Morals*: Besides, *Dying* does not *Confirm* the *Truth* of any *Doctrine*; it only shews, That He who *Dies* for it, does himself *Believe* it. Some have *Died* for *Errors*; and the *Socinian Doctrine* Affords no *Comfort*, no *Assurance* to Us. For if we consider *Christ* only as a *Teacher*, or *Example*, we have not followed His *Precepts*, nor *Example*: Here is Nothing but Matter of *Condemnation* to Us. But if we look upon Him as our *Surety*, who has paid our *Debt*, as our *Sacrifice*, *Atonement*, and *Propitiation* for our *Sins*, and that we are *Saved* by His *Blood*, (which is the Language of the *Holy Scriptures*, of which the *Socinians* know no Meaning) this is a *Rock*, and *Infallible Assurance*.

VIII. *The Church of Rome.*

As the *Socinians* have totally *Rejected* this *Doctrine*, so the *Church of Rome* has greatly *Vitiated* and *Depressed* it, by their *Doctrine* of *Merit*, and their own *Satisfaction*, which they make Part of their *Sacrament of Penance*. On this is *Founded* their *Purgatory*, wherein *Souls* who had not made full *Satisfaction*

tion upon *Earth*, must *Compleat* it there. They deny not the *Satisfaction* of *Christ*, but join their own with it, as if it were not *Sufficient*.

IX. *The Dissenters.*

On the other Hand, our *Dissenters* run to the contrary *Extream*: And because our *good Works* must have no *Share* in the *Satisfaction* for *Sin*, which they cannot, as being *Unworthy* and mixed with our *Infirmities*, and our *Sin*; therefore they make them not *Necessary*, nor of any *Effect* towards our *Salvation*. They say that *Christ* did not *Die* for any but the *Elect*, in whom he sees no *Sin*, let them *Live* never so *Wickedly*. They *Damn* the far greatest Part of the *World*, by irreverfible *Decrees* of *Reprobation*, and say, That their *Good Works* are hateful to *God*, and that it is not *Poffibly* in their *Power* to be *Saved*, let them *Believe* as they will, and *Live* never so *Religiously*. They take away *Free-Will* in *Man*, and make him a perfect *Machine*. They make *God* the *Author* of *Sin*, to *Create Men* on purpose to *Damn* them; and to *Punish* them *Eternally* for not *Doing* what was not in their *Power* to *Do*, and for doing what He had made *Impossible* for them not to *Do*. They make his *Promises* and *Threatnings* to be of no *Effect*, nay, to be a Sort of *Burlesquing*, and *Insulting* those whom He has made *Miferable*; which is an *Hideous Blafphemy*!

For a Solution in this Matter, both as to *Faith* and *Works*, I refer you to the *Homilies* of *Faith*, and *Salvation*, and of *Good Works*, where you will find the *True Christian Doctrine* set forth *clearly* and *solidly*.

I will not anticipate what you Design for your *Second Part*, by entering into other Disputes there are among *Christians*; only this will be exceeding Necessary, to settle well the Notion of the *Church of Christ*, to which all do pretend in various Manners.

X. *The true Notion of the Church.*

First, therefore, the *Church* must be considered not only as a *Seet*, that is, a Company of People *Believing* such and such *Tenets*, like the several *Seets* of the *Heathen Philosophers*; but as a *Society* under *Government*, with *Governors* appointed by *Christ*, invested with such *Powers* and *Authority*, to *Admit* into, and *Exclude* out of, the *Society*, and *Govern* the Affairs of the *Body*.

This *Power* was Delegated by *Christ* to His *Apostles*, and their *Successors*, to the End of the *World*: Accordingly the *Apostles* did Ordain *Bishops* in all the *Churches* which they Planted throughout the whole *World*, as the *Supreme Governors*, and Center of *Unity*, each in his own *Church*. These were obliged to keep *Unity* and *Communion* with one another; which is therefore called *Catholick Communion*. And all these *Churches* considered together,

together, is the *Catholick Church*: As the several *Nations* of the Earth are called the *World*.

XI. *Of an Universal Bishop.*

And *Christ* Appointed no *Universal Bishop* over His *Church*, more than an *Universal Monarch* over the *World*. No such Thing was known in the *Primitive Church*, till it was set up first by *John* Bishop of *Constantinople*, then by the Bishop of *Rome*, in the *VIIIth Century*. And as the whole *World* is *One Kingdom* to *God*, as it is written, *His Kingdom Ruleth over All*; so the several *Churches* of the *World* are *One Church* to *Christ*. And the *Church* of *Rome* saying that She is that *One Church*, or shew Us another, which can Dispute it with Us, in *Universality*, *Antiquity*, &c. is the same as if *France* (for Example) should say, Who can compare with Me? Therefore I am the *Universal*, or *Monarch*, shew me another. The Thing appears *Ridiculous* at the first Proposal; for it must be said to *Rome*, or to *France*, that if you were ten times greater than you are, you are yet but a *Part* of the *Whole*. And to say, who else pretends to it? Why none. And it would be Nonsense in any who did pretend to it: *One Part* may be *Bigger* than another; but one *Part* can never be the *Whole*. And all Results in this, whether *Christ* did appoint an *Universal Bishop* over all the *Churches* in the *World*?

And we are willing to leave the *Issue* to that, if it can appear either from *Scripture* or *Antiquity*. Besides, the *Reason* of the Thing; for as *Gregory the Great* urged against *John of Constantinople*, if there was an *Universal Bishop*, the *Universal Church* must fall, if that one *Universal Bishop* fell; and so all must come to center in *One Poor, Fallible, Mortal Man*.

This obliged the *Pope* to run into another monstrous *Extream*, and set up for *Infallibility* in his own *Person*, as the only *Successor* of *St. Peter*, and *Heir* of those *Promises* made to Him, *super hanc Petram*, &c. This was the *Current Doctrine* of the *Divines* in the *Church of Rome*, in former Ages, as you may see in *BELLARMINE*, *de Rom. Pontif.* l. iv. c. 5. Where he carries this so high, as to Assert, That if the *Pope* did Command the Practice of *Vice*, and Forbid *Virtue*, the *Church* were Bound to Believe that *Virtue* was *Vice*, and that *Vice* was *Virtue*. And in his *Preface*, he calls this *Absolute Supremacy* of the *Pope*, the *Summa rei Christianæ*, the *Sum* and *Foundation* of the *Christian Religion*. And that to Deny it, was not only a *Simple Error*, but a *Pernicious Heresy*.

This was *Old Popery*: But now it is generally *Decried* by the *Papists* themselves; yet no *Pope* has been brought to *Renounce* it, they will not *Quit Claim*.

When they departed from the *Infallibility* of the *Pope*, they sought to place it in their *General Councils*: But these are not always in *Being*; and so their *Infallibility* must *Drop*
for

for several *Ages* together ; which will not consist with their *Argument*, That *God* is obliged by His *Goodness*, to Afford *always* an *outward* and *living Judge* and *Guide* to His *Church*. Besides, that *Instances* are found, where those *Councils* they call *General*, have contradicted one another.

For which *Reasons*, others of them place the *Infallibility* in the *Church Diffusive* : But this upon their *Scheme* is *Indefinite*, and the *Judge* of *Controversy* must be sought among numberless *Individuals*, of whom no *One* is the *Judge* or *Guide*.

XII. *Of Infallibility in the Church.*

But there is an *Infallibility* in the *Church*, not *Personal* in any *One* or *All* of *Christians* put together ; for *Millions* of *Fallibles* can never make an *Infallible*. But the *Infallibility* consists in the *Nature* of the *Evidence*, which having all the *four Marks* mentioned in *The Short Method with the Deists*, cannot possibly be *False*. As you and I believe there is such a *Town* as *Constantinople*, that there was such a *Man* as *Henry VIII* ; as much as if we had seen them with our *Eyes* : Not from the *Credit* of any *Historian* or *Traveler*, all of whom are *Fallible* ; but from the *Nature* of the *Evidence*, wherein it is *Impossible* for *Men* to have *Conspired* and carried it on without *Contradiction*, if it were *False*.

Thus, whatever *Doctrine* has been Taught in the *Church*, (according to the *Rule* of *Vincentius*

centius Lirinensis) *Semper, ubique, & ab omnibus*, is the *Christian Doctrine*; for in this Case such *Doctrine* is a *Fact*, and having the foresaid *Marks*, must be a true *Fact*, *viz.* That such *Doctrine* was so *Taught* and *Received*.

This was the Method taken in the *Council* called at *Alexandria* against *Arius*, it was asked by *Alexander* the *Archbishop* who *Socrat. Hist. l. i. c. v. Gr.* Presided, *Quis unquam talia audivit?* Who ever heard of this *Doctrine* before? And it being Answered by all the *Bishops* there *Assembled*, in the *Negative*, it was concluded a *Newel Doctrine*, and contrary to what had been *Universally Received* in the *Christian Church*. Thus every *Doctrine* may be reduced to *Fact*; for it is purely *Fact*, whether such *Doctrine* was *Received* or not?

And a *Council* *Assembled* upon such an *Occasion*, stands as *Evidence* of the *Fact*, not as *Judges* of the *Faith*; which they cannot alter by their *Votes* or *Authority*.

A *Council* has *Authority* in *Matters* of *Discipline* in the *Church*; but in *Matters* of *Faith*, what is called their *Authority*, is their *Attestation* to the *Truth* of *Fact*; which if it has the *Marks* before-mentioned, must be *Infallibly True*: Not from the *Infallibility* of *Any* or *All* of the *Persons*, but from the *Nature* of the *Evidence*, as before is said.

And this is the surest *Rule*, whereby to *Judge* of *Doctrines*, and to know what the *Catholick Church* had *Believed* and *Taught*, as *Received* from the *Apostles*.

And

And they who refuse to be *Tried* by this *Rule*, who say, we care not what was *Believed* by the *Catholick Church*, either in former Ages, or now; we think our own *Interpretations* or *Criticisms* upon such a *Text*, of as great *Authority* as theirs; these are justly to be *Suspected*, nay, it is *Evident*, that they are *Breaching* some *Novel Doctrines*, which cannot stand this *Test*. Besides the monstrous *Arrogance* in such a *Pre- tence*, these overthrow the *Foundation* of that *sure* and *Infallible Evidence* upon which *Chri- stianity* itself does stand; and reduce All to a *Blind Enthusiasm*.

XIII. *Of Episcopacy.*

But further, Sir, in your Search after a *Church*, you must not only consider the *Doc- trine* but the *Government*; that is, as I said before, you must consider the *Church*, not only as a *Seēt*, but as a *Society*: For though every *Society* founded upon the Belief of such *Tenets*, may be called a *Seēt*, yet every *Seēt* is not a *Society*. Now a *Society* cannot be without *Go- vernment*; for it is that which makes a *Society*: And a *Government* cannot be without *Governors*. The *Apostles* were Instituted by *Christ*, the first *Governor* of his *Church*; and with them and their *Successors* He has Promised to be, to the End of the World. The *Apostles* did Ordain *Bishops*, as *Governors*, in all the *Churches* which they planted throughout the whole World:
and

and these *Bishops* were esteemed the *Successors* of the *Apostles*, each in his own *Church*, from the Beginning to this Day. This was the Current Notion and Language of Antiquity. *Omnes Apostolorum Successores sunt.* That all *Bishops* were the *Successors* of the *Apostles*. As St. *Jerom* speaks, *Epist. ad Evagr.* And St. *Ignatius*, who was Constituted by the *Apostles* *Bishop* of *Antioch*, salutes the *Church* of the *Tralians*, *Ἐν τῷ πληρώματι ἐν Ἀποστολικῷ χαρακτήρι.* In the Plenitude of the *Apostolical* Character, Thus it continued from the Days of the *Apostles*, to those of *John Calvin*. In all the which Time there was not any one *Church* in the whole *Christian* World, that was not *Episcopal*. But now it is said by our *Dissenters*, That there is no need of *Succession* from the *Apostles*, or those *Bishops* Instituted by them: That they can make *Governors* over themselves whom they list: And what signifies the *Government* of the *Church*, so the *Doctrine* be Pure? But this totally Dissolves the *Church* as a *Society*; the *Government* of which consists in the *Right* and *Title* of the *Governor*. And as the *Apostle* says, *Heb. v. 4.* No Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was *Aaron*. And the Dispute betwixt him and *Korab* was not as to any Point either of *Doctrine* or *Worship*, but meerly upon that of *Church* *Government*. And St. *Jude*, ver. 11. brings down the same Case to that of the *Christian* *Church*. And Reason carries it as to all

all *Societies*. They who will not Obey the Lawful *Governor*, but set up another in Opposition to him, are no longer of the *Society*, but *Enemies* to it, and Justly Forfeit all the *Rights* and *Privileges* of it.

Now Considering that all the *Promises* in the *Gospel*, are Made to the *Church*, what a Dreadful Thing must it be, to be *Excluded* from all these !

Besides, the *Church* is called the *Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, as being a *Society* Instituted by *Christ*, for the Support and Preservation of the *Faith*. This no Particular *Church* can Attribute to itself, otherwise than as being a *Part* of the *Whole* : And therefore, as St *Cyprian* says, *Christ* made the *College of Bishops* numerous, that if one proved *Heretical*, or sought to Devour the *Flock*, the Rest might Interpose for the Saving of it. This is equally against letting the whole Depend upon one *Universal Bishop* ; and against throwing off the whole *Episcopate*, that is, all the *Bishops* in the World ; which would be a total *Dissolution* of the *Church* as a *Society*, by leaving no *Governors* in it ; or which is the same, Setting up *Governors* of our own Head, without any *Authority* or *Succession* from the *Apostles* ; which is rendering the whole *Precarious*, and without any *Foundation*. And it is a Supposing that *Providence* is more Obligated to Stand by a *Church* set up in Direct Opposition to His *Institution*, than by that *Church* which *Christ* Himself has founded, and Promised to be with it to the *End* of the *World*. And tho'

tho' He has permitted *Errors* and *Heresies* to overspread several Parts of it, at several Times, for the Probation of the *Elect*, like the *Wain- ing* of the *Moon*, yet has He not left *Himself* without *Witness*, and has Restored *Light* to Her, pursuant to his Promise, *that the Gates of Hell should not prevail against Her*: And this by the Means of his *Servants* and *Substitutes*, the *Bishops* of his *Church*, whom He has not deserted. All of whom, through the whole World always did, and still do Maintain and own the *Apostolick Creed*. And wherein some, as the *Arians*, have perverted the Sense of some *Articles*, that lasted but a short Time; and the *Truth* has been more confirmed by it, in the unanimous *Consent* and *Testimony* of the whole *Episcopal College*, to the *Primitive Doctrine* which they had Received from the *Beginning*. God Healed these *Heresies* in His own Way, by the *Bishops* and *Governors* of His *Church*, whom he had Appointed, and without any *Infraction* upon His own *Institution*.

And it is observable, That these *Heresies* began by *Infraction*, which Men made upon His *Institution* of *Bishops*, as *Arius*, an *Ambitious Presbyter*, first rose up against his *Bishop*, before he was given up to that vile *Heresy*, which he vented afterwards by *Degrees*, to Gain a Party after him, thereby to Maintain the *Opposition* which he had made against his *Bishop*: And, by a Just Judgment, he Fell from one *Error* to another, till he at
last

last Completed that Detestable *Heresy* which bears his *Name*.

And in all the *Annals* of the *Church*, whether under the *Law* or the *Gospel*, there is not one *Instance* of a *Schism* against the *Priesthood*, which *God* had *Appointed*; but *great Errors* in *Doctrine* and *Worship* did follow it. Thus the *Priesthood*, which *Micah* set up of his own *Head*, and that which *Jeroboam* set up in *Opposition* to that of *Aaron*, both ended in *Idolatry*. Thus the *Novations* and *Donatists*, who made *Schisms* against their *Bishops*, fell into *grievous Errors*, tho' they did not renounce the *Faith*.

And into what *gross Errors*, both as to *Doctrine* and *Worship*, has the *Church* of *Rome* fallen, since her *Bishop* set up for *Universality*, and thereby *Commenced* that *Grand Schism* against all the *Bishops* of the *Earth*, whom he sought to *Depress* under him; but while he would *Trust* other *Churches* from him, he *Thrust* himself from the *Catholic Church*.

What *Hydra Heresies*, and *Monstrous Sects* (*fifty* or *sixty* at one *Time*, of which we have the *Names*) flowed like a *Torrent* into *England*, in the *Time* of *Forty-One*, after *Episcopacy* was thrown down!

So evident is that *Saying*, That the *Church* is the *Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, that we can hardly find any *Error* which has come into the *Church*, but upon an *Infractiion* made upon the *Episcopal Authority*.

XIV. *An Infallible Demonstration of*
Episcopacy.

For which this is to be said. That it has all the *Four Marks* before-mentioned, to ascertain any *Fact*, in the concurrent *Testimony* of all *Churches*, at all *Times*; And therefore must *infallibly* be the *Government* which the *Apostles* left upon the Earth. To which we must adhere, till a greater *Authority* than *Theirs* shall alter it.

I doubt not but all this will determine you to the *Church of England*. And keep you firm to *Episcopacy*, as a Matter not *indifferent*.

And I Pray God, that *He who hath begun a Good Work in you, may perfect it until the Day of JESUS CHRIST, Amen.*

July 17, 1704.

F I N I S.

A SHORT and EASIE
METHOD
WITH THE
J E W S.
WHEREIN THE
CERTAINTY
OF THE
Christian Religion

Is demonstrated by INFALLIBLE PROOF from the

FOUR RULES
Made use of against the DEISTS.

S H E W I N G,

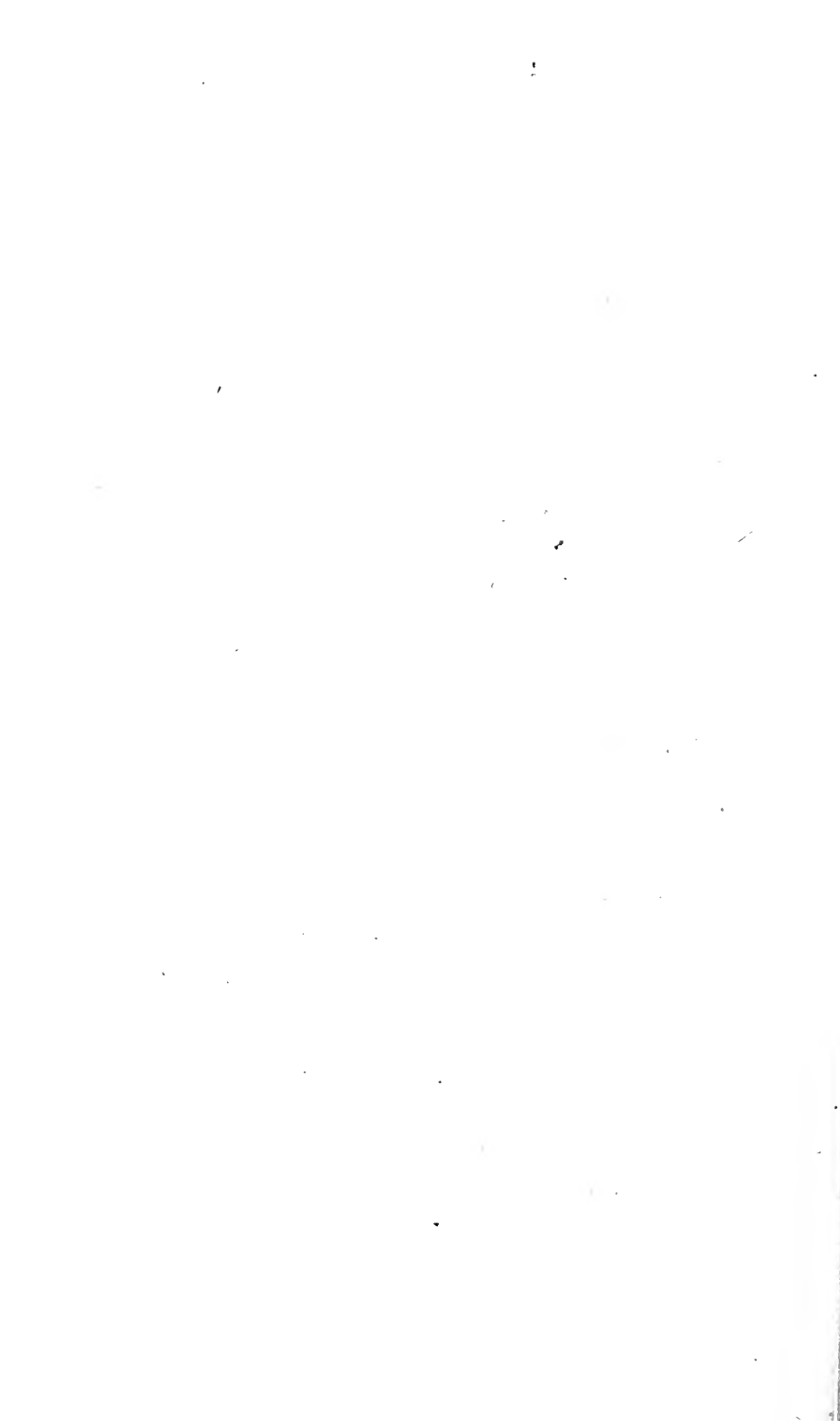
That these FOUR RULES do oblige the JEWS,
as much or more than the DEISTS, to the
Acknowledgment of CHRIST.

With an ANSWER to the most material of their
OBJECTIONS and PREJUDICES against
CHRISTIANITY.

The Eighth Edition Corrected.


L O N D O N :

Printed for GEO. STRAHAN at the *Golden-
Ball*, over-against the *Royal Exchange* in
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T H E
P R E F A C E.

I.  Endeavour'd, when I set my Thoughts upon this Subject, to find out the most *modern* Objections of the *Jews*. Because my business is with those of the present Age. I procur'd what I cou'd of what they have, of late, publish'd in their Defence in *Holland*, and *Germany*. What *Grotius* has wrote concerning them in his *De Veritate Relig. Christian.* is well known, because *Reprinted* at *Oxford*, and *Translated* into *English*. But the *Arguments* of the *Jews* are rather there *suppos'd*, than told us in their own words. In the Year 1644 *Hackspan* publish'd *R. Lipmann's* Book *Nizachon*, and does reason with them upon their *Principles*. Afterwards in the Year 1655. *Hornbeck* wrote

A 2 against

against them. But the latest I find is *Limborch Anno 1687. his Amica Collat. cum Erudit. Judæo*; wherein the *Jews Defence, Arguments, and Objections* are set down at large, in the *Jews* own words. Therefore I have made most use of this Book; and have taken thence the present *Principles* of the *Jews*, out of the *Writings* of that *learned Jew* which is there inserted *verbatim*. And indeed he makes the best *Defence* for them, that, I think, their Cause will bear; and shews himself a Man of *Letters*, and of great natural *Wit* and *Sagacity*. Therefore I conclude, that we have here the *Jugulum Causæ*, the *Heart* of the *Cause*: And if sufficiently answer'd, the likeliest Method, to bring matters to an Issue.

II. I have here forbore to enter upon the *Objections* of the *Jews* concerning the *Genealogies*, and *Chronological Niceties* which they raise against several Passages of the *New Testament*: Because that is done lately by a better Hand. And because there are more *Objections* of this sort, which are brought by the *Deists*, against the *Old Testament*, than the *New*: And therefore the *Jews* are equally concern'd herein with us, against the *Deists*; and cannot make so many *Objections* against us, upon this *Head*, as are made against themselves.

But

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But chiefly, because *Objections* are no *Answers*; And, as hereafter shewn, there is no *Truth*, even the *Existence* of a *God*, against which *Objections* and *Difficulties* may not be started. And herein the *Deists* are concern'd against the *Atheists* (if they be not the same) as well as the *Jew*, or *Christian*. It is *easier* to *object*, than to *answer*. But if the *Proof* be *clear* for the *Truth* of any thing, we must submit to it, tho' we were not able to *solve* every *Difficulty*. And the *chasing* of *Difficulties*, *diverts* the *Question*, and often *loses* it. And they are many times brought for that Purpose. Besides making Books so *long* and *tedious*, that few have the *Leisure* or *Attention* to go through with them.

Therefore I have chosen, for once, to put the *Deists* upon the *defensive*. And if they cannot *answer*, they must *surrender*. For it is not a *Nicety* or *Objection* that I insist upon; but the *Merits* of the *Cause*, to which every one is *oblig'd* to *answer*.

And as to this, I have given them full *Liberty*, and *invited* them to make all the *Objections* that they can. And I have made the *strongest* for them, that I cou'd think of. Let them make *stronger*.

I have had greater Consideration for the *Jews* (because they deserve it more) and enter'd more at large upon their *Objections* and *Prejudices*, which has swell'd the *Second Part* so much beyond the *First*.

3. Let me here take notice of the *Uncertainty* of the *Genealogies* now kept of *Jewish Families*. They have *intermarry'd* with their *Profelytes* of all *Nations*, and sometimes with others. Infomuch that they cannot be sure of one *Jew* now in the *World*, who is of the *Pure and Unmix'd Blood* of the *Jews*. Nay more, whether most of them be not sprung from *Profelytes* of the *Heathens*, *Mahometans*, and *Apostate-Christians*. Therefore they can never know whether any *Messiah*, who shall hereafter set up, be of the *Tribe* of *Judah*, or *Family* of *David*, according to the *Prophecies* of the *Messiah*. For they have no *Certainty* of either *Tribe* or *Family* now amongst them.

III. As to the *Gentiles*, and *Reveal'd Religion*,

1. What is said of the *Sybils*, p. 30. I wou'd have so understood, as that I do not put the *stres*s whether those Books of the *Sybils* that we have now, have receiv'd no *Additions*, or *Interpolations* from what they were in the *Second Century*, when quoted by the *Fathers*: But that, as they were then, and before *Christ* came, they had most *flagrant Testimonies* to our *Blessed Saviour*; which confounded the *Gentiles*: And that they were not, at that time, *corrupted*. As there is no *Proof*, that they have been since.

2. *Plato*,

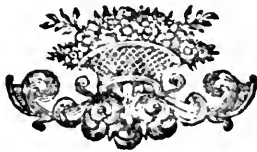
2. *Plato*, in his *Discourse* concerning *Prayer* and the *Worship* of *God*; hereafter quoted, p. 198. concludes, that Men, by their *natural Reason*, cannot find out what sort of *Worship* will be *acceptable* to *God*; nor can be *sure* what they ought to *pray* for according to *his Will*. And that it were *safer*, to forbear *Sacrifices* and *Prayer*, than to venture upon it, when we did not know, but that we might *provoke* GOD thereby, instead of *pleasing* him. That therefore it was necessary, they shou'd *wait* till *God* shou'd send some *Person* from *Heaven*, to *instruct* them in this. And that they did *expect* such a *Person* to be sent. And they greatly *long'd* to see that *Time*, and that *Man*, who they believ'd shou'd come. They *saw* his *Day*, and *rejoyced*, as *Abraham* did (a). But not so clearly, not having so *full* and *express* *Revelation* of him, as *Abraham* had. But from *Revelation* they had it, (and not merely from the strength of their *Reason*) tho', perhaps, they knew it not: For they declar'd, that they had it by *Tradition* from their *Fathers*. And in all *Probability*, it had descended through all *Adam's* *Posterity*, from the first *Promise* of it, *Gen. iii. 15.* together with the *Institution* of *Sacrifices*; which were *ordain'd*, not only as constant *Remembrances* of it, but as visible *Types* of the *fulfilling* of it. Tho' the

(a) *John* viii. 56.

Original, and full *Import* of the *one*, as well as the *other*, had been *lost* amongst the *Heathen*. This is brought to shew the *Expectation* that the *Gentiles* had of a *Messiah* to come.

But here I wou'd, from this Reasoning of *Plato's*, infer the *Necessity* of *Revealed Religion*, against the *Deists*. Here they see that the *wisest* of the *Philosophers* did own, that they were wholly at a *Loss*, and *Uncertainty* without it.

And withal, it shews, that the *wisest* of the *Heathen* did not believe the pretended *Revelations* of their *Gods*. And therefore there can lie no Comparison betwixt these, and the *Faith*, which is most *surely* believ'd by the *Christians*. Upon what *Grounds*, is shewn hereafter. And that they are *Infallible*.



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wherein, *Zeck. ix. 9.* 19

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A SHORT and EASIE

METHOD

WITH THE

F E W S.



Brethren, my Heart's Desire,
and Prayer to God for *Israel*,
is, that they might be saved.
The first Part of this Discourse
was wrote against the *Deists*,
equal *Enemies* to you and us,
who deny all *Instituted* and *Reveal'd* Religion.
And I have justify'd the *Truth* of yours, while
I have asserted that of the *Christian* Religion.
They both stand upon one Bottom. They
only, of all the *Revelations* that ever were pre-
tended in the World, can shew the four *Marks*
before mention'd; which do infallibly demon-
strate the *Truth* of any *Matter* of *Fact*, where
B they

they *all* do meet. And the Consequence is as plain, that if the *Revelation of Moses* be *true*, that of *Christ* must be *true* also. And you can never demonstrate the *Truth* of the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses* by any *Arguments* or *Evidences*, which will not as strongly evince the *Truth* of the *Matters of Fact* of *Christ*: And, on the other hand, you cannot overthrow the *Matters of Fact* of *Christ*, but you must, by the same Means, destroy those of *Moses*. So that I hope you are involv'd under the happy Necessity, either to renounce *Moses*, or to embrace *Christ*.

But if you will allow (as some of you have done) that the *Matters of Fact* of our Lord *Jesus*, as recorded in the *Gospels*, are *true*: But will contend, that this does not infer the *Truth* of His *Doctrine*; because, as may be alledg'd, those seeming *Miracles* which He wrought, were done by *Magick*. Then, I beseech you, how will you rescue the *Miracles* of *Moses* from the same Objection? The Comparison, in this Case, must lie betwixt the *Miracles* of *Moses* and of *Christ*. And I believe you will not deny, but that those recorded in the *Gospel*, are full as great as those in *Exodus*.

II. If the *Deists* think to come in here betwixt us, and conclude *both* to be *false Miracles*, at least that we cannot be *sure* they are *true Miracles*, because, as they philosophize, we do not know the utmost Ex-
tent

tent of the Power of *Nature*, and consequently cannot know what *exceeds* it.

Anfw. 1. This is an Objection not against the *Miracles* recorded of *Moses* or of *Christ*, but against all *Miracles*. And putting it out of *God's* Power to shew any *Miracle*, that ought to be believ'd of *Man*: which is a Contradiction to the Principles of the *Deists* themselves, who allow an *Eternal Being* of *Infinite Power*: and yet, by this, wou'd put it out of His *Power*, to make any *External Revelation* to *Men*.

2. But, in the next place, their *Philosophy* is not good. For tho' we cou'd not know the utmost Stretch of what *Nature* can do, yet it will not follow that we cannot know what is *contrary* to *Nature* in those Works of *Nature* which we do know. For Example; tho' I cannot tell all the whole *Nature* of *Fire*, and all its *Operations*, yet this I certainly know, that it is of the *Nature* of *Fire* to *burn*: And therefore if proper *Fuel* be administred unto it, it is contrary to the *Nature* of *Fire* not to consume it. Thus when *Ananias*, *Azarias*, and *Misael*, were thrown into the *Burning Fiery Furnace*, if that *Matter of Fact* be true, in all its Circumstances, as it is related in the third Chapter of *Daniel*, we can be sure that there was a Stop there put to the *Natural Power* of the *Fire*, which is a *Miracle*. We can be as sure of it, as of any thing we either *see* or *hear*. So that the same *Scepticism*, which these Men advance against

Miracles, will, as much, take away the Certainty of our outward *Senses*; which is the only *Populatum* they wou'd have taken as *undoubted*; and to which they reduce all the *Certainty* of which Mankind is capable; giving to themselves, by their great Sense, little Preheminence above the Condition of *Brutes*; to which they wou'd degrade all the rest of the World with themselves. And some of them have shewn their Parts in witty *Satires* upon this Subject. But let us leave them with the Company they have chosen, and return.

As sure as we can be that it is the *Nature* of *Fire* to *burn*, (tho' we may not know every thing else it can do) so sure we can be, that it exceeds the Power of *Nature* to raise the *Dead*, by the *speaking* of a *Word*, to cure the *Lame*, *Blind*, &c. by the same Means, or the *Touch* of one's *Finger*, without any other Application.

III. Now then, the *Miracles* recorded of *Christ*, being as great as those recorded of *Moses*; and carrying along with them the same *Evidences* of their *Truth*, deduc'd down from that Time to this, what Reason can be given for the *believing* of the *one*, and yet *rejecting* of the *other*? There can be none, my Friends, only there are some *Prejudices* under which you labour, that stop your Way towards *receiving* of the *Truth*, which you cannot *deny*; as conceiving it inconsistent with your *Interpretation* of some *Texts* in your *Law*.

But

But ought we not rather to suspect your own *Interpretations* (especially where the Words will favourably bear another) than to reject such an *Evidence* as must undermine your *Law* itself; and destroy its *Infallible Certainty*, by disowning the same, in the *only Case* that carries the same *Demonstration* along with it? God cannot *contradict* Himself. And therefore would never have set his own *Seal* (which it is not possible to *counterfeit*, as before is shewn) to the Truth of the *Gospel*, if it did, in the least *Iota*, *contradict* or *destroy* the *Law*. Therefore, it behoves you well to consider, whether those Things that you take for *Contradictions*, are such. In order to which,

1. Consider the Difference 'twixt *Destroying* and *Fulfilling*. The *Fulfilling* of a *Prophecy*, is not its *Destruction*, but *Completion*. So of all *Types*, or *Shadows*, which point at Things to come; when the *Substance* is come, the *Shadow* ceases of course.

Now, if the *Messiah* was *Prophecy'd* of, and *Typify'd* in the *Law*, then his Coming will indeed put an end to these, but not by way of *Destroying*, which would be *Contradicting*, but of *Fulfilling* them, which is *confirming*, and attesting to the *Truth* of them. And I suppose you are not ignorant that our *Messiah* did not pretend to *Destroy* the *Law*, but to *Fulfil* it: And did most strongly *Affert* and *Confirm* it (a), to the least *Iota*: And did

B 3 Fulfil

(a) *Matth.* v. 17, 18, 19.

Fulfil it (a), in every Circumstance, even to His Suffering *without the Gate* (b), to answer the Burning of the *Body of the Expiatory Sacrifice*, without the *Camp* (c), &c. That (as Himself said) (d) *all things might be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Him.* Some of which are repeated hereafter.

SECT. XII.

2. But I will carry this Argument further, That not only there is no *Contradiction* to the *Law*, in the *Gospel*; but that the *Law* cannot be *True*, unless you allow the *Truth* of the *Gospel*. For no other way possible is there to reconcile the *Promises* made in the *Law*, but as they are *fulfill'd* in the *Gospel*, of which let me give some few Instances out of many.

1. (e) *The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet, until Shiloh come; And unto him shall the Gathering of the People, or Nations, be.*

This the *Chaldee* and *Ancient Jewish Interpreters* do understand of the *Messiah*.

And the *Scepter* being long since departed from *Judah*: And no other *Messiah* come, but our Lord *Jesus Christ*; to whom the *Gathering* of the *Nations*, or *Gentiles*, has been. The *Rabbies* of the *Jews*, since his Coming, have strain'd their *Wits* to invent *Salvo's* and *Evasions* for this *Prophecy*. Some of them say,

(a) Luke xvi. 17. (b) Heb. xiii. 12. (c) Lev. xvi. 27.
 (d) Luke xxiv. 44. (e) Gen. xlix. 10.

say, that by *Shiloh* here was not meant the *Messiah*, but *Moses*. Others say, it was the *Tabernacle* at *Shiloh*. But others thinking these Interpretations not tenable, and that it cannot be deny'd to be meant of the *Messiah*, have fenc'd about the Word *Scepter*, which they contend to be a *Rod*, not of *Rule*, but of *Correction*, which shou'd not depart from *Judab* till *Shiloh*, or the *Messiah*, should come. Others, not liking this, allow it to be a *Scepter* of *Government*; but then turn it this way, *viz.* That the *Scepter* should not *finally*, or for *ever*, depart from *Judab*, because the *Messiah* should come, that is, to *Restore* it. But this being an *Altering* instead of *Expounding* the *Text*, others seeing there could not be any tolerable *Evasion* made from the Words of the *Text*, have boldly adventur'd upon a new Way of satisfying it, *viz.* That the *Scepter*, or *Dominion*, is not yet *departed*, that is, not *totally*, for that some of them have, somewhere or other, some Share or other of *Government*, or *Jurisdiction* more or less; at least, some that have, some way or other, descended from the Tribe of *Judab*, tho' it may not be known.

I will not take up Time to examine or disprove these Pretences. They carry Guilt in their Face: And being all contradictory to one another, shew to what a Confusion the *Jews* are brought, in forcing their Way thro' the plain *Predictions* of the *Messiah*, of which I will go on to more Instances.

2. (a) *Thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a Man to sit upon the Throne of the House of Israel: Neither shall the Priests, the Levites, want a Man before me to offer Burnt-offerings, and to kindle Meat-offerings, and to do Sacrifice continually — Thus saith the Lord, If ye can break my Covenant of the Day, and my Covenant of the Night, and that there should not be Day and Night in their Season; then may also my Covenant be broken with David my Servant, that he should not have a Son to reign upon this Throne, and with the Levites, the Priests, my Ministers.* Now is all this gloriously fulfill'd in our *Messiah*, the Son of *David*, who is made *Lord of Heaven and Earth*, and of whose *Kingdom* there shall be no *End*. But without this, how is this *Prophecy* fulfill'd? What *Son of David* can you produce, who now reigns over the *House of Israel*? And as for the *Covenant with Levi*, that is as much broken, for instead of *Sacrifices continually*, you have not now, nor have had since the *Destruction of Jerusalem*, about 1700 Years, any *Sacrifice* at all. But if you understand these *Prophecies*, as of the *Kingdom of the Messiah*, so of his *Priesthood*, of which that of *Levi* was a *Type*, and fulfill'd in it, then is this *Prophecy* exactly accomplish'd in the *Evangelical Priesthood*, which our *Messiah* has instituted: And which, we
doubt

(a) *Jr.* xxxiii. 17, 18, 20, 21.

doubt not, will, according to the utmost Extent of this *Prophecy* of it, last as long as the *Covenant* of *Day* and *Night*, that is, as our *Messiah* has again given us his Assurance, (a) even unto the *End of the World*; and that the *Gates of Hell* shall never be able to prevail against it. Some of the * *Jews* pretend, that *David* will be rais'd from the *Dead*, and made *Immortal*, to fulfil this *Prophecy*. But others, rejecting this Interpretation, say, that this is to be meant of the Time after the *Messiah*, *sc.* That after the *Messiah* shall come, of the Seed of *David*, there shall no more want of his *Seed* to rule, &c. But the Words of the *Text* are, that *David* shall never want a *Man* to sit upon the *Throne* of the *House of Israel*. And putting to this, after the *Coming of the Messiah*, is adding to the *Text*. And the like *Liberty* would leave nothing certain in any *Text* of the *Bible*, or in any other *Writing*. The next I produce is,

3. That most exact Description (b) of the *Death* and *Sufferings* of the *Messiah*, with the Reason of it, *viz.* as an *Expiation* and *Satisfaction* for the *Sins* of the *People*.

And how forc'd and foreign is that Interpretation, which some of your modern *Jews* have put upon this *Chapter*, on purpose to avoid the plain Proof of *our Messiah* therein?

As

(a) *Matth.* xxviii. 20. xvi. 18. * *Limberch Collat.* p. 73.

(b) *Isaiab* liii.

As if the Person there spoke of, were not any particular Person, but only a Description of the *People* of the *Jews*, in the Name of a Person; of their present *Dispersion* thro' all Nations; with the *Contempt* and *Misery* which they suffer; and withal their making many *Profelytes* to their *Religion*, in this their *Dispersion*.

For their many *Profelytes*, we hear not of them. If the *Jews* keep their own Ground, it is the most that in your present Circumstances, you seem to expect: And wou'd be well content to compound for it, not only *here*, but in all the Countries whither you are dispers'd. What *King*, what *Nation*, have you converted? Nay, in our Part of the World, what *Family*, what *Persons*? And we hear as little of it from other Parts. You boast of many in *Spain* and *Portugal*; but they conceal it, and we know them not. But the flowing in of the *Gentiles* has been to the *Christian Church*. And only so, can the Promise of it to *your Church* be verifi'd, that is, as *yours* was a *Type* of *ours*; or as *ours* is truly *yours*, fulfill'd and continu'd, in the *Reign* of *your Messiah*, pursuant to all the *Prophecies* which went before of Him. Therefore by all that has yet appear'd of your *Dispersion*, it is as a just *Punishment* for your own *Sins*; and not for the *Conversion* of the *Gentiles*. But how for their *Conversion*? When your Learned *Jew* confesses (as hereafter quoted) That you have no Arguments
against

against the *Gentiles*, nor can convince any of them. And in all the *Prophecies* of this your *Dispersion* (some of which are recited *Seēt. xi.*) there is nothing told of the *Conversion* of the *Gentiles* as thereby design'd, but only as a *Punishment* of your *Iniquity*; and, at the length, for your *Conversion*, as well as that of the *Gentiles*. As that God will have mercy upon you, and cause your *Captivity* (a) to return. That the *Redeemer* (b) shall come to *Zion*, and turn away *Iniquity* from *Jacob*. And in the mean time, that you should be *rejected* for your *Wickedness*, and another People chosen in your Place. For thus it is said to you, (c) *But ye are they that forsake the Lord — Therefore will I number you to the Sword — Because when I called ye did not answer; when I spake ye did not hear —* (ye did not hearken to the *Words* of the *Lord*, in the *Mouth* of that *Prophet*, whom He told you He wou'd send) *Therefore thus saith the Lord God* (d), *behold my Servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; behold my Servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold my Servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed; behold my Servants shall sing for Joy of Heart, but ye shall cry for Sorrow of Heart, and shall bowl for Vexation of Spirit. And ye shall leave your Name for a Curse unto my Chosen: For the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his Servants*

(a) *Jer. xxxviii. 26.* (b) *Isaiah lix. 20.* (c) *Isaiah lxxv. 11. 10 15.* (d) *Deut. xviii. 18, 19.*

vants by another Name. How literally is this fulfill'd! God hath chosen the *Christians* in your Place, and called his *Servants* by another Name. Not that you shou'd be finally rejected; but till the Fulness of the *Gentiles* shall come in: And then shall *you* be converted by *them*, and not *they* by *you*. Therefore are you fatally deluded, who attribute to your selves, and to your present Circumstances, all that *Righteousness* which is spoken of the *Messiah* in 53d of *Isaiab.* As, *By his Knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, &c.* Was it for this End that God foretold your *Dispersion*? No; but for your grievous Iniquities, and for your own Conversion. As said by a *Prophet* of your own, (a) *Yet will I leave a Remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the Sword, among the Nations, when ye shall be scattered through the Countries: And they that escape of you shall remember me among the Nations — Because I am broken with their whorish Heart, which have departed from me — And they shall loath themselves for the Evils which they have committed in all their Abominations: And they shall know that I am the Lord, and that I have not said in vain, that I wou'd do this Evil unto them.* Again, (b) *They shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall scatter them among the Nations, and disperse them in the Countries:*
But

(a) *Ezek.* vi. 8, 9, 10.(b) *ibid.* xii. 15, 16.

But I will leave Men of Number of them — that they may declare all their Abominations among the Heathen, whither they come, and they shall know that I am the Lord; That is, you Jews shall know. It is to convince and convert you, that you shall be so dispers'd, as you are this Day. Again, (a) Are ye not as Children of the Ethiopians unto me; O Children of Israel, saith the Lord? — Behold the Eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful Kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the Face of the Earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the House of Jacob, saith the Lord: For so I will command, and I will sift the House of Israel among all Nations, like as Corn is sifted in a Sieve, yet shall not the least Grain fall upon the Earth.

You shall be preserved in your *Dispersion*, in order to your *Repentance*, not for your *Holiness* to convert the Nations, for you are call'd *the Sinful Kingdom*, and as *Children of the Ethiopians*. And God will chuse other Hands to raise his Kingdom among the Heathen; as it follows, (b) *In that Day I will raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen — That they may possess the Remnant of Edom, and of all the Heathen, which are called by my Name, saith the Lord that doth this.* See that fulfill'd this Day. Where are the *Heathens* that are call'd by the Name of the *Lord?*

(a) *Amos ix. 7, 8, 9.*(b) *Ibid. ver. 11, 12.*

Lord? Who does *possess* them, but our *Messiah*, the Son of *David*, by whose *Name* they are call'd *Christians*? In vain therefore do you expect the *Heathen* to be converted by *you*. You see it done already, by those whom God has chosen in your Room; and who now seeks to convert you, by perswading of you to hearken to *Moses* and your own *Prophets*. Who have told you of this Conversion of the *Gentiles*, while you remain in your *Obstinacy*. (a) *I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said behold me, behold me unto a Nation that was not called by my Name. But unto Israel he saith, I have spread out my Hands all the Day unto a rebellious and gainsaying People. Yet you would attribute great Holiness to your selves in this your Dispersion, even all that which is spoken of the Messiah in the fifty third Chapter of Iſaiab.*

I have insisted thus long upon it, because this is all you have to say against that wonderful *Prophecy* of the *Law*, outward *Appearance* of the *Messiah* when he should come; and of the End of his coming, not *Fighting* (as you expect) but *Suffering*: Not *Conquering Men* with the *Sword*, but, as it is there express'd, (*ver. 10.*) *Giving up his Soul, an Offering for Sin*; whereby to redeem us from that *Death*, denounced (b) against *Sin*. And so

(a) *Iſaiab* lxxv. 1, 2.(b) *Gen.* ii. 17.

so *Conquering* him that had the *Power of Death*, that is, the *Devil*; to whom we were in *Bondage*, lying under the *Curse*, of which he was made the *Executioner*.

And this (till the Time shou'd come) was *Shadow'd out* to us in several *Types* and *Representations* of it, not only in your *Law*, which was but *one* of them. For *Sacrifices* (the most express *Type* of the *Death* and *Sacrifice* of the *Messiah*) were instituted upon the first *Sin* of *Man*, and the *Promises* of the *Messiah* (a) then given, and his *Conquest* of the *Serpent*. And were practis'd by *Cain*, *Abel*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, &c. before the *Law*. But most lively express'd (b) in the *Sacrifice* of *Isaac*; upon which the *Promise* of the *Messiah*, was again renewed to *Abraham*. This *Salvation* by the *Messiah* was likewise prefigur'd by the saving of *Noah* and his *Family* in the *Ark*; as by your *Passage* through the *Red-Sea*, and *Deliverance* out of *Egypt*; particularly by the *Erection* of the *Brazen-Serpent*, as of *Christ* upon the *Cross*; and your *Salvation* only by *Looking* upon that, as ours by *Faith* in him. But these *Types* may be over-valu'd, when we rest in them, without looking forward to what they represent. Therefore *Hezekiah* (c) broke that *Brazen-Serpent* to Pieces, and call'd it *Nebushtan*, a contemptible Name, that is, only a bit of *Brass*.
And

(a) *Gen.* iii. 15. (b) *Gen.* xxii. 18. (c) *2 Kings* xviii. 4.

And God expresses himself with as much Indignation against your *Sacrifices*, as insufficient, of themselves, to *Reconcile* to Him. In which Sense, He declares (a) that He *Hates* them, that they are a *Trouble*, and an *Abomination* to Him, and that He is *wearry* to bear them. And that he will not *accept* of them, or has *requir'd* them, as a *Satisfaction* for *Sin*. What is it then that He will *accept*? Even the *Messiah*, (b) for whom a *Body* was prepar'd in which he was to make that *Atonement*, which the *Bodies* of *Beasts* could not. And which is very particularly describ'd in the fifty third Chapter of *Isaiab.* And cannot be apply'd to the *Jewish Nation* (as they wou'd now turn it) under their present *Sufferings* and *Calamity*. It is said, *ver. 12. He bore the Sin of many, and made Intercession for the Transgressors.* Do the *Jews* make *Intercession* for the *Gentiles*? Or how do they *bear* their *Sins*? It is said, *ver. 9. He had done no Violence, neither was any Deceit in his Mouth; yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, &c.* But what is before recited out of your *Prophets*, and much more could be added to the same purpose, shew plainly, that you have been *bruised* for your *own* great *Wickedness*. And the *Opinion* of your *own Righteousness*, is not the least Part of your *Delusion*. But you oppose your selves, and set up contrary *Pretences*. For when you come to give an *Account* why
your

(a) *1. Sam. i. 11. to 15.* (b) *Psal. xl. 6, 7.*

your *Messiah* has *delay'd* his coming so long beyond the Time which was limited by the *Prophets*; you have no other Answer, but that it is because of your *Sins*. And they must be *Sins* more than *ordinary*, which have provok'd God to *break* his *Promises*, so oft repeated, concerning the Time of the *Messiah's* Coming. So that *here* you make yourselves the greatest *Sinners* that can be: But in answer to *Isaiab* liii. then you are *Righteous* altogether, and there is no *Deceit* in your *Mouth*! Your *Nation* is the *righteous* *Servant* of the *Lord* there spoke of!

But of that *Servant* it is said, *ver. 8.* For the *Transgression* of my *People* was he *stricken*. Therefore he was not that *People*, but he *suffer'd* for that *People*.

The learned *Jew* * says, That the *Death* which the *Christians* wou'd infer of the *Messiah* from this of *Isaiab* liii. means not a real *Death*, (for they suppose rightly, but misunderstood that their *Messiah* will live for ever) but only *Labores* & *Flagella*, (as he words it) great *Labours* and *Afflictions*, which they suppose He may endure, *ante perfectam Regni Revelationem*, before the full Establishment of his Kingdom. And he brings as a Parallel Place, *in Deaths oft*, which the *Apostle* (c) speaks of himself, but it means no more than *Dangers*.

C

*Answ.** *Limbor. Collat.* p. 53.(c) 2 *Cor.* xi. 23.

Ans. 1. The *Messiah's* undergoing *Stripes* and *Afflictions*, tho' in order to his *Kingdom*, is as adverse to the *Jews* Notion of the *Messiah*, as *Death* itself. For they suppose him to go on *gloriously* in *Conquests* and *Victory*; and not to be *Scourged*, or *Ignominiously Treated*.

Ans. 2. Being in *Deaths*, shews itself to be a *figurative* Expression: For a Man can be in *Death* but *once*, therefore, not, in that Sense, *often* in *Deaths*. But as a Man in *Battles*, or *Storms* at *Sea*, may be said to be *often* in *Deaths*, so the *Apostle* in the many *Dangers*, which he there repeats. But far otherwise are the Expressions concerning the *Death* of the *Messiah*, (d) *He was cut off out of the Land of the Living. He made his Grave with the Wicked. He poured out his Soul unto Death.* And *Messiah the Prince* (e) shall be *cut off*, but *not for himself*, &c. If these Expressions do not signify *Death*, what others can? And the *Jews* struggling against it, shews only, that they are resolv'd not to be convinc'd by any Words whatsoever that can be spoken. They try all Ways; but dare *stick* to none; for they are contradictory to one another. And if one of their *Excuses* hold, the rest must be *false*. Which *Confusion*, of it self, were enough to *convince* them, you shall see more of them.

To

(d) *Isaiah* liii. 8, 9, 12.

(e) *Dan.* ix. 25, 26.

To avoid this, and other *Prophecies*, which speak expressly of the *Poor* and *Low State*, in which the *Messiah* was to appear. (f) *Behold thy King* cometh unto thee *Poor*, or as we translate it *Lowly*, &c. The modern *Jews* have fram'd to themselves *Two Messiahs*: One *Ben Joseph*, of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, who was to be *Poor* and *Contemptible*; and undergo great *Indignities*. The other *Ben David*, of the Tribe of *Judah*, who was to be *Victorious*, and *Conquer* all the Earth before them; and to live for ever in *Temporal Grandeur*. That he was to raise again from the *Dead*, all the *Israelites* of former Ages: And among them, the first *Messiah Ben Joseph*. Thus the *Jews* shutting fast their Eyes, do *Dream*, and *Invent Messiahs*, on purpose because they will not be concluded by the plain *Prophecies* of the *one* and *only Messiah*. Where do the *Prophets* speak of *Two Messiahs*? But speaking all along of *one*, and of *the Son* or *Messiah*, does necessarily exclude any other. If there were *Two*, one would not be *the Messiah*. And by the same Rule they make *Two*, they may make *two score* of *Messiahs*. But this *shameless Contrivance* shews, how hard they are put to it, to elude the plain *Prophecies* of the *Messiah*: And is a Confirmation of the true *Import* and *Meaning* of these *Prophecies*, which are not answerable, but by such *Poor* and

(f) *Zech.* ix. 9.

Guilty shifts. It is for this Reason that I have been so long upon this *Prophecy of Isaiab.* And shewn the *Dream* of your *modern Rabbies*, of *Two Messiahs*, unknown to all your *Expositors* before *Christ* came; but invented since, on purpose to avoid the plain and undoubted *Characters* which our *Jesus* bore of the *Messiah.*

4. The famous *Prophecy of Daniel's* (g) 70 Weeks; which according to the *Prophetical Computation* of a *Year* for a *Day*, makes 490 Years. In which Time it was then foretold that the *Messiah* shou'd come; and our *Messiah* did come within that Time. And all there spoken of him, were punctually fulfil'd. As, that the *Messiah* shou'd be *cut off*; and soon after, that the *City of Jerusalem*, and the *Sanctuary* shou'd be *destroy'd*; and the *Sacrifice* and *Oblation* shou'd *cease*. And that even after all this, *Desolations* were determin'd against *your Nation*.

And the end of the *Messiah's* coming is likewise there told, not *Temporal Conquests*, as you dream of, but, *To finish the Transgressions, and to make an end of Sins, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness.*

This *Prophecy* pinches so close, that the modern *Jews* to avoid it, wou'd endeavour to discredit the whole Book of *Daniel*: They dare

(g) *D.m* ix. 24, &c.

dare not quite throw it off, because it was indubitably receiv'd by their Forefathers before *Christ* came. And the high Rank (*b*) in which *Daniel* is put, rather gives Him the preference before all the rest of the *Prophets*, than excludes him out of their Number. It makes him at least, the most highly favour'd of God, of all the Men living in the World in his time. And his Visions of the four great *Empires* of the World; and *Prophecies* of the *State-Revolutions* which follow'd so remarkably, made his *Prophecies* more noted than those of any of the other *Prophets*. And God (*i*) sets him forth as the *Standard* of *Wisdom* amongst *Men*: For these Reasons, the *Jews* after *Christ* cou'd not expunge this Book of *Daniel*. But about a hundred years after *Christ*, they quite inverted the *method* of the *Books* of the *Old Testament*, which to that time had been receiv'd amongst them, and made a new *Distribution* of them; And a *Distinction* of those they call'd *Αγίαγραφα* or *Holy Writings*; but put them in a Class below the *Inspir'd* and *Canonical Scriptures*. And into this *lower* Class they thrust the Book of *Daniel*, at the end of the *Prophets*, which before was plac'd in the middle of them.

But this Book of *Daniel*, if it be not among those which are *inspir'd*, in the highest Degree, it cannot stand among any *holy* or *good* Writings,

(*b*) Ezek. xiv. 14, 20.(*i*) Ibid. xxviii. 3.

tings; but it must be reckon'd *False* and *Blasphemous*. Because, it speaks of itself all along as *immediately inspir'd* by God: And if those *Visions* and *Revelations* there related, be not *True*, then it is telling of *Lies*, in the *Name* of the *Lord*, which is high *Blasphemy*.

Therefore since the modern *Jews* dare not place the Book of *Daniel* lower than among the *Holy* or *Pious* Writings: they confess it to be *Inspir'd* and *Canonical*; and have only discover'd their own *Guilt* in seeking to avoid the witness of their own *Prophets* to our *Messiah*.

5. That *Promise* (k) concerning the *Temple* of *Solomon*, that *God's Name* should be there *for ever*, and *perpetually*, cannot be verify'd, but as it was a *Type* of the *Christian Church*, which shall last *for ever*. For *Types*, as *Pictures*, are often call'd by the *Name* of what they *represent*: And by them, is meant that whereof they are the *Types*.

6. As that *Promise* to the *Temple* of *Solomon*, so neither can that made to the *Second Temple*, be otherwise verify'd than as fulfill'd in our *Messiah*: (l) That *the Glory* of *this latter House*, shall be *greater* than of the *former*. And yet it was *as nothing*, in *Comparison* of the *former*. How then should the *Glory* be *greater*? It is told, because, *The desire* of all *Nations* shou'd come into it, and *In this Place*

(k) 2 *Chren.* vii. 16. (l) *Eag.* ii. 3, 7, 9.

Place will I give Peace saith the Lord of Hosts. Here was given the eternal Peace and Reconciliation of God with Men, in the Person of Jesus Christ, in whom God was, by His means, reconciling (m) the World unto Himself.

Some *Jews*, to avoid the force of this *Prophecy*; do now pretend, that, by the *latter House*, *ver. 9.* is not to be meant that *Second Temple*, but some other yet to be built. This is very *precarious*, and a *guilty Plea*. But it will not bear; for it is plain, that it was of that *very second Temple* which the *Prophet* spoke. The *Comparison*, *ver. 3.* is betwixt that *Temple* which they then saw, and the *First Temple* of *Solomon*. And *ver. 7.* God speaking of that *Temple* then built, says, *I will fill this House with Glory.* And *ver. 9.* *The Glory of this latter House shall be greater than of the former.* If it were spoken of a third or a fourth *Temple*, the word *former* wou'd not relate to the *First Temple*. And there was no other *Former*, when this *Prophecy* was given forth. It was the *Second Temple* that seem'd as nothing, in the Eyes of those who had seen the *First*, who therefore *Wept (n)*. And, to comfort these, it was here promised, that the *Glory* of that *Second House*, shou'd exceed that of the *Former*.

C 4

But

(m) 2 Cor. v. 19.

(n) Ezr. iii. 12.

But there were other *Glories*, much greater than that of the *Building*, which the *First Temple* had; and the *Second* had none of them. As your own *Rabbies* * do reckon them under five Heads. 1. The *Holy Ark* wherein were the *Tables of the Covenant*, the *Pot of Manna*, and *Aaron's Rod* that buded: And where *God* was said to dwell between the *Cherubims* that cover'd it (o). 2. The *Schechina*, or *Divine Presence in the Cloud of Glory*. 3. The miraculous *Urim and Thummim*. 4. The *Holy Fire* that came down from *Heaven*. 5. The *Gift of Prophecy*, or of the *Holy Ghost*; These all ceas'd under the *Second Temple*: Which made its *Glory* much more inferior to that of the *First*, than the *Difference* as to the *Magnificence* of the *Building*. But all these *Glories* were much exceeded under the *Second Temple*, they were fulfill'd, and more divinely exhibited in their *Archetype*, the *Messiah*; who was the true *Schechina*, *God* not only appearing in, but personally united to our *Nature*; whose *Holy Spirit* descended miraculously in *Fire* upon his *Apostles*, the same day (of *Pentecost*) wherein the *Law* was given in *Fire* from *Mount Sinai*; and fill'd them with the *Gifts of Tongues*, of *Miracles*, and of *Prophecy*, which were now departed from the *Temple*; and plac'd

* R. Kimchi. & R. Solom. in Hag. i. 8. and R. Bechai in Legem, f. 59. (o) Psal. lxxx. 1.

plac'd that infallible *Urim* and *Thummim*, in their *Hearts*, which was but faintly represented in the *Breast-plate* of your *High-Priest*.

7. Again of this *Second Temple* it was said, (p) *The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his Temple; even the Angel of the Covenant whom ye delight in: Behold he shall come saith the Lord of Hosts.* Therefore it was necessary that the *Messiah* shou'd come during the standing of the *Second Temple*; and that *Prophecy* can never now be fulfill'd.

You have several times attempted to re-build your *Temple*, in the reigns of *Adrian*, of *Constantine*, of *Julian*, when having gain'd not only that *Apostate Emperor's Consent*, but that he was willing to bear the *Expences* of it; and gave Orders for the re-building of your *Temple* at *Jerusalem*, in *Oodium* to the *Christians*; and the *Heathens* did with great *Zeal* (for the same reason) assist you in it; even then, when you seem'd on all hands to have gain'd your Purpose — Behold *God* did immediately *himself* interpose! And by a terrible *Earthquake* threw up the *Stones* out of the very *Foundation* with that *Violence*, as *destroy'd* many of the *Workmen*, and *Spectators*. And by over-throwing the *Buildings* near adjoining to the *Temple*, *kill'd* and *maim'd* many more of the *Jews*, who were
there

(p) *Mal. iii. 1*

there gather'd together, for the carrying on of this Work.

And when not *terrify'd* with this, they again attempted to lay the *Foundations* of the *Temple*, Globes of *Fire* bursting out of the very *Foundations*, not only *destroy'd* the *Workmen*, but *devour'd* the *Stones*. This is recorded in *Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 20.* and in *Sozom. l. 5. c. 22.* who appeals to several *Witnesses* of it, then living. And our *Chrysofome* (q) says, *We are all Witnesses of this thing.* But besides these *Testimonies* of *Christians*, this is likewise told by *Ammianus Marcellinus*, who was not a *Christian*, in his 23^d *Book.* Thus the building of the *Temple* was defeated at that time *A. C. 361*, and to this day. Tho' if you had a new *Temple* to *Morrow*, that cou'd not solve the *Prophecies* that were made either to the *First* or *Second Temple.* Which last has been *destroy'd* now more than 1600 *Years.* Much less cou'd it satisfy all those *Prophecies* that speak so particularly of the *time* of the *Messiah's* coming, which are longer since *past.*

IV. The *Prophecies* of the *Holy Scriptures* concerning the *Time* of the coming of the *Messiah*, were so noted and known among the *Jews*, that when it drew near, *viz.* about the time that our *Blessed Saviour* came into the *World*, the *Jews* were generally looking
out

(q) *Orat. 2. contr. Jud.*

out for Him, and expected his coming. Some thought that *Herod* (who repair'd the *Temple* and made it more glorious) was He, and took the Name of *Herodians*. Others follow'd *Theudas*; others *Judas of Galilee*.

Both of which are mention'd (r) in our History of the *Acts* of the *Apostles*. And likewise (s) by your *Josephus*: If it was not another *Theudas*, who, as he tells, pretended to *Miracles*, viz. To divide the River *Jordan*, by his Command, and give his Followers Passage through it, on dry Land. He mentions (t) another *Impostor*, who led the *Jews* into the *Wilderness*, and promised them Deliverance, if they wou'd follow him thither: whom *Festus* destroy'd with all his Followers. This our *Saviour* (u) literally foretold; and cautions against following these *False Christs* and *False Prophets* into the *Desert*. And *Josephus* says (x), that there were at that time (which was about 57 or 58 Years after the Nativity of *Christ*) many *Enchanters* and *Deceivers*, who persuaded the common People to follow them into the *Desert*, where they promised to work *Miracles*, &c. He says, that the *Country* of *Judea* was stor'd with such; so intent were they then to find out their *Messiah*: And so persuaded that
that

(r) *Act.* v. 36. 37. (s) *Joseph. Antiq.* l. xxviii. c. 1, 2. l. xx. c. 2. (t) *Ibid.* c. 7. (u) *Matth.* xxiii. 23, 24, 25, 26. (x) *Joseph. Antiq.* l. xx. c. 6.

that was the *Time* of his coming. The two Brothers (y) *Asinaeus* and *Anileus*, both *Weavers*, had mighty *Successes*: But were at last destroy'd, and were the occasion of the Destruction of many of the *Jews*, who follow'd them, about 40 years after the Birth of *Christ*. And (z) about 74 years after, another *Weaver*, one *Jonathan*, led many of the *Jews* after him into the *Wilderness*, where he promised to shew them *Signs* and *Wonders*. He was *burnt* alive, and multitudes of the *Jews* were *Massacred* about *Cyrene*. This was two years after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. And *Josephus* tells (a), that the great cause of that was their expectation of their *Messiah* then to come. For he says, That *the chief thing which incited them to that War* (with the *Romans*) was a *doubtful Prophecy* (as he calls it) *found in the Holy Scriptures, that, about that time, one of their Country should be Monarch of the whole World*. He said (after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*) that they were *deceiv'd* in this *Interpretation* of the *Prophecy*; which he (*then*) apply'd to the reign of *Vespasian* as if fulfill'd in Him.

V. But what is more remarkable, the *Romans* themselves had the same Notion current among them; and not only they, but all the *Eastern* part of the *World*, which may well include

(y) *Ibid.* l. xxviii. c. 12. (z) *Id. de Bell. Jud.* l. vii. c. 31.
 (a) *Bell. Jud.* l. viii. c. 12.

include all that was then known. Thus says *Suetonius*, in the Life of *Vespasian*, *Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus & constans opinio, esse in Fatis, ut eo Tempore, Judæa profecti rerum potirentur*, i. e. That an ancient and constant Tradition had obtain'd throughout all the East that in the Fates it was decreed, that, about that Time, some who shou'd come from Judæa, shou'd obtain the Dominion, or Government, i. e. of the World, which the Romans then possess'd. And *Cornelius Tacitus* (*Hist. l. 5.*) speaks almost in the same Words, telling of the great *Prodigies*, which preceded the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, He says, that many understood them as the Forerunners of that extraordinary Person, whom the *Ancient Books* of the *Priests* did foretel shou'd come about that Time, from *Judæa*, and obtain the Dominion. *Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur.*

These *Ancient Books* of the *Priests*, must either mean the *Holy Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, in the hands of the *Jewish Priests*, and which were known to the *Romans*: And, if so, it shews the Sense of the *Jews* at that time, and before, that that was the time of the *Messiah's* coming: Or otherwise, which is more probable, by these Books, were meant the *Oracles* of the *Sibyls*, which were kept with great Veneration by the *Roman Priests*: And which very plainly foretold the coming
of

of *Christ*; and pointed out the very *Time*. And this rais'd so great an *Expectation*, and *Jealousie* in the *Roman* Government, at that *Time*; with a watchful *Eye*, particularly upon the *Jews*. The same *Year* that *Pompey* took *Jerusalem*, one of the *Sibyl* Oracles made a great *Noise*, viz. That *Nature* was about to bring forth a *King* to the *Romans*. Which as *Suetonius* tells in the *Life* of *Augustus*, did so terrifie the *Senate*, that they made a *Decree*, that none born that year shou'd be *Educated*. And that those whose *Wives* were with *Child*, did each conceive great hopes, applying the *Prophecy* to themselves — *Senatum exterritum censuisse, ne quis illo Anno genitus educaretur, eos qui gravidas uxores haberent, quod ad se quisque spem traheret, curasse ne Senatus consultum ad Ærarium deferretur.* And *Appian*, *Plutarch*, *Salust*, and *Cicero*, do all say, that it was this *Prophecy* of the *Sibyls*, which stirred up *Cornelius Lentulus* at that time, he hoping that he was the *Man* who shou'd be *King* of the *Romans*. Some appy'd it to *Cæsar*, which *Cicero* (*de Devotione*) after *Cæsar's* *Death*, ridicules, and cautions that those *Prophecies*, shou'd not be interpreted of any future *King* to be in *Rome*. *Cum Antistitibus agamus, & quidvis potius ex illis Libris, quam Regem proferant: quem Romæ post hæc nec Dii, nec Homines esse patientur.* *Virgil* in his famous *ivth Eclogue*, wrote about the beginning of *Herod the Great*, Compliments

pliments the *Consul Pollio*, with this *Prophecy*, by supposing it might refer to his Son *Saloninus*, then born. But the words are too great to be verify'd of any mere mortal Man. And speaks of such a *Golden Age* and *Renovation* of all things, as cannot be fulfill'd in the *Reign* of any earthly *King*. And *Virgil* does express it, almost in the words of the *Holy Scriptures*, wherein they tell of the *Glorious Age* of the *Messiah*; of *New Heavens* and a *New Earth*, then to *begin*, and to be finally *completed*, at the end of the *World*. *Isaiab lxx. 17. 2 Pet. iii. 13.*

*Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas :
Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.
Jam nova progenies cælo demittitur alto.
Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
Desinet, ac toto surget gens aurea mundo----*

The last Age decreed by Fate is come:
And a new Frame of all Things does begin,
An Holy Progeny from Heaven descends,
Auspicious be his Birth, which puts an End
'To th' *Iron Age*, and from whence shall rise
A *Golden State* far glorious thro' the Earth.

Then the *Poet* runs a *Division* upon the *peaceable State* of that *Reign*, perfectly a *Paraphrase* of *Isaiab lxx. from ver. 17. which ends ver. 25. The Wolf and the Lamb shall feed together, and the Lion shall eat Straw as*
the

the Bullock; and Dust shall be the Serpent's Meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy, in all my Holy Mountain, saith the Lord.

— *nec magnos metuent armenta leones.
Occidet & Serpens, & fallax Herba veneni
Occidet.* —

— Nor shall the Flocks fierce *Lions* fear.
No *Serpent* shall be there, or Herb of *pois'nous*
Juice.

Nay, the very *Atonement* for our *Sins*, which *Daniel* attributed to the *Messiah*, chap. ix. 24. *To finish the Transgression, to make an end of Sins, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity,* is thus express'd in this *Eclogue*,

*Te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras.*

By thee, what Footsteps of our *Sins* remain
Are blotted out, and the whole *World* set
free
From her perpetual *Bondage*, and her *Fear.*

And the very Words of *Haggai* ii. 6. seem to be literally translated by *Virgil*. Thus says the *Prophet* of the coming of the *Messiah*, *Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the Heavens, and the Earth, and the Sea, and the dry Land. And I will shake all Nations,*
and

and the Desire of all Nations shall come. And thus the Poet,

Aggredere O magnos (aderit jam tempus) honores,

Chara Deum soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum.

Aspice convexo nutantem pondere mundum, Terrasque, tractusque Maris, Cælumque profundum.

Aspice venturo lætentur ut omnia secl.

Enter on thy high Honour, now's the Time,
Offspring of God, O thou great Gift of Jove.
Behold the World, Heaven, Earth, and Seas
do shake.

Behold how all rejoice to greet that Glorious
Age.

And, as if *Virgil* had been learn'd in the
Doctrine of *Christ*, he tells, that these *Glorious Times*
should not begin immediately upon the *Birth* of that
Wonderful Person, then expected to come into the
World; but that *Wickedness* should still keep its
Ground in several Places.

Pauca tamen suberunt priscae vestigia fraudis.
————— *erunt etiam altera Bella.*

Yet some Remains shall still be left
Of ancient *Fraud*, and *Wars* shall still go on.

D

Now

Now how *Virgil* apply'd all this, is not the Matter; whether in part to *Augustus*, or partly to *Pollio*, and partly to *Saloninus* his Son, then newly born. But it shews the general Expectation that there was, at that Time, of the Birth of a most Extraordinary Person, who shou'd introduce a *New and Golden Age*; and both *Reform* and *Govern* the whole World. Justly therefore call'd by the *Prophet* the *Desire of all Nations*.

Now the *Sibyls* had pointed out the Time to be *then* at hand. And if it shou'd be suppos'd (tho' there is no Reason for it) that the *Jews* had *forg'd*, or *interpolated*, these *Oracles*; and made them speak thus in the Language of the Holy *Scriptures*, yet this still shews, that the *Jews*, at that Time, did so understand the *Prophecies* of the *Old Testament*, concerning the *Messias*, as that *then* was the *Time* prefix'd for his Coming.

But if these *Prophecies* of the *Sibyls* be what they speak themselves (against which nothing but *Presumption* has yet appear'd) then can they not be deny'd as a demonstrative Proof of our *Jesus* being the *Messiah*; for they describe him so *personally*, and so *plainly*, that this is made the Cause of Suspicion against them; as if they cou'd not be genuine, because they speak so very plainly and particularly of *Jesus Christ*.

This has carry'd some *Christian Criticks* too far, to reject, upon this only *Presumption*, the Authority of the *Sibyls*. And yet they

they have not (not any of them that I can find) taken into due Consideration, the Answer which *Origen* gives to this same Objection of theirs, for it is not a new one. It was first objected by the *Heathens*. *Celsus* had recourse to this, *alleging*, that the *Christians* had *interpolated* and *added* several Things to the *Prophecies* of the *Sibyls*. But * *Origen* appeals to the *Ancient Copies* of them, and challenges *Celsus* or any of the *Heathens*, to shew what was added; which he says, they cou'd not instance; and that certainly they wou'd if they cou'd. Yet some of our *Criticks* have declar'd themselves, in this, for *Celsus* against *Origen*; but without answering of *Origen's* Argument, which *Celsus* cou'd not. And it is not to be imagin'd that *Origen* would have put the *Issue* upon such a plain *Matter of Fact*, if it had not been true: And which cou'd have been so easily disprov'd.

But this especially is to be consider'd, that the *Primitive Fathers* of the *Church*, as *Justin*, *Clemens*, *Theophilus*, *Athenagoras*, *Origen*, *Eusebius*, *Lactantius*, &c. did lay so great stress upon the *Sibyls*, and quoted them so often against the *Heathens*, that they call'd the

D 2

Christians

* 'Αποφράμω, ὅτι παρενέγραψαμεν εἰς τὰ βιβλία πολλά καὶ βλάσφημα· καὶ μὴ ἀποδείξαι μὴδ' ὅτι παρενέγραψαμεν. ἀπεδείξε δ' ἂν, εἰ τὰ Ἀρχαιότερα καθαρότερα εἴηκεν, καὶ ἐκ ἑχέου ἀπεδείξε παρενέγρασθαι, μὴ ἀποδείξαι, ὅ μὴδ' ὅτι βλάσφημα εἰσι ταῦτα. *Orig. contra Cels. l. 7.*

Christians Sibyllanists. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, in his *Stromat.* l. 6. quotes *St. Paul* (some Work of his now lost) in his Disputations with the *Gentiles*, referring them to their own *Sibyls*. And he liv'd near to the Time of *St. Paul*; so that we must suppose this to have been at least the current Opinion of that early Age of *St. Clement*. This is observ'd, *Obiter*, for the sake of some *Christian Criticks*, who seem not to have a due Regard for the Authority of the *Primitive Fathers* of the *Church*.

But as to what concerns you *Jews*, and the present Subject we are upon, there can be no Dispute, by what is quoted out of the *Sibyls*, by several Authors, before *Christ* came, that they spoke of a *Wonderful Person* to appear in the World; who shou'd Rule all Nations: And that it was understood, as well by the then *Jews*, as *Romans*, to be about that Time in which our *Jesus* was born. Now there cou'd be none but *Jews* or *Heathens* to have made these *Prophecies* of the *Sibyls*, (there being no *Christians* then in the World.) And, as said before, it is all one, as to our present Argument, whether the one or the other made them. For I bring them now only to shew, that there was a general Expectation of the *Messiah*, at that Time, when our *Jesus* was born. And I have shewn that it was *Universal*, all the World over. The greatest part of which was then under the *Roman Government*;

Government; who likewise testify, that all the *Eastern* Part of the World had the same Expectation.

And that, not only at that Time, as if then put into their Heads (by the *Craft* or *Artifice* of the *Jews*, as some *Fanciful* Men have pleas'd themselves to *imagine*) but that they had it all along as an *ancient* and undoubted *Tradition*, written in the Books of *Fate*: And that it should come to pass at that very Time. And never but at that Time was there any such general Expectation.

This Universal *Impulse* (if we will call it no more) which was imprinted, in whatever manner, upon the Minds of the whole *Earth*, to expect a *Glorious* and *Wonderful Deliverer*, *Restorer*, and *King* of the *World*, at that *Time*, when our Blessed *Lord* and *Saviour* was *born*, (and never before or since) cannot be made of less Account, than a very *Extraordinary*, and even *Divine Apparatus*, or *Preparing* of the way, whereby to introduce the *Son of God* with the general *Expectation* and *Commotion* of whole *Nature*, into the *World*!

And, among all these, the *Expectation* was most *firm*, as there was most reason, with you, the *Jews*, who had the *lively Oracles* of the *Holy Scriptures*; which punctually *pointed* out the *Time* wherein God had decreed to send His Great *Messiah* into the *World*.

This appears, with a flagrant Evidence, in your setting up, at *that Time*, this and that

Person for the *Messiah* (as I have before shewn out of *Josephus*) and so continu'd to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*.

And since that Time you have not desisted looking out for your *Messiah*; and following every *Impostor*, that, with any, or no, *Pre- tence* set himself up for it. As our *Lord*, your True *Messiah*, has foretold to you, that many wou'd come in His Name,^a saying, I am *Christ*. Behold (says he) (b) *I have told you before*. But you wou'd not believe. And it has turn'd to your Destruction.

VI. Th *History* of these *Falſe Meſſiahs* has been lately wrote by *Johannes à Lent*, and printed at *Herborn* 1697, with sufficient *Vouchers* from the *Rabbies* of the *Jews* themselves. Let me but name them, to shew the *Succession* of *Declusion* in the *Jews*. You have heard before, out of *Josephus*, the *Multitudes* of *Falſe Meſſiahs* before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. Afterwards, *A C.* 114, you set up another, in the Reign of *Trajan*; one *Andrew*, which occasion'd the Destruction of many *Thousands* of you. Again, in the Reign of *Adrian*, another, whom ye call'd *Bar Cokab*, i. e. The *Son* of a *Star*; alluding to the *Star* of *Jacob*, *Num.* xxiv. 17. And again *rebelliſg* under this *Messiah*, caus'd a most dreadful Destruction amongst you, inſomuch that, as your selves have told it in
your

(b) *Matth.* xxiii. 27.

your own Books, there was twice the Number of *Jews* that perish'd upon this Occasion, more than all those that came out of *Egypt*; and that you suffer'd more under *Adrian*, than under *Nebuchadnezzar*, or *Titus*. When you were at last undeceiv'd (too late) then you chang'd the Name of this *False Messiah*, from *Bar Cochab*, the *Son of a Star*, to *Bar Cosibab*, i. e. the *Son of a Lye*, as being a *False Messiah*.

And how oft have you been deceiv'd since? In the Year of *Christ* 434, in the Reign of *Theodosius the Younger*, another *Pseudo-Messiah* arose in the Island of *Crete*, who said, that he was *Moses*, and sent from *Heaven* to carry the *Jews* in *Crete*, on dry Ground, thro' the Sea, and perswaded several of them to throw themselves into the *Sea*.

In the Year of *Christ* 520, another *Pseudo-Messiah*, one *Dunaan*, arose in *Arabia*, and, with the *Jews* who follow'd him, set upon the *Bishop* and *Christians* in the City of *Negræ*, and committed great *Outrages*, till he was destroy'd.

A. C. 529, the *Jews* and *Samaritans* in *Palestine* were seduc'd into *Rebellion* by *Julian*, a *Pseudo-Messiah*, which occasion'd the Destruction of many of them.

And when *Mahomet* appear'd about the Year 620, the *Jews* flock'd to him, as their *Messiah*, to which he at first pretended. And they stuck to him, till, as some say, they saw

him eat *Camels Blood*; or, as others tell, for other Reasons, they left him. Indeed he left them, and set up other Pretences.

After, *A. C.* 721, they follow'd a certain *Syrian*, who said that he was *Christ*.

A. C. 1137, they follow'd another in *France*, which occasion'd their Banishment out of that Country, and the Slaughter of great Numbers of them.

The Year following, *viz.* *A. C.* 1138, in *Persia*, a *False Messiah*, taking Arms, brought great Mischiefs upon the *Jews* there.

A. C. 1157, the *Jews* rising under another *Messiah*, in *Spain*, had well nigh all of them been cut off.

A. C. 1167, they suffer'd much under another *Messiah*, in the Kingdom of *Fez*.

And the same Year, under another in *Arabia*, who gave for a *Sign*, That after his *Head* was cut off by the King of *Arabia*, he wou'd rise to Life. Which he did not: But by this escap'd a more cruel Death. And not long after, in the same 12th Century, they suffer'd much by another beyond *Euphrates*; who gave for his *Sign*, That he wou'd go to Bed at Night *leprous*, and rise *sound* in the Morning.

About the Year 1174, another rose in *Persia*, and led the *Jews* into *Rebellion*; which occasion'd great Destruction among them. And one *David Almusar* occasion'd the like to them in *Moravia* in *Germany*.

And

And again, in the same *Century*, another *Pseudo-Messiah*. All mention'd by *Maimonides*, and other *Jewish Rabbins*.

Who likewise tells us of that most famous *Pseudo-Messiah* in *Persia*, call'd *David El David*, alias, *David Alroy*, about the Years 1199 or 1200, a great *Magician*, who deluded many of the *Jews*.

A. C. 1222, many *Jews* follow'd a *False Messiah* in *Germany*, whom they call'd the *Son of David*: And the same Year expected their *Messiah* to be born of a Woman, then with Child, at *Worms*. But it prov'd a *Girl*.

A. C. 1465, when the *Saracens* made such Inroads upon *Christendom*, the *Jews* then thought their *Messiah* was come to fight their Battles.

And the same Year Rabbi *Abraham Avenaris*, a *Jewish Astrologer*, from the Conjunction of *Jupiter* and *Saturn* in the Sign *Pisces*, foretold the Coming of the *Messiah* to be then at hand.

And afterwards *R. Aberbanal*, in his Commentary upon *Daniel*, p. 84, 86. gather'd the Time of the *Messiah's* coming from the like Conjunction of *Jupiter* and *Saturn* in *Pisces*.

About the Year 1497, the *Jews* were again deceiv'd in *Ishmael Sophus*, whom they took for their *Messiah*, who having got together an Army of vile and profligate Men, pursu'd his *Victories* successfully thro' *Media*, *Parthia*, *Persia*, *Mesopotamia*, and *Armenia*. But at
last

last cheated the *Jews*, and set up a new *Seet* for *Mabome*!

A. C. 1500, Rabbi *Ascher Lemla* appear'd in *Germany*, as the *Fore-runner* of the *Messiah*, who, he promis'd, shou'd come and restore the *Jews* to the Land of *Canaan* that same Year. And the *Jews* generally, every where did believe him: And appointed *Publick Fasts* and *Prayers* to prepare for the Coming of their *Messiah*.

About the Year 1534, a new *Messiah* rose up in *Spain*; who was bur'd by *Charles V.*

As was another at *Manua*, *R. Salomo Malcho*; whom many of the *Jews* did believe came again to Life after he was burn'd, and every *Sabbath* visit'd by *the Zephati*.

But the Emperor *R. David*, who call'd himself one of the *Emphatic* of the *Messiah*, then soon to come. Who, when he was at *Rome*, is said to have *Fasted six Days* together.

Another *Pseudo-Messiah* rose up in the *East-Indies* about the Year 1615.

And another in *Holland*, *A. C.* 1624.

But the famous *Pseudo-Messiah Sabethai Zevi*, *A. C.* 1666, is a Story remarkably known; who, after all the Expectation of the People of the *Jews*, turn'd, at last *Mahometan*, to save his *Life*.

And no longer since than the Year 1682, there has got up another *False Messiah*, *R. Mardochai*, a *German Jew*, whom, almost all the *Jews* in *Italy*, and many in *Germa-*

ny, have own'd; but like wise Men, with due respect to the *Inquisition*, and *Self-preservation*. Whether he be yet *alive*, or what Strefs the present *Jews* do lay upon him, I cannot tell; nor do I suppose they will be willing to own.

But, from the foregoing Account, I wou'd lay before them what a strange *Uncertainty* they are at; running after every *Impostor* for their *Messiah*; having lost all the *Marks* whereby they may know their *Messiah*; nay, being willing they should be lost; and disputing against them for this only Reason; That because all the *Marks* given of the *Messiah*, in the *Old Testament*, do meet in our blessed Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*; and can never meet in any other; therefore they wou'd have no *Marks* of Him at all.

The Learned *Jew* who disputed with *Limborch*, Anno 1687, (five Years after their last or present *Messiah*, *R. Mardochia* *, appear'd) contends, that the Prophets foretold neither the *Time* or *Place* of the Nativity of the *Messiah*. And says †, that *Miracles* were not needful to prove his Mission; but only to gather the *Jews* together from all Parts of the World, and to conquer the Nations.

Agreeable to this Notion, the *Pseudo-Messiah* before-mention'd, who arose in *Persia*, A. C. 1138, when desir'd to shew some *Miracle*, to prove his Mission, said, that the *Messiah*

* *Limb.* p. 73.

† *Ibid.* p. 55.

siab was not to be known by *Miracles*, but by his *Success* in conquering the World.

And your famous *Maimon* * says the same, That the *Messiah* was not to work *Miracles*, but to *fight* the *Lord's Battles*, and *conquer* all before him.

Mabomet † made the like Excuse for his not working of *Miracles*. He said, That *Moses*, *Solomon*, and *Jesus*, were sent to shew God's *Righteousness*, *Wisdom* and *Clemency*, to which *Miracles* were necessary to gain *Belief*: But that he (*Mabomet*) was sent to shew God's *Fortitude*; to which no *Miracles* were necessary, but to enforce it with the *Sword*; which carry'd its own Conviction.

The *Guilt* and *Folly* of this Excuse is apparent. For at the first setting up of any for the *Messiah*, how shall it be known that he shall have *Success*? We see how often the *Jews* have been *deceiv'd* and *ruin'd* by it. But do they believe that their *Messiah* shall have *Success* without *Interruption*, all along from his first setting up? No, the learned *Jew* || before mention'd, interpreting the *Death* of the *Messiah*, which is spoke of *Isaiab* liii. only of *Troubles* and *Afflictions* which he should endure; says it shall be in the *Wars* with the *Nations*, before he compleat the *Redemption* of the *Jews*; and then (says the learned *Jew*) shall be fulfill'd that *Prophecy* of *Jeremiab*,

Et

* II. *Mela.* and *Milch.* c. 11. † *Alcoran*, c. 2, 3, 4, &c.
 || *Limborch* p 53, and 127.

Et erit dies tribulationis Jacob, sed ex ea salvabitur: That the *Jews* shall suffer great *Tribulation*, but shall be sav'd out of it: So that, by this Rule, they cannot know their *Messiah* by his *Success*, till he is quite ruin'd and destroy'd, and they confounded, as it has hitherto befallen them.

One would think this enough to open their Eyes; That whilst they have obstinately rejected the *sure and infallible Marks*, which God by his *Prophets* has given of the *Messiah*, they have left to themselves no *Marks* or *Rules* at all, whereby they can know him, or which do distinguish him from every *Impostor*.

The *Jews* (c) in our *Saviour's* time, did expect that the *Messiah*, when he came, wou'd work *Miracles*. Many of the *False Messiahs* pretended to it; and no doubt, the present *Jews* would think it a great *Confirmation* of any who should now set up for their *Messiah*. Which shews, that they dispute against the *Necessity* of *Miracles* to vouch the *Messiah*, because they cannot deny those of *our Saviour*. And it likewise discovers their *Diffidence* in ever having a *True Messiah* to come (whatever they pretend) because they dare not put it to the issue of a *Miracle*, or trust that they shall have any, who shall be endow'd with such a *Power*.

Yet

(c) *John* vii. 31.

Yet they reject Him, who they cannot but own had that *Power*. And confess that they are ready to acknowledge *another* without that *Power*; that is, they reject the *Strongest Credentials*, and will accept of *Lesser*. They cannot deny this to be their Case. They will not say, that they do not *desire* they had a *Messiah*, who could work *Miracles* to vouch his *Mission*. And their *Doctōrs* have asserted, *That as the Messiah, was to be greater than Moses; so when he came, he should work greater Miracles than Moses had done.* As it is quoted out of *R. Levi, Ben Gerson, Parafcha*, by *Theodorick Hackspan*, in his Edition of *R. Lipmann's Book Nizáchon. An. 1644.* p. 387. Yet now they cry down *Miracles*, as a *Mark* of the *Messiah*, because they despair of any such; that is indeed, of any *Messiah* at all to come. For no otherwise can they know him, whenever they suppose that he should come. They confess that they cannot know him by the *Time* when he shou'd come, or by the *Works* he shall do when come, other than by the *Issue* of his *Battles*; which they cannot know before-hand: And consequently can never be sure with whom to join, in time, before it be too late; as they have hitherto experimented in all their *False Messiahs*.

I would intreat them to think of another thing, as to the *Time* of the *Messiah's* Coming. They never set up any *False Messiah*, nor did any pretend to it, till near the *Time* that

that our Blessed *Saviour* came into the World; which was the *Time* foretold by *Daniel* and the *Prophets*. And since that *Time*, they have been perpetually setting up of *False Messiahs*, one after another, even to our *Times*. Which shews plainly, that the *Time* wherein our *Messiah* did come, was the *Time* wherein he was generally expected by the *Jews*: And that then they understood their *Law* and their *Prophets* in the same Sense that we have done, as to the *Time* of the *Messiah's* Coming; tho' now they wou'd dissemble it.

VII. I come now in the next place to consider (what I have before hinted.) The Excuse that you have for the Delay of your *Messiah's* Coming, beyond the *Time* (as your selves have confess'd) which was foretold by the *Prophets*. And you have so little to say upon this Point, that you only pretend your *Sins* have hindred his Coming. This is a very bare, and looks like a *guilty Put-off*. Surely it cannot satisfy your selves: For I pray you to consider, 1. What are those *Sins* you now complain of? They must be more than *common Sins*, that should defeat so many *express* and *solemn Prophecies*. And by your Interpretation of *Isaiab liii.* (before spoke to) you pretend to be *Righteous* and *Holy* to a *superlative Degree*.

But what are those *Sins* that should prevent the Coming of your *Messiah*? Are they greater than those of which you were formerly

ly guilty in the Days of *Moses*? (d) And from that time to the *Captivity*, (*2 Kings* xvii. 7 to 24) in the *Captivity*, and after, (*Ezra* ix. *Neb.* ix. *Ezek.* xvi. *Dan.* ix. *Zech.* vii. and the whole *Prophecy* of *Malachi.*) No, you are not now so guilty of these *Idolatries* and vile *Abominations*; you have greatly *reform'd* your selves from these: And (excepting only your rejecting of your *Messiah*, and standing out still against him) you have not now, nor have had since his Coming, more *Sins* to answer for, or more notorious, than other Men. So that this, of your supposing the Coming of the *Messiah* to be delay'd for your *Sins*, seems only to be an Excuse, because you can find no other.

2. The Coming of the *Messiah* is promis'd as a *Remedy* for *Sin.* (e) *In that day there shall be a Fountain opened to the House of David, and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, for Sin and for Uncleaness.* And what is before quoted, *Dan.* ix. 24. expresses the Design of his Coming to be, *To make an end of Sins, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity.* So that our *Sins* are so far from being a Reason for the *deferring* of his Coming; that they are rather an Argument for the *hastening* of it. The Prophet *Jeremy* speaking of the Coming of the *Messiah*, and the Condition of the *Jews* at that time, re-
cites

(d) read *Dent.* ix.

(e) *Zech.* xiii. 1.

cites their most horrible *Wickedness*, (f) and of *Judab* worse than *Israel*, and promises the New Covenant of the *Messiah*, as a *Redemption* to the *Penitent*; when God would give them *Pastors* (g) according to his own Heart, which shou'd feed them with *Knowledge and Understanding*. And to shew that this was not the renewing or restoring of the *Legal Dispensation*; but the leaving it behind, for one more excellent, it is added; (h) *In those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done any more.* And this is the time of the great *Wickedness* of *Israel*. And this is according to the *Tradition* which your Rabbi *Judab* tells in *Masoreta*, under the Title *de Synedrio, c. Helec*. That at the time of the Coming of the *Son of David*, the *Temple* should be a *Den of Thieves*, or *Unclean Persons*. And that this should be a *Time of great Dissoluteness* is likewise deliver'd in your *Talmud, tit. de Synedrio, & de Ponderibus, &c.* and by several of your *Rabbies*. So that this *Excuse* of your *Messiah* delaying his Coming, because of your *Sins*, is against your own *Expositions and Traditions*, as well as not only without any ground from, but contrary to

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(f) Jer. iii. (g) Ibid. 15. (h) Ibid. 16.

the Tenure of the Holy *Scriptures*; which I come next to shew yet more expressly.

3. The *Promises* of the Coming of the *Messiah*, are not only *positive*, and without any *Condition*: But the Case is expressly put of the *Sins* of *David* or of his *Posterity*; and there *God* declares (*i*), that tho' he will *punish* those *Sins*; yet that because of them, he would not *break* or *alter* the *Promise* (*k*) he had given, concerning the Coming of the *Messiah*.

4. But I have another Answer yet to give, and I beseech you seriously to consider of it: That is, whether it wou'd not be as great a Punishment to your *Sins*, if *God* has *blinded* your *Eyes*, that you shou'd not know your *Messiah*, when he came; and a much greater Punishment than if his Coming had been *delay'd*? And now consider, whether this be not the Case. It has been plainly prophesy'd (*l*) that your *Builders* would reject the chief *Corner-stone*. That he should be (*m*) *for a Stone of stumbling, and for a Rock of Offence to both the Houses of Israel, for a Gin, and for a Snare to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem*: And that *many among them should stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken* — (*n*) *Stay your selves and wonder,*

(i) 2 *Sam.* vii. 14, 15, 16.

(j) *Ibid.* cxviii. 22.

(k) *Ibid.* xxix. 9, 10, 11.

(l) *Psal.* lxxxix. 30, 33, to

(m) *Isaiah* viii. 14, 15.

wonder, cry ye out, and cry: *They are drunken, but not with Wine; they stagger, but not with strong Drink: For the Lord hath poured out upon you the Spirit of deep Sleep, and hath closed your Eyes: The Prophets, and your Rulers the Seers hath he covered; and the Vision of all is become unto you, as the Words of a Book that is sealed.* Is not this literally your Case? Are not your *Prophets* now to you, as a *Book sealed up*? Do you understand by them, when you are to expect your *Messiah*? or what are the *Signs* of his Coming? No, they are all long since past; and you are left in the *dark*, in *endless* and *groundless Expectation*.

And in this Method, there is no *breach* of God's *Promises*, and yet his *Judgments* have their full scope, and there is still room and hopes of his *Mercy*. When his time comes to *open* your *Eyes*, then will you return to him, and he will turn to you. But even unto this Day, when *Moses* is read the *Veil* covers his *Face* from you, *i. e.* the true *Import*, and full *End* of the *Law*; which *Veil* is done away in *Christ*. For *Christ* is the *End* of the *Law* for *Righteousness* to every one that *believeth*.

5. To avoid all the Absurdities of this Pretence of yours, some of you have set up another Notion, *viz.* That the *Messiah* did come at the *Time* foretold by the *Prophets*, and has been in the World ever since, and is still; but, for your Sins, *conceals* himself among

the *Lazers* or *Lepers*, that sit at the *Gates of Rome*, or elsewhere; others say * that he is in *Paradise*, but there *fetter'd* in a *Woman's Hair*. This we must suppose is by way of allusion to *Sampson* and *Delilah*. Some of the *Rabbies* put a *mystical* Sense upon this; meaning by the *Woman's Hair*, in which the *Messiah* is tied, your *evil Concupiscence*, which *retards* his *Coming*.

How horribly *absurd* and *ridiculous* is this? These sort of strain'd Excuses were enough to *convert* any Men of Reason amongst you. Besides that they are *contradictory*, which shews one must be *false*. For the former Pretence overthrows this; and this, if true, destroys that. But what *Foundation* have you for this?

What *Prophecies* have you for such a *State* of the *Messiah*?

What, was the *End* of his *Coming* to keep himself *conceal'd* for 1600 Years? And all that time to undergo so *miserable* and *wretched* a *Life*, as you would have him?

How was his *Coming* to be a *Light* to the *Gentiles* so often *prophecy'd* of, if the *Gentiles* had not heard of him from that time to this?

If he has undergone the state of a *Leper* and a *Beggar* now for above 1700 Years; How do you object the *Afflictions* and *low Estate*

Estate of Jesus for 33 Years, as inconsistent with the glorious State of the Messiah.

But if he be come, and you know him not; and that this, you think, will solve all those *Prophecies* concerning the *Time* of his *Coming*: Behold, your own *Conjecture* truly fulfill'd. He is *come*, and you have not *known* him; while the *Gentiles* have been *convinc'd* by his *Miracles*, and *submitted* to him, even to the *uttermost* parts of the *Earth*, as was expressly *prophecy'd* of Him.

Again, if you did not *know* him, what hinders but that you might likewise *persecute* him? And why should this seem a thing so impossible to you? Have ye not done the same to almost all of your own *Prophets*? You stoned *Zechariah* (o) in the *Court of the House of the Lord*: You persecuted *Jeremiah* (p), till the *Day* that *Jerusalem* was taken; and the *Hands* of your *Priests* and your *Prophets* were chief in the *Pursuit* of his *Blood*, and after them the *Cry of all the People*; as it was in your *Persecution* of your *Messiah*. How often did you rebel against *Moses*, against *David*, against *Solomon*, against all your *Prophets*? How do all they complain against you? (q) *Moreover all the Chief of the Priests, and the People, transgressed very much, after all the*

E 3

Abo-

(o) 2 Chron. xxiv. 21. (p) Jer. xxvi. 8, 9. (q) Chron xxxvi. 14, 15, 16.

Abominations of the Heathen; and polluted the House of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerufalem: And the Lord God of their Fathers sent to them by his Messengers — But they mocked the Messengers of God and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets, until the Wrath of the Lord arose against his People, till there was no Remedy. And now it has risen a hundred fold more, since your despising and misusing of your Messiah. And your not knowing your Messiah was a just Judgment upon you for your rejecting and persecuting all your former Prophets. Elijab (r) complain'd that you had slain them all, every one of the Prophets, but himself alone; and he was forc'd to fly for his Life, and was miraculously preserv'd. In the solemn Confession (s) of the Priests and the Levites, and the Covenant which they and the Princes seal'd; they confess that they slew the Prophets who testify'd against them, to turn them to the Lord. This Branch was never forgot in all their Confession, for it was notorious; (t) We have not hearkned unto thy Servants the Prophets, which spake in thy Name, to our Kings, our Princes, and our Fathers, and to all the People of the Land. Why then shou'd it be thought a thing impossible with you, that you should not hearken unto the last Prophet, the Messiah, who refus'd to hearken to any

(r) 1 Kings xix. 10. (s) Neh. ix. 26. (t) Dan. ix. 6.

any before Him? Read all your *Provocations* recorded *Pſalm* cvi. and then your present *Obſtinacy* will not appear ſo ſtrange to you, or ſo totally diſproportionable to your former *Demeanour*. It is ſaid, *ver.* 7. *Our Fathers underſtood not thy Wonders in Egypt.* Then it is poſſible that you might not *underſtand* the *Wonders* of your *Meſſiab*.

Your *Fore-fathers* kill'd the *Prophets*; and your *Fathers* built their *Sepulchres*: And you ſay, (u) *If we had been in the Days of our Fathers, we would not have been Partakers with them in the Blood of the Prophets: Wherefore ye be Witneſſes unto your ſelves, that ye are the Children of them who kill'd the Prophets.* And how have you fill'd up the *Meaſures* of your *Fathers*! As our *Meſſiab* told you before-hand that you wou'd do. That he wou'd ſend you *Prophets* and *Apoſtles*: And that you wou'd ſlay and *perſecute* them: *That the Blood of all the Prophets, which was ſhed from the Foundation of the World might be requir'd of your Generation.* And how *ſeverely* has it been requir'd? Believe, in this, *our Meſſiab* to have been a *True Prophet*; and that this laſt *Sin* of your *Crucifying* Him, and *Perſecuting* His *Apoſtles* and *Meffengers* whom He ſent unto you, has been greater, as it has been more grievouſly *puniſh'd*, than all your former *Pro-*

E 4

vocations:

(u) *Mat.* xxiii. 29, 30, 31, 32.

vocations: Of which that you may be more sensible (for it is a material Consideration) I invite you, as the last thing I shall say upon this Head, to make the Comparison betwixt your former *Captivities* and *Sufferings*, and that much more heavy Hand of God which has lain upon you since your *Crucifying* of your *Messiah*.

6. In the Book of *Judges* (x) you are told of the several *Captivities* into which you were sold for your repeated *Idolatries*: First, into the Hand of the King of *Mesopotamia*, for *Eight* Years: Then, Secondly, after *Forty* Years Deliverance, unto the King of *Moab*, for *Eighteen* Years. Thirdly, unto *Jabin*, King of *Canaan*, for *Twenty* Years. Fourthly, into the Hand of *Midian*, for *Seven* Years. Fifthly, of the *Philistines* and *Ammonites*, for *Eighteen* Years. Sixthly, of the *Philistines* for *Forty* Years. The Seventh was the great and longest *Captivity* of *Seventy* Years in *Babylon*. All these for your *Idolatry*. But, after this, you were cur'd of your *Idolatry*; and to this Day have kept your selves in the greatest *Abhorrence* of it. And yet now, since your rejecting of *our Messiah*, and saying, *Let his Blood be upon us and our Children*, you have undergone not a bare *Captivity*, as in *Babylon*, where you were all together, and *Prophets* sent amongst you to *comfort* you, and assure you

(x) *Judges* iii. 8, 13, 14. v. 4. vi. 1. x. 8. xiii. 1.

you of a *Restoration*, and that in *Seventy Years*; but a *Dispersion* over the Face of the whole Earth; without a *King*, without any *Prophet*, as a People *forsaken* of God; and without a *Temple* or *Sacrifice*: And that not only for 70 or 700, but now almost 1700 Years.

And if this heavy *Judgment* be come upon you, for your not *understanding* the *Promises* of God; and thereby hardening your selves against the clear Proofs which your *Messiah* brought of his *Mission*; then is there no Appearance of your being *Deliver'd*, till you shall repent of this greater *Sin*, and more grievously *punish'd* than your *Idolatries*; to *Reject* and *Crucify* your *Messiah*.

The Ingenious and Learned *Jew* * before-mention'd, answers to this, That the *Captivity* of the *Ten Tribes*; has been longer than that of the *Two Tribes*: And it cannot be said, that the *Captivity* or *Dispersion* of the *Ten Tribes* was for the rejecting of their *Messiah*. And therefore, that it cannot be concluded, that the *lesser* Punishment of the *Two Tribes* was for a more *heinous* Sin (*viz.* of *Crucifying* their *Messiah*) than that *Sin* (*viz.* of *Idolatry*) for which, principally, the *Ten Tribes* were deliver'd to *Captivity*.

Ans. Tho' the *Ten Tribes* were sent into *Captivity* about 120 Years before the *Two Tribes*,

* *Lind.* p. 99.

Tribes, yet their *Captivity* has not been so long. For as the Temporal Punishment of any *Man* ends with his *Death*; so the Punishment of a *Nation*, as a *Nation* ceases, when that *Nation* has lost its *Name*, and is scatter'd or incorporated into other *Nations*. Particular *Persons* who have descended of that *Nation* may suffer; but the *Nation* is no more, and so cannot be said to suffer when it is extinct. As when a *Regiment* is broke, it is no more a *Regiment*, tho' the *Soldiers* are incorporated into other *Regiments*. Thus in *Families*, a *Family* is said to be extinct when the *Name* is lost, and there are none left to support it; tho' all the particular *Persons* of that *Family* may live under other *Names*, and in other *Families*. And thus it is, that the *Family* of the *Ten Tribes* of *Israel* are long since lost in the World. All the *Jews* now known being of the *Family* of *Judab*, as distinct from *Israel*. But the *Family* of *Judab*, consisting of the *Tribes* of *Judab* and *Benjamin*, with the *Levites*, are still preserv'd to suffer, a visible *Example* of God's just Judgment and *Indignation* against them. The very *Names* of all the other *Tribes* of *Israel* being so far lost, as that not one of them is now known, or any *Jew* does so much as pretend to be of any of those *Tribes*.

Tho' it is very probable that many of the *Ten Tribes* are incorporated (albeit they may not know it) into the *Two* remaining *Tribes*; yet all go under the *Name* of the *Two Tribes*:
And

And therefore the *Two Tribes* are they *only* who are said to *suffer*; as they *only* (and such of the *Ten Tribes* as were then incorporated with them) were concern'd in the *Rejection* and *Crucifying* of their *Messiah*. (y)

But as the Punishment of the *Two Tribes* has been so many *Hundred Years* continu'd longer than that of the *Ten Tribes*, for this their greater Sin of *Crucifying* their *Messiah*; so there was a plain and visible Reason for the at first greater Punishment of the *Ten Tribes*.

1. They *rebell'd* from under the House of *David*. 2. They fell into *Schism* against the House of *Aaron*, and set up new *Priests* of their own. 3. As a Consequence of both these, they set up a *Falſe Worſhip*, in the *Caves* of *Dan* and *Bethel*; and return'd not from their *Idolatry*, their *Schism*, and *Rebellion*, till their *Extirpation*.

And we may see a very legible Hand of *God* upon them, in great *Judgments*, all along from their *Revolt*.

Judab had many bad *Kings*, but some eminently *Good*.

Israel had a Succession only of Nineteen *Kings* from their *Defection*, among whom there was not one that was *Good*.

And they were carry'd away *Captive* 120 Years before the *Captivity* of *Judab*.

But

(y) *Lam.* iv. 6.

But then, the *Captivity* of *Judab* having been continu'd so much *longer* than theirs (as before has been said) swells up the *Punishment* of *Judab* now to exceed theirs, as their *Sin* in *Crucifying* their *Messiah* has far exceed'd all the *Sins* of the *House of Israel*.

Let me add to this, the many and miserable *Massacres* and *Destructions* of the *Two Tribes* since *our Saviour*, under the several *False Messiahs* whom they set up; in one of which they *suffer'd* more than in either of the *Destructions* of *Jerusalem*, by the *Chaldeans*, or the *Romans*, as before has been shewn, from their own *Confessions*.

Now let us consider, that at the *Day of Judgment* there is no *Representation* of *Nations*; but every *Man* suffers for his own *Sin*. *National Judgments* are only in *this World*.

And hence it is observable, that no *Wicked Nation* has ever yet escap'd a *National Judgment* in *this World*. Tho' *God* may bear long with them; yet, if they do not *repent*, by a *National Sorrow* and *Amendments*, *Judgment* overtakes them, even *here*. For no where *else* are there any *National*, either *Mercies* or *Judgments*.

And as all *Nations* have been *Wicked* in their several *Degrees*; so have they every one been severally *punish'd*, according to their *Demerits*, even before the *Sons of Men*.

But there are no *Judgments* that have befallen any *Nation* so legible as what have been
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sent upon your *Nation*: particularly upon the *Two Tribes*. No *Nation*, since the *Earth* began, has been kept under so long a *Captivity* and *Dispersion*; so wonderfully preserv'd! and so remarkably punish'd! Preserv'd for Punishment! And, when *God's Time* shall come, for a glorious *Restoration*, in the Acknowledgment of your only True and Divine *Messiah*! O that this were the Time!

But the learned *Jew* * has another *Answer*, viz. That the *Jews* have not been free from *Idolatry* since their Return from the *Captivity* of *Babylon*, nor are at this Day: And therefore that the Comparison must fail which we draw betwixt the Punishments that have come upon them for their former *Idolatries*, and this 1600 Years *Dispersion*, after they had forsaken their *Idolatry*; which, he says, they have not yet forsaken. He says, † that they have it in the utmost Abomination, and avoid it wherever they can: But that for *Fear*, or other base Motives, very many of them have turn'd *Mahometans*, in all the Dominions of the *Turk*, in *Africa*, in *Asia*, in *Persia*, and *Arabia*. But tho' this be an *Apostasie*, and forsaking of their *Law*, yet he does not charge it as *Idolatry*, because the *Mahometans* do not worship *God* by *Images*. But then he returns upon the *Christians*, and says, That since the *Idolatry* of the *Church*
of

* *Limbor.* p. 101. n. iv. † *Ibid.* p. 102.

of Rome, Multitudes of the *Jews* have, to avoid *Persecution*, embrac'd the *Popish Idolatry* in divers Countries: And even in our own Times (says he) we have fresh Experiences of it. He names the whole *Neapolitan Synagogue* of *Barcelona*, and all the others in *Catalonia*, who turn'd to the Church of Rome. And in *Spain* and *Portugal* they have turn'd so fast, that he says, *Ex Judæis Apostatis fere omnes, & Principes, Nobiles, & Populares, originem ducunt. Quod in iis Regionibus adeo notum, ut nemo dubitaverit, i. e. That almost all of them, Princes, Nobles, and Commons, are sprung from Apostate Jews: Which is so well known in those Countries, as that none doubt of it: Notwithstanding (as he says) for the obtaining of Great Places and Honours, especially Ecclesiastical, they are oblig'd to renounce Judaism, and to bring Certificates that they are not descended of the Jews. Which (as we may easily believe him) are attainable at that, as well as other Courts, where Money is not wanting.* This, indeed, does plainly shew the Suspicion, at least, that they are descended of the *Jewish Race*. He says moreover, that many of their *Clergy, Bishops*, and even of the *Inquisitors* themselves, are *Jews* in their Hearts; and dissemble *Christianity* for the avoiding of *Persecution*, and to gain *Honours* and *Preferments*; of whom (he says) some do *repent* and *fly*, as they can: And that there are in *Spain* both *Bishops*, and the *Gravest*

est of their Monks, whose Parents, Brothers, and Sisters, do fly into this Country (that is, into *Holland*) that they may freely profess *Judaism*. That many of the Fryars, Augustines, Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, have there, and in several other Countries, renounc'd their Idolatry, i. e. of the Church of Rome. This, I suppose, he wou'd make an Argument of their returning back to *Judaism*. But he does not deny that there are many *Christian* Countries, who have thrown off the Idolatry of the Church of Rome, and yet do not *Judaize*. But now, to consider all this whole Excuse:

1. If many *Jews*, to avoid *Persecution*, submit to *Idolatrous* Practices; as this Learned *Jew* confesses, that he himself had often bow'd the Knee to *Baal*, for which he begs *God's* Pardon: Yet this is still but the Defection of particular *Persons*; and cannot be compar'd to those *National* Idolatries, wherein their *Kings*, and *Priests*, and *People* did concur, of their own *Choice*, without any *Force* or *Compulsion*; as were their many *Idolatries* before the *Captivity* of *Babylon*, and none the like since. Their *Principles* were then corrupted; but not since: For they confess that they have *Idolatry* in the greatest *Abhorrence*, tho' many of them cannot resist unto *Martyrdom*.

2. But this Learned *Jew* has afforded us a very material Consideration; for if all *Spain* and *Portugal*, or the greatest part of them,
and

and likewise many in other Countries, are descended of the *Stock* of the *Jews*, this may let us into conjecture what is become of the *Ten Tribes*. It is certain, they are dispers'd among other Nations: And tho' they have lost their *Name*, and consequently their *Nation*, yet their *Posterity* must remain somewhere, under other *Denominations*. It is reasonable to believe that many of them did return to *Judæa*, after the *Two Tribes* were restor'd to their *Country*, and *Jerusalem* and their *Temple* were built again. And, consequently, are mix'd among them to this Day. It will not be so easy, without this, to reconcile the vast *Numbers* of the *Jews* that were destroy'd in the Siege of *Jerusalem*; under their several *False Messiahs*; and that are now *dispers'd* all over the World. From whence I make these Inferences:

1. That many of the *Ten Tribes* might be involv'd in the *Guilt* of *Crucifying* their *Messiah*, and standing out against Him unto this Day, tho' all going then under the Name of *Judab*, or the *Two Tribes*: And, consequently, sharing with them in the *Punishment*.

2. If the *Spaniards*, *Portuguese*, and other *Christians*, or of the Race of the *Jews*, they must be of the *Ten Tribes*; so far, at least, as they were mix'd with the *Two Tribes*. And they turn'd more into other *Nations* than the *Two Tribes*: Because they have lost their *Name* and *Nation*, which only survives in
the

the *Two Tribes*. Therefore the *Ten Tribes* may be said to be more converted to *Christianity* than the *Two Tribes*; who only, by *Name*, of all the *Tribes*, persist in their *Infidelity* against *Christ* our *Lord*.

This will make the *Punishment* of the *Ten Tribes*, for their *Idolatry*, *Schism*, and *Rebellion*, much less than that of the *Two Tribes*, for the *Rejecting* and *Crucifying* of their *Messiah*; and this *Sin* of the *Two Tribes* to be much greater than that of their own former *Idolatries*, as the *Punishment* of it has been many ways more remarkably transcendent. Which, I pray *God*, you may lay to heart as you ought.

3. (x) Many *Myriads* of the *Jews*, as well *Priests* as others, were converted to *Christianity*, in the beginning of the *Gospel*, upon Conviction of what they themselves had *seen* and *heard*: About 3000 at one Sermon; 5000 at another; (a) *Multitudes both of Men and Women*. These, with their *Religion*, lost (in time) their *Nation*, or the *Name* of *Jews*, having embrac'd that of *Christians* in the stead of it. And their *Posterity* are *Christians*, tho' of the *Jewish* Race.

Now, by reasonable Computation, there are more of these *Christian Jews* at this Day in the World, than of all that are known by the *Name* of *Jews*.

F

For

(a) *Act. xxi. 20. xxvii. 7. Gal. i. 23. ii. 4. v. 14.*

For the *Jews* were almost all cut off, and utterly extinct, in the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*: And more afterwards by *Adrian*, for the adhering to their *False Messiah Barcofbas*. And all that now go by the Name of *Jews* are sprung from the small Remainders that were left out of these *Destructions*, like *Brands* pluck'd out of the *Fire*.

Whereas the *Christian Jews* escap'd all these, and all that came upon the other *Jews*, for their several *False Messiahs* before-mention'd. And which is wonderfully observable, the *Christian Jews* that were in *Jerusalem* when it was *besieg'd*, were sav'd by a *miraculous Providence*: The *Siege* being unaccountably *rais'd* for a short time, till the *Christian Jews*, taking hold of that *Warning* of our *Saviour*, *Matth. xxiv. 16.* fled to *Pella*, a *City* in the *Mountains*; and thereby escaped that *dreadful Overtbrow*, which swept away the *Unbelieving Jews* that waited their *Fate* in *Jerusalem*. By this it appears, that the *Stock* of the *Christian Jews* has increas'd and spread much farther than that of the *Infidel Jews*; whose *Tree* was twice cut down by *Titus* and *Adrian* even to the *Ground*, and left to spring again out of the old *Root*; besides the many great *Loppings* afterwards, under several others of their *False Messiahs*. Whereas the *Believing Jews* have *increas'd* and *multiplied* without any of these *Interruptions*; and spread far and wide

wide thro' the World. From whence we must conclude, that much the greatest Number of the *Jews* are converted, and have embrac'd the *Christian* Faith; and by this means are deliver'd from that *Servitude* and *Dispersion*, which now lies only, as a *Curse*, upon those *Infidel Jews* who continue in their *Obstinacy* against the *Messiah*.

Let me here take notice of another Passage in the Place before-quoted of *Limborch*, where that learned *Jew*, speaking of the Defection of so many of the *Jews* to *Idolatry*, to *Mabometism*, &c. according to the Countries where they live, wishes the *Jews* were as good as this Argument of the *Christians* would suppose them, *viz.* That they had reform'd from their *Idolatry* since their Return from the *Captivity* of *Babylon*, and were in other respects better than before, excepting that *Sin* of *Rejecting* their *Messiah*, and *Persisting* in it. Which this learned *Jew* will by no means allow; but, to avoid the Force of this Argument, he makes the *Jews* now more *wicked* than ever. Upon which occasion I wou'd mind you of your Exposition (before-mention'd) of the liii. of *Ijaiah*, which makes them most *holy* and *righteous*; (see p 69.) and that their *Dispersion* was for the *Conversion* of the *Gentiles* by them; whereas now you make them grow more and more *wicked*, and that they are *corrupted* every where with the *Ido-*

latries and Delusions of the Nations, instead of converting them.

Theodore Hackspan, in his Book before-quoted, p. 394. cites the Jewish Rabbies and Talmud making the Ancient Jews much better than the Modern. He quotes Jalkut upon the first of Isaiah, and upon these Words, that Righteousness lodged in Jerusalem. R. Juda, F. R. Simonis, says, That there was not a Man then to be found in Jerusalem, in whose Hands any Sin was to be found. But how was this? The daily Morning-Sacrifice did cleanse the Sins of the Night; and the daily Evening-Sacrifice, the Sins of each Day; so that none was to be found in Jerusalem upon whom there was any Sin. Thus he. But of the Jews, after the daily-Sacrifice did cease, it is said in the Talmud by Jochanan Massech Joma. cap. 1. That a Nail of the former Jews was better than the whole Body of the after Jews. Because the daily Sacrifice was wanting, by which the former Jews were cleansed.

See how vile the Modern Jews are here made, ever since the Destruction of the *Second Temple!* How vile this learned Jew here makes them! And this, that they might find an *Excuse* for the *Delay* of the *Messiah* thus long after the *Time* foretold by the *Prophets*.

But at another turn, when they apply what is said of the *Sufferings* of the *Messiah* in the liii. of *Isaiah*, to their own *present* suffering

ing State; then they are the *righteous Servants of the Lord*, and there is no Deceit in their Lips! Then do they apply to themselves all that *Righteousness*, which is there spoken of the *Messiah*. At one time, they are more vile than the *Heathen* among whom they are mix'd; at another time, they are *righteous* above all that are on the Earth, and by their *Righteousness* the *Gentiles* are to be converted.

These *contradictory* Pretences, set up severally as they are pinch'd, shew the *Desperateness* of their Cause. Therefore I will labour this Point no further, but proceed to another Topick.

VIII. It is strange that you will adhere so obstinately to the *Letter* of those *Promises* made to *Levi*, which yet you must acknowledge, are, (according to the *Letter*) and have been, long *broken*; and yet so easily get over the *Letter* of the *Promises* concerning the *Messiah*; which can never be *fulfill'd* but in the Person of *Jesus Christ*.

Especially considering that in that famous *Prophecy* of the *Messiah*, *Psal. cx.* it is expressly said, that he shou'd be a *Priest*, not of the Order of *Levi*, but of *Melchizedec*. Here was a new *Priesthood*: And a Change of the *Priesthood* does necessarily infer a Change also of the *Law*. In your Sense of the *Promises* to *Levi*, you make that *Promise* of the future *Priesthood* after another Order, to be a

Contradiction to the *Promises* made to *Levi*, but in our Sense, they both stand together, and the one *fulfils* and *compleats* the other. If you will admit no *Change* of the *Levitical* Priesthood, you must throw off the *Psalms* of *David*, as well as the *Gospel* of *Christ*. Then consider, that the *Promise* to the *Priesthood*, of which *David*, then *Prophecy'd*, was confirm'd by an *Oath*, that God would not alter his Purpose, *I have sworn and will not repent*. There was no *Oath* to the *Priesthood* of *Levi*. Again, the *Priesthood* of the *Messiah* was declared to be *eternal*. Thou art a *Priest for ever*. And the *Type* of this *Priesthood* in *Melchizedec*, was more noble than that in *Levi*: Because *Abraham* the Father of *Levi* and of all *Israel*, did pay an Acknowledgement to the *Priesthood* of *Melchizedec*, as superior to his own, in paying of *Tythes* to *Melchizedec*, instead of receiving *Tythes* from him; and being *blessed* by *Melchizedec*, as his Superior.

When the flowing in of the *Gentiles* to the *Church* is describ'd; it is written, (b) *I will take of them for Priests and for Levites, saith the Lord*; Or, if this were to be understood of the *Jews*, yet the *Covenant* with *Levi* wou'd be at an end, if the *Priesthood* were enlarg'd to let in those of other *Tribes*. And it is promis'd, (c) *ye shall be to me a Kingdom of*

(b) *Isaiab* lxvi. 21.(c) *Exod.* xix. 6.

of *Priests*. This could not be under the *Mosaical* Dispensation, but it is under the *Evangeli- cal*; where the *Priesthood*, which is design'd to serve the whole *Earth*, is not, it cannot be confin'd to one *Family*, or *Tribe*, or *Nation*: And so the whole *Kingdom* of *God*, which is the whole *World*, as they that are made capable of the *Covenant* of *Grace*; so also of the *Priesthood*.

And if the whole *Gentile* World were gather'd unto you, (as you expect) then surely one *Tribe* of *Levi* wou'd not be sufficient for *Priests* to them all. So that according to your own *Expectation*, there must be a *Change*. And yet,

IX. Your great *Objection* is, that *God* cannot *alter* any thing that he has once *ordain'd*. It is true, *God* is *immutable*, and cannot *change*; and what he *ordains*, must answer the *Ends* for which he has *ordain'd* it. He does not always tell us what those *Ends* are; and therefore we cannot always tell when they are accomplish'd. But when he pleases to make known to us the *Ends* for which he has ordain'd such things, what it is they tend to, and when they are to be accomplish'd; then when they are accomplish'd at the time he has nam'd, to think this any *Breach* of *Promise*, or *Alteration* in *God*, which is the highest *Proof* of his *Veracity* and *Unchangeableness*, is a great *Weakness* in our *Understandings*, and our great *Unhappiness*, when this betrays us to *oppose* and *fight against* the *Counsel* of *God*, and *forfeit*

our *share* in his glorious *Dispensations*, all ordain'd to bring us to *Bliss*.

1. This Objection of yours, which keeps you from *Christianity*, is that which has divided the *Samaritans* from you. They stick to the *Institutions* given to the *Fathers*, to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*; and think that what was after commanded to *Moses*, cannot alter what God had before appointed. Our *Fathers worshipp'd in this Mountain*, (said a *Woman of Samaria* (d) to our *Messiah*) and ye say that in *Jerusalem* is the place where Men ought to worship. Our Lord determin'd the Case on your side, against the *Samaritans*, and said that *Salvation is of the Jews*. But by the same Argument that you can defend your selves against the *Samaritans*, you must yield up the Cause to the *Christians*. For if God could alter his *Institutions* from what he gave to the *Fathers*, to what he commanded by *Moses*, why not from what he commanded by *Moses*, to what he instituted by *Christ*.

2. If you say, that the Argument will run on to all *Changes*, as from what he instituted by *Christ*, to what it is pretended he a-new reveal'd to *Mahomet*, and so on to the End of the World; and then nothing can be certain.

I answer, That *Mahomet* could not prove his pretended *Revelations* by those *Marks* as *Moses* and

(d) *John* iv. 20.

and *Christ* did; and they only, as shewn in the first Part of this Discourse. And we may safely venture all the *Impostors* in the World, to counterfeit these *Marks*, and to believe them, if they can.

But in the next place, *Christ* was foretold by *Moses*, *Deut.* xviii. 18. Yea and all *Prophets* that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these Days, in which our *Messiah* came into the World, and fulfill'd all that they had *prophecy'd* of him. So that the *Gospel* is a *Confirmation* and *Fulfilling* of the *Law*, and bears witness to it.

But tho' the *Alcoran* does acknowledge both the *Scriptures* of the *Old* and *New Testament*, and so far bears witness to them; yet it cannot shew that *Mahomet* was foretold either by *Moses* or *Christ*, or by any of the *Prophets*. Nay, *Christ* has told that he is the *last*, and none to come after him; and therefore gives us *Caution* to believe none such. So that the *Alcoran* is in direct opposition both to the *Law* and the *Gospel*.

If *Moses* had said that he himself was the *last* that God wou'd send, then cou'd not you expect any *Messiah* to come. But since *Moses* has told us of a *Prophet* (e) that God wou'd send after him, and commanded all to hear him; and threatens God's Judgments upon those who will not hearken to the Words of
God

(e) *Deut.* xviii. 19.

God which he shall tell them; What difficulty shou'd you make to hearken unto him, who has come with the same *Attestation* and *Seal of God* as *Moses* himself did?

3. If you say that you are forbidden, *Deut.* xiii. to trust even *Miracles* against what *Moses* commanded. That *Scripture* shall be consider'd by and by; and it will be shewn, That it extends only to the Worship of *false Gods*; and that they are not *true* but *seeming Miracles* that are there spoke of.

But your *Talmud*, (*tit. de Synedrio*) gives this as a standing *Rule*, That any *Command whatsoever, may without Scruple be transgress'd, by the Command of a Prophet*; that is, who works *Miracles* to attest his *Mission*.

This is to be understood of those *Commands*, which stand only upon *positive Precepts* of God's *Institution*; and have not a *moral*, which is an *indispensible* *Obligation*, in their own *Nature*.

And of this there are many *Examples* in *Scripture*, even where no *Miracles* were wrought to warrant them; but they gave place oft-times to *Cases of Necessity* and *publick good*.

How oft have the *Treasures* of the *Temple*, which were *hallow'd*, being *dedicated* to *God*, and the very *Gold* upon the *Doors* and *Pillars* of the *Temple*, been given to *Heathen* and *Idolatrous Kings* (when other *Treasure* there was none) to procure *Peace* to the
Kingdom

Kingdom upon great Emergencies? And no *Censure* past upon this.

David, in a Case of *Necessity*, eat of the *Hallow'd Bread* (*f*), and those who were with him, of which it was not lawful for any but the *Priests* to eat; and was blameless.

The Command of the *Sabbath* was transgress'd, as oft as the *Eighth-Day* for the *Circumcision* of a *Child* fell upon that Day.

Joshua, and all the *Men of War* (*g*), compass'd *Jericho* on the *Sabbath-Day*.

Circumcision (*h*) (so positively commanded) was omitted 40 Years in the *Wilderness*.

Samuel (*i*) sacrific'd at *Mizpeh*, and built an *Altar* at *Ramah*, neither of which was the Place that God had appointed: Which was contrary to the general Command, *Deut.* xii. 13, 14. And, besides, *Samuel* was no *Levite*; and therefore it was *Death* for him to offer *Sacrifice*, by *Numb.* xviii. 7.

The same did *Elijah* (*k*), (who was not a *Levite*) and had God's Approbation by a great *Miracle* then shewn.

The Place of which *Moses* spoke, *Deut.* xii. 5, 6. that God wou'd choose to put his Name there, was establish'd at *Shiloh*, which bore the Name of the *Messiah*; and was call'd *The Tabernacle which God had pitch'd among Men*, *Psalms* lxxviii. 60. It remain'd there from

(*f*) 1 *Sam.* xxi. (*g*) *Josh.* vi. (*h*) *Ibid.* vi. 5 (*i*) 1 *Sam.* vii. 7, 17. (*k*) 1 *Kings* xviii. 38

from the Days of *Joshua* to *Samuel*, about 450 Years. And thither they brought their *Tythes, Sacrifices, &c.* and came up *Yearly* to *worship*, as *Moses* had commanded, to the *House of the Lord*, which was *there*, (l).

Yet this was alter'd, by the Authority of *David* and *Solomon*, who set it up at *Jerusalem*: And moreover, made several *Changes* in the Courses of the *Priests* and the *Levites*, and other Parts of the *Worship* of *God*, which *Moses* had commanded, particularly as to the *Time* of the *Levites* Service (m), which, by the Commandment of *Moses*, was from the Age of 30 to 50. But this, by the last Words of *David* (n), was alter'd, and they were to begin their Service at the Age of 20. And the Reason is there given, because the *Manner* of their Service was chang'd, not being so laborious, as when they were to carry the *Tabernacle* upon their *Shoulders*. The Practice of which ceas'd, when the *House of the Lord* was built at *Shiloh*, after the Conquest of *Canaan*, for then the *Ark* (o) was fix'd; and all the Tribes repair'd to it at *Shiloh*, and it was not carry'd about with them from place to place as formerly. Yet this Alteration of the Age of the *Levites* Service was not made till the time of *David*, but ser'y'd ever after. *Ezra* iii. 8.

And

(l) 1 Sam. i. 3. 7. (m) Numb. iv. 3. 23. (n) 1 Chron. xxiii. 27. (o) *Joshua* xviii. 1. 1 Sam. i. 7. iv. 3.

And there was no *Prophecy* going before to warrant these *Changes*, nor had *Moses* spoke any thing of them.

But he spoke expressly of the *Messiah*, and imply'd *Changes* to be made by him. For he gives strict Charge (p) to *hearken to what he should command*; and threatens God's *Judgments* to those who should refuse. Now what occasion was there for this, if he had no more in Commission than *Moses* had, and were to command nothing *more or less* than *Moses* had done? If he were only to *re-inforce* what *Moses* commanded; that was the Business of *lesser Prophets*, and wou'd make him *less than Moses*; which I suppose none of you will say.

But beside *Moses*, we have the joint Voice of all the *Prophets*, which do in express Terms declare, that the *Messiah* would make great *Changes* from what *Moses* commanded, and introduce a much more glorious State into the *Church*; which *Isaiab* expresses (q) by *New Heavens* and a *New Earth*; and tells, that at that time, God wou'd throw off the *Jews*, and make others his *Chosen*; *And ye* (says God to your Nation) *shall leave your Name for a Curse to my Chosen; for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his Servants by another Name.* And, (r) *In those days, saith the Lord,*

(p) *Deut.* xviii. 15, 18, 19. (q) *Isaiab* lxxv. 17. lxxvi. 22. lxxv. 17. (r) *Jer.* iii. 16.

Lord, they shall say no more, the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done any more. (s) Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah; not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers, in the Day that I took them by the Hand to bring them out of the Land of Egypt. (t)

And it is told, that the *Messiah* should be a *Priest*, but not of the Order of *Levi*, as before shewn p. 69. And, as your *Priesthood*, so it is said, that God would reject and put an end to your *Sacrifices*, and bring in their place the great and *only* expiatory *Sacrifice* of the *Messiah*. (u) *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; Burnt-offering and Sin-offering hast thou not required: What then? A Body hast thou prepared me (says the Messiah) and lo I come, to do thy Will, O God: In the Volume of the Book it is so written of me.*

Thus it is written of the *Messiah*, and of the *Changes* which he was to introduce: yet you will have none of them, because they are *Changes*; tho' you make no scruple of the *Changes*.

(s) Jer. xxxi. 31, 32.
Covenant.

(t) See Ezek. xvi. 61. Not by thy
(u) Psal. xl. 6, 7.

Changes by David, Solomon, and others, of which there were no Prophecies: nor did they attest their Mission, as our Messiah has done, by such a multitude of Miracles, and of such a wonderful Nature, as never before were shewn upon the Earth.

Nay, you your selves have made *Alterations*, without the Command of any *Prophet* that you can produce, or of any *Miracles* to warrant you. For you are commanded (x) not to *add* to what *Moses* commanded, as well as not to *diminish*. Yet how many *Traditions* of your *Elders* do you observe, that were never commanded by *Moses*? as the *washing* of *Pots* and *Cups* (y), &c. If that were all; for you have *Traditions* quite *contrary* to the *Laws of God*, and which render them of none effect. *Moses* said, *Honour* (that is, support) *your Father and Mother*: But ye say, if a Man has made a voluntary *Corban*, or Gift of what he has, tho' in Reversion, to the *Temple*, or other use of your *Law*; he is free from that part of the fifth Command, which you have thus enervated by your *Tradition*. And many other such like things do ye. Nay, you have laid an eternal Fund of *Traditions* to vie with the *Written Law*: These you suppose deliver'd to *Moses*, and by him *orally* convey'd to your *Elders*, of which they

(x) *Dent.* iv. 2. v. 32. xii. 32.

Prov. xxx. 6.

(y) *Jesus* 1. 7.

they have the Keeping, and their *Stock* is *inexhaustible*. And these you make of equal Authority with the *written Law*.

What *Prophet* or *Miracle* had you for changing of the *Posture* in eating the *Passover*, so positively commanded, *Exod. xii. 11*? Yet after you were at Rest in *Canaan*, you made your own Construction upon the *Equity* of the Command, and releas'd your selves from the Trouble of that *manner* of eating it.

You likewise added a *Post-Cœnium* to it, which you observ'd with as much strictness as the *Passover* it self.

You added *Baptism* to *Circumcision*. And several other things which were not commanded in your *Law*.

Yet you reject your *Messiah*, because you say, He made *Alterations* in the *Ordinances* which *Moses* deliver'd.

X. From what has been said, I hope it will not be a difficult *Task* to remove from you all *Scruple* as to that *Master Objection*, which you most insist upon, grounded upon the *xiii. of Deut. ver. 1, 2, 3.* where it is said, *If there arise among you a Prophet, or a Dreamer of Dreams, and giveth thee a Sign or a Wonder, and the Sign or the Wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them: Thou shalt not hearken unto the Words of that Prophet, or that Dreamer of Dreams;*
for

for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your Heart and with all your Soul. From hence you wou'd infer, that you are not to believe our *Messiah*, let his *Miracles* be never so great, because he seeks to turn you after other Gods.

Anfw. 1. The *Sign* or *Wonder* here mention'd, is not any true and real *Miracle*; but only telling of something which might afterwards come to pass. And this has happen'd, and may happen many times by *chance*, which yet may seem a *Wonder* to the People, and it is only against these *false* and *seeming Miracles* that God here guards his People; which he sometimes permits for the *trial* of their *Faith*. Therefore observe, the Word *Miracle* is not us'd here; only a *Sign*, a *Wonder*, or a *Dream*.

For none can work a true and real *Miracle*, but God. And it cannot without the highest *Blasphemy* be suppos'd, that God would work a *Miracle*, on purpose to set his *Seal* to a *Lie*. If this were possible, it would destroy all *Revelation*; For how cou'd we know when it were true or false? Therefore where there can be no doubt as to the *Miracle*, there can be no scruple as to the *Revelation*, which that is brought to attest.

Now the *Miracles* of our *Jesus* were such, as that there can be no manner of *doubt* concerning them. The most harden'd *Deist* upon the Face of the Earth, if he allow'd the

Matters of Faët, would grant them to be *true* and *real Miracles*. And you must either allow them to be such, or throw off all those of *Moses*, which were neither so *great*, nor so *many*.

This is the first Answer I give, which concerns the *Nature* of the *Sign* or *Wonder* that is spoke of *Deut. xiii*. The next *Answer* is concerning that *Thing* for which such a *Sign*, or *Wonder*, or *Dream* is produc'd; and that is, *to go and serve other Gods*. And as to this, consider;

II. What are these *Gods* here spoke of? It is told, *ver. 7*. *Namely, the Gods of the Péeple which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the Earth, even unto the other end of the Earth*; That is, all the *Gods* of the *Heathen World*; and against all these our *Jesus* is as severe as your *Moses*, and confirms this very *Text*, and all that *Moses* commanded against them. They are call'd *Devils*, over and over again, *1 Cor. x. 20, 21*. And *Christianity*, wherever it has come, has rooted out all the *Pagan Idolatry*, more than ever the *Law* has done.

Obj. 1. If you say that our *Jesus* wou'd have Men to worship *himself*. 1. That is none of the *Gods* mention'd in this place of *Deuteronomy*; for you will not say that any of the *Heathen* did worship the *Messiah*. 2dly. You do not refuse *Worship* to the *Messiah*:
David

David call'd him *Lord*, and said of him (z), *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever* — (a) *And God, even thy God, hath anointed thee* — And says to the *King's Daughter* (that is, the Church) *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him.* And God calls him (b) his *Fellow* or *Associate*; and commands all the *Kings of the Earth* to *kiss* (that is, to worship) the *Son* (c) (for that was an Act of Worship.) And *David* speaks of him (d) (which can be apply'd to *Solomon*, no otherwise than as he was a *Type* of the *Messiah*) *They shall fear thee as long as the Sun and Moon endure, throughout all Generations* — (e) *He shall have Dominion from Sea to Sea, and unto the Ends of the Earth* — (f) *All Kings shall worship or fall down before him; all Nations shall serve him* — *Prayer shall be made ever unto him; or, He shall ever be adored* — *All the Nations of the Earth shall be blessed in him, and all the Heathen shall praise him; These are the very Epithets given to the Messiah* (g) (and can belong properly to no other) who is call'd the *Desire of all Nations*; and that in him all the Nati-

G 2

ons

(z) *Psal.* cx. 1. (a) *Ibid.* xlv. 6, 7, 11. (b) *Zech.* xiii. 7. *Psal.* ii. 12. (c) *Job* xxxi. 27. (d) *I Kings* xix. 18. (e) *Hof.* xiii. 2. (f) *Psal.* lxxii. 5, 8, 11, 15, 17. (g) *Hag.* xi. 17. *Ibid.* xi. 7. *Gen.* xii. 3. xviii. 18. xxii. 18. xlix. 10.

ous of the Earth should be blessed; and to him shall the Gathering of the Gentiles be: Which is to Christ our Jesus, but was not to Solomon, unless in a very low Sense, as he was greatly fam'd for his Wisdom, which made him much respected by many of the Heathen; but they had no Relation to him, or were gather'd unto him as their King or their Saviour, as they are now to our Jesus, whom Solomon did, but faintly, represent. And if you shou'd apply the Worship before-mention'd to Solomon, then surely, much more to the Messiah. So that the Worship of him is establish'd in your own Scriptures, and comes no way within the Prohibition of Deut. xiii. which respects only the Worship of the Heathen Deities. Let me add here what your Talmud (tit. de Synedrio) says, that Jesus is not the Name of any Idol, nor can be reckon'd such, when the Christians do refer the Honour they pay to him, to God the Creator of all. And (tit. Schebuoth and Sabboth) agrees with Rabbi Solomo, who upon Gen. xxii. 18. does acknowledge, that God might take upon him Human Nature, and thinks that he had done it, for a time. And the Chaldee Paraphrase (upon Hosea i. 7. and other places) calls the Messiah the Word of God, the same that our St. John calls him (John i. 1, &c.) And your Talmud upon Taanith, says from Isaiab xxv. 9. That at that time, God wou'd be pointed at and shewn even with the Finger.

The

The above-quoted *Psalms*, which speak of the *Worship* of the *Messiah*, are own'd to refer to the *Messiah*. The second *Psalms* by *David Kimchi*, *Abraham Esdra*, *R. Jonathan in Beresith rabba*, and that most learned Rabbi *Saadia*; who owns the same of *Psalms* cx. as the *Chaldee Paraphrase* does of *Psalms* xlv.

But there needs no Attestations, for these *Scriptures* are express'd in such a strain, as may indeed be accommodated, at an infinite Distance, to Transactions here below: But cannot be *Properly* apply'd, nor *Verify'd* of any but the *Messiah*. And some are such, as can, in no way, be adapted to any other. What other did *David* call his *Lord*? What other claims the *Worship* of all the *Kings* upon the Earth? Whose *Kingdom* but His, is without *End*? And extends to the *uttermost part of the Earth*? All which, in the second *Psalms*, is given to the *Son*, but was not given to *David*. Neither was it given to *David*, that his *Flesh* shou'd not see *Corruption*, as it is promis'd, *Psal.* xvi. 9, 10. but was verify'd of none that ever enter'd the *Grave*, except only of our *Messiah*.

Obj. 2. You urge our Doctrine of the Holy *Trinity*, as inferring Plurality of *Gods*: And so to be brought within the Prohibition, *Deut.* xiii. But you cannot say, that this is any of the *Gods* of the *Heathen*, who only are express'd in that Command: When we profess to worship none other but that *One* only *God*, who spoke to your *Fathers* in *Horeb*, out of

the midst of the *Fire*. And we detest all thoughts of any other *God*. Our great *Messiah* taught us this to be the *First of all the Commandments*, that the *Lord our God is one Lord* (b). And all *Expositions* of the Blessed *Trinity*, or *Inferences* from it, that do, in the least interfere with this, we condemn as *Impious* and *Heretical*.

But whether this *One most Simple and Un-Compounded Nature* of *God* may not be communicated to *Three Eternal Persons*, without either *Confusion* of the *Persons*, or *Dividing* of the *Substance*, does, in no way, interfere with the *Unity* of the *Nature*, because this very *Hypothesis* does suppose the *Unity* of the *Nature*, in the strictest Sense that is possible. And if we shou'd be under great difficulty (as how can it be otherwise) in explaining such an *Un-fathomable Mystery*, yet can it not infer *Poly-theism* upon us, while we are ready to part with all, rather than to admit of that.

You know, we bring many *Proofs* for this, out of your *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament* (some are nam'd hereafter) and you cannot infer from hence, that we do not *Own* these *Scriptures* (nay this is a *Proof*, that we do *Own* them) only that we do not *Understand* them right. And if you shou'd prove against us, that we do not rightly *Understand* (who does?)
the

(b) *Mark* xii. 29.

the *Divine Incomprehensible Nature*; while we contend, as earnestly as you, for the necessity of its *Unity*, you cannot charge us with *Poly-theism* for our mistake in other matters. And therefore this can never come under the Prohibition of *Deut. xiii.*

I say not this, that I wou'd wave entering with you upon this Subject: But there is not room for it in this short *Essay*. It wou'd require a Discourse by it self. All that I am, at present, concern'd in, is to shew you, that this can be no cause for your Rejecting of our *Messiah*. There are some call'd *Christians*, who say, that we have mistaken our *Messiah*, in this Point. But I wou'd be loth to clear you from the Objection by that method. Only thus much it shews you, that if we have mistaken the *Gospel*, so have we the *Law* too, as to the Doctrine of the Holy *Trinity*: And this can be no more an Argument that we set up *Poly-theism* against the *Law*, than against the *Gospel*, which as strongly asserts the *Unity* of *God* as the *Law*, and confirms all that the *Law* says of it. Therefore if you reject the *Gospel*, because we would infer a *Trinity* from hence; you must, upon the same account, reject the *Law* too. If our Inferences are not Just, the *Gospel* is cleared as well as the *Law*. And if our Arguments do hold, then the *Law* does infer a *Trinity* as well as the *Gospel*.

Nor is it we *Christians* alone that wou'd infer a *Trinity* from your *Law*, your own *Cabalists*

lists do distinguish *God* into three *Lights*; and some of them call them by the same Names, as the *Christians*, of the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Spirit*; and yet say, That this does not at all break the *Unity of God*. Your famous *Philo* expresses the same in many Places. Upon the *Sacrifices of Cain and Abel*, he says, That *God was accompany'd with His Two Supreme Virtues of Power and Goodness: And that God being one, did produce, out of His clear Mind, Three Operations, of which each is Un-measurable or Infinite; for that His Powers are Un-limitable*. And in his second Book of the *Husbandry of Neah*, he distinguishes these into τὸ ὄν, τὸ δεσποτικὸν τὴν ἰδέαν δυνάμιν. i. e. *Being, Power, and Goodness*. In his *Allegories*, he calls the *Word*, the *Name of God*, and the *Maker of the World*, or the great *Instrument of God*, whereby He made the *World*, the same as our *Gospel*, John i. 3. And in his Book before quoted of *Husbandry*, he calls the *Word* by the same Name as we do, Heb. i. 3. *Χαρακτῆρ*. the express *Image of God*. *Moses* the Son of *Nebemannus* calls him the *Angel, the Redeemer*, who is call'd the *face of God*, that is, says he, *God himself*, the same that appear'd to *Jacob* at *Bethel*, and said to *Moses* in the *Bush*, *I am the God of thy Father, &c. The Lord* that should come to his *Temple*. And the *Angel of the Covenant* Prophecy'd of *Mal. iii. 1*.

Maimonides in his Book of *Foundations*, and after him *Joseph Albo* distinguish in *God*.

1. That

1. That which *Knows*. 2. That which is *Known*. 3. The *Knowledge* it self.

But I will not detain you here with Quotations: Our *Eusebius*, in his Book of the *Preparation of the Gospel*, p. 327. tells you that all your *Rabbies*, after the God of all and his *First-born Wisdom*, do join into the same *Divine Nature a Third*, whom they call the *Holy Ghost*, by whom your *inspired Persons* were *enlightned*. And you do all generally agree, That this *Holy Spirit*, was not any thing that was *Created*: And yet you distinguish it from him that sent it. Your *Rabbi* tells us, that in the word *Elohim*, there are three *Degrees* each *distinct* by it self, yet all one; join'd in *one*, yet not *divided* from one another.

And, as you make that *Holy Spirit* which inspir'd the *Prophets*, not to be a *Creature*, yet *distinct* from *Him* who sent *Him*: So you make what you call the *Schekina* to be a *Divine Thing*: And *distinguish* it not only from *God*, but from that *Holy Spirit*. As in your *Jerusalem Gemara*, of *Documents*, c. 3. And the *Babylonish Gemara*, tit. *Joma*, c. 1. Your *R. Jonathan*, in the Preface *Ecka Rabtki*, says, That the *Schechina* waited three years and a half upon *Mount Olivet*, expecting the *Conversion* of the *Jews*.

This was the place where (i) our *Jesus* (the true

(i) *Luke* xxi. 37. xix. 29.

true *Schechina*) made his *Abode*. And whence he rode into *Jerusalem*, to accomplish his Blessed *Passion*. And the time of his *Preaching*, was about three years. So long he said (k), he wou'd bear with the obstinate *Jews*. This may be apply'd (l), as to what your *High-Priest* said, tho' himself knew not the true *Import* of it.

Now then all these forecited Testimonies to the Holy *Trinity*, whether of *Jews* or *Christians*, are not the setting up of any other *God*, but only searching into the *Nature* of that *God* whom we acknowledge, as to give an Example (tho' any *parallel* to *God* must be at an infinite Distance) we argue three great *Faculties* in the *Soul*, the *Understanding*, the *Memcry*, and the *Will*: And that these may be understood, without either *Confusion* of the *Faculties*, or *Division* of the *Substance* of the *Soul*. And suppose that some shou'd object, that this was making of three *Souls*. I say, that whatever the *Consequence* might be from this *Hypothesis*, yet that no *Man* cou'd be justly charg'd with holding three *Souls* in *Man*, who profess'd that he held but *One*. We are not to be charg'd with the *Consequence* of an *Opinion*, so as to infer that we do not hold that *Opinion*: For we may not see all the *Consequences* of what we hold. Therefore tho' three *Faculties* shou'd infer three *Souls*, yet
cannot

(k) *Luke* xiii. 7. (l) *John* xi. 51.

cannot he who holds three *Faculties*, be charg'd with holding of three *Souls*, while he does but hold *one* Soul; and thinks that the contrary, does not follow from his holding of three *Faculties* in the same *Soul*.

Thus, tho' three *Persons* did infer three *Gods*: Yet does not he hold three *Gods*, who holds three *Persons* in *one* and the *self same* *God*.

If you say, that this will excuse all *Idolatry*, as of those who *worshipp'd* the *Sun*, &c. because of *God's* suppos'd *Residence* there. I answer, no; because supposing of that *Residence*, yet it would be *Idolatry* to *worship* the *Sun*, or any thing else, meerly because of *God's* *Residence* in it. As you wou'd have thought it *Idolatry* to have *worshipp'd* the *Temple*, or the *Cloud of Glory*, because of *God's* special *Presence*, which was there afforded.

But they did not think it to be *Idolatry*, was it therefore none? No, our *Thoughts* cannot alter the *Nature* of Things. And there are *Sins of Ignorance*. None ever *Confess'd*, no, nor, I believe, *Thought* himself to be an *Idolater*: For then, it must be suppos'd, that he would not continue in it. But he that adores *One God* in three *Persons* (supposing him mistaken in his Judgment) comes not under either of the Branches of *Idolatry*. 1. Of a false *Object*. 2. Of a false *Manner of Worship*. For the *Manner*, there is no Pretence; that consists in the *Worship* of *God* by *Images* (which

(which he has forbidden) whether *Artificial*, of our own making; or *Natural*, by any *Creature* of God's making; as any of the *Host* of *Heaven*, *Sun*, *Moon*, or *Stars*; or any thing here below, as of *Men*, *Birds*, *Beasts*, *Fish*, &c. tho' the *Worship* be referr'd to *God*, as *Represented* by them; or from his suppos'd *Residence* or *Presence* in them. This is *Idolatry* in the *Manner* of our *Worship*. But nothing of this can be apply'd to the three *Persons*, which are suppos'd to be *God* himself. This was your *Idolatry* in the *Golden Calf*, which you did not take to be *God* himself, that you your selves had made; nor could such *Folly* be suppos'd in your *Solomon*, as to think the *Images* he made, to be that *God* that made him. This was the *Idolatry* forbidden in the second *Command*.

Then, for the first *Command*, which relates to the *Object* of *Worship*. If that be taken for setting up any *Creature* as the *Supreme Being*; or giving *Divine Honour* to *Angels*, or other *Ministers* of *God*, as *Inferior* or *Middle Deities*, betwixt the *Supreme Being* and *Us*, as the *Heathens* thought their *Dæmons*, whom therefore they call'd *Dii Medioximi*: In neither of these Senses, can *Idolatry* be apply'd to three *Persons* suppos'd to be in the *Divine Nature*. For 1st, They are not *Creatures*, nor 2^{dly}, any *inferior Deities*; nor so suppos'd to be. But all equally to partake of the same *One Divine Nature*; as the three *Faculties* do of the same *One* and *Indivisible*

visible Soul. And therefore whatever *Mistake* may be suppos'd in the *Hypothesis*, yet it cannot come under any Notion of *Idolatry*. And no otherwise can the *Worship*, or paying of *Divine Honour* to the *Son* or *Messiah* (already prov'd) be excus'd from *Idolatry*, than by acknowledging him to be the *Word of God* (as you your selves have call'd him) that is, one of the *Divine Persons* in the *Godhead*. And this does avoid all Notion of *Idolatry* in the *Worship* of Him: And can no ways come under that Prohibition of *Deut. xiii.* against worshipping of the *false Gods* of the *Heathen*. You lay not this to the charge of your own *Talmud* and *Rabbies*; who give the same Expositions of your *Scriptures* as we do. And you know how many of them do think, that a *Plurality* of *Powers* in the *One Nature* of God is intimated in the very Name of God, *Elohim*, which is the *Plural* Number; and in these *Texts*, among many others of the *Old Testament*. *Gen. i. 1, 26. iii. 22. xix. 24. Psal. xlv. 6, 7. lxviii. 18. cx. 1. Isaiab ix. 6. xlviii. 16. Jer. xxiii. 6. Mich. v. 2. Zech. ii. 8, 9. iii. 2. xii. 10.* Now may we not reason upon these *Texts*, as you have done, without Imputation of *Poly-theism*? And so of the *Texts* in the *Gospel*? And when you come to embrace the *Gospel*, (God send) we will reason with you, as with some amongst our selves, upon what Proofs are there, answerable to, and explanatory of those

Texts

Texts in the *Old Testament*, which favour the *Doctrin*e of the *Holy Trinity*; and then, and not till then, will be the proper time to enter with you, at large, upon this *Controversy*.

But what I have now said, I hope, will be sufficient to remove all *Scruple* from you against the *Gospel*, from that *Text* of *Deut.* xiii.

And then that other *Text*, *Deut.* xviii. 19. will look very terribly upon you, that whoever should not *hearken* to the *Messiah*, when he came, *God* wou'd *require* it of him. And you feel it *severely*, that *God* has requir'd it.

3. But to put an end to this *Objection* from *Deut.* xiii. the *Jews* have yielded it. If they will allow that learned *Jew* who disputed with *Limborch* to give their true *Sense*: And that according to their own *Talmud*, before quoted (*tit. de Synedrio*) which says, *That any Command may be transgressed, by the Command of a Prophet, i. e. who can work Miracles to prove his Mission.*

And says that learned *Jew**, *If Christ, after he arose from the Dead, had publickly said to the whole Congregation of Israel, Hear, O Israel, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the Land of Egypt: And now have redeemed you from a greater Captivity of Sin; whom you have sacrilegiously put to Death.*
Abs

* *Limbor Collat.* p. 132.

Abs Dubio (says he) *without doubt, all Israel had believ'd, even to this present Day. Nor had there been room left for any Doubt, or Suspicion.* Thus he; and he thereby yields, that such a *Miracle* as this, wou'd have convinc'd all the *Jews* to believe *Christ*, when he call'd himself *God*. And therefore he must grant, that, notwithstanding of what is said, *Deut.* xiii. *Miracles* are sufficient to vouch even the *Divinity* of *Christ*. And then the *Dispute* must only lie upon the *Miracles* recorded in the *Gospel*. For the truth of which, I refer to what is said in the first part against the *Deists*.

XI. I wou'd in this place call upon you to reflect, how very exact and particular *God* has been in fulfilling all the *Promises* he has made unto your *Nation*. One especially, which does confound the *Deists*, who call for *Ocular* Demonstration, and have it, to their Astonishment, in seeing at this *Day* the fulfilling of a most wonderful *Prophecie* and *Promise* made to your *Nation*, so many *Ages* past.

The *Deists* have made you, of all *People*, their *Reproach*, because you have been call'd the *Peculiar People*, the *Holy Nation*, *Chosen of God* before all *Nations* upon the *Earth*. Yet ye were the *fewest of all People* (m). And they call'd you the most *Inconsiderable* and *Contemptible*: And thence argue (in their
bold

(m) *Deut.* vii. 7.

bold and Prophane manner) the *Injustice* and *Nonsense* of God's preferring these to all the great *Nations* and *Monarchies* upon the Earth.

They will not believe that God had more regard to the *Jews* than to any other People; or gave any *Prophecies* concerning you. They say you coin'd those *Prophecies* after the *facts* they spake of. But they demand the fulfilling of a *Propheſie*, which they may ſee. And this, that I ſpeak of is obvious to the Eyes of all the World; it is recorded, *Jer.* xlvi. 28. *Fear thou not, O Jacob my Servant, ſaith the Lord, for I am with thee, for I will make a full end of all the Nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in Meaſure, yet will I not utterly cut thee off.* You will find the ſame; *Chap.* xxx. 11. and *Chap.* xxxi. 36, 37. it is written, *If thoſe Ordinances depart from before me, ſaith the Lord, then the Seed of Iſrael alſo ſhall ceaſe from being a Nation before me for ever. Thus ſaith the Lord, if Heaven above can be meaſur'd, and the Foundations of the Earth ſearched out beneath, I will alſo cut off all the Seed of Iſrael, for all that they have done, ſaith the Lord.* See the ſame repeated, *Chap.* xxxiii. 24, 25, 26. And confirm'd, *Iſaiab.* xxvii. 7. xxix. 7, 8. liv. 9, 10. lxxv. 8. *Ezek.* vi. 8. xi. 16. xii. 15, 16: *Amos* ix. 8, 9. *Zech.* x. 9. And this was purſuant to what was promis'd in the *Law.* *Lev.* xxvi. 44. *Deut.* iv. 31, &c.

Now

Now let us see how literally this is fulfill'd at this Day. The great and famous *Monarchies*, who, in their turns, govern'd the World, and successively had destroy'd the *Jews* (the *Affyrian*, the *Babylonian*, and the *Roman*) are all vanish'd, as a Dream; there is not one of them left: Their very *Names* are lost in the Earth. But your *Nation*, tho' *sifted among all Nations* (as your Prophet *Amos* expresses it, in the Place above quoted) *like as Corn is sifted in a Sieve*, yet are you preserv'd a *visible distinct People*, in all the *Nations* whither you have been *scattered*. And the Rage of many *Kings* and *Governments* have been let loose against you, to root you off from the face of the Earth: And you had no *Helper*. Yet the *Lord* was your *Helper*, and put it out of the power of all the Earth (tho' without any visible *Opposition*) to infringe the *Promise* he had made to *You*.

The *Deists* dare not say, that these *Prophecies* were made yesterday, or not before the fall of these *Monarchies*; especially of the *Roman*, the greatest of them. And what a *folly*, as well as *vanity* had it been in the *Jews*, to have forged such *audacious* and *provoking Prophecies*, to have thus *dar'd* all the *Powers* of the *Earth* to *extirpate* them, who hated them, and had them perfectly at *Mercy*?

And here let the *Deists* take notice of this wonderful Instance, fresh before their Eyes, of God's particular *Regard* to this most *despis'd* and *contemptible* People (in their account)

above all the other Nations of the Earth, how great and honourable soever. This is a standing *Miracle* exhibited to the whole World.

Yet is there no *Partiality* in this, as the *Deists* weakly reason: For as *Moses* was a *Type* of the *Messiah*, so the Church of the *Jews* was of the *Christian*, whose Pales are enlarg'd to take in the *Gentiles*, as often promis'd in your *Prophets*: By which means your *Nation* was indeed a *Type* of the *whole World* (represented in the long Garment of the High-Priest, *Wisd.* xviii. 24. *Israel* call'd the *First-fruits of God's Increase*. *Jer.* ii. 3.) And consequently the *Blessings* of which the *Jews* partook; the *Promises* made to them, and miraculous *Protection* over them, was taking *Possession* in the Name, and securing the *Reversion* of the *Gentile World*, in the same glorious *Inheritance*. And it was indifferent as to the Good of the World, which Nation had been pitch'd upon as their *Type*. But God chose the least, that his *Power* and *Protection* over his *Church* might be more visible; and to shew that *She* must struggle thro' many Difficulties and Temptations; yet never be *extinct* (tho' often *distress'd*) when all the Powers and Glory of this World shall vanish as Smoke before the Wind.

Moreover, if God had chosen any of the great and powerful Nations of the Earth for his *peculiar People*, to whom if he had given his Promise to continue them for ever; the *Scorners* would have *blasphem'd* and said that God

God was still on the *strongest* side. And they would have ascrib'd their Preservation to their own *Power* and *Greatness*. This is the Reason God gives, why he chose the *fewest of all People* (n, lest they shou'd say it was thro' their own *Power* and *Might* that they were preserv'd. Besides, the *peculiar Nation* being (as before has been said) a *Type* of the *Christian Church*, it was necessary that the *Odds*, as to the World, shou'd be against that Nation; which shou'd subsist not by *worldly Strength* and *Politicks*, but by signal and *miraculous Providences*. Thus the *Church* was best represented, as *greatly DISTRESSED*, but *wonderfully PRESERVED!*

And here, O ye *Jews*, behold an equal *Promise* of our *Messiah* to his *Church*, and as miraculously fulfill'd, as that before-mention'd to yours. He promis'd, as before-quoted, that his *Church* should continue *even unto the End of the World*; that he would be all that time with her to preserve her, and that the *Gates of Hell* should never *prevail* against her. And when was this promis'd? Even at the Beginning, when his Religion was *low* and *contemptible*, hardly yet known in the World. And the *Devil* has been let loose (as against *Job*) to spare only her *Life*; all things else have been put in his Power. All

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the

(n) Deut. vii. 7. viii. 17.

the *Rage* and *Madness* of *Kings* and *States*, and *Mobs* have been exerted against her to *destroy* her, for many *Ages* together: And she was destitute of all *Human* Help; nay it was made unlawful for her to help herself, or take *Arms* in her own Defence, against her persecuting *Kings*, as it was not permitted to you, tho' an Army of 600000 Men (o) *bar-nessed*, besides a great *mix'd Multitude*, against *Pbaraob*, *Abasuerus*, &c. But she was commanded, as you, only to *stand still*, and see the *Salvation of God*; yet still she insisted upon the *Promise* of her *Preservation* made to her by her *Messiah*; nay more, of her *Victory* at last over all these her *Enemies*; and boasted of it before them, while they were *worrying* of her without Controul; and told them, that it was not in their Power to *destroy* her. Yet all this notwithstanding, how miraculously did our *Jesus* perform his *Promise*, in his now almost 1700 Years *preserving* and *supporting* her under all her Persecutions, and giving her *Victory* and *Triumph*! And she still trusts in that *Promise*, that it can never fail. Could any Power less than *Divine* have foretold this *Preservation*, and have effected it for so long a time without *Human* Means, without *Sword* or *Policy*? This is not the least of the *Miracles* which God has shewn, as to *You*, so to *Us*, in these

Promises

Promises so full of *Wonder*, so visibly fulfill'd, and now every day fulfilling. And this is not a mean *Argument* to join *You* to *Us*, when you see the same *God* working so wonderfully for *You* and *Us*, for *Us* only of all the whole *Earth*; none of whom can boast such *Promises*, and such *Performance*, so uncontestably *true*, and so truly *miraculous*. Therefore I beseech you to hearken at last, to the wise Reasoning of your own *Gamaliel*, lest ye be found (p) *Fighters against God*. For if this *Work* had not been of *God*, it cou'd not have so stood. You first spent your *Rage* against this *Stone*, which your *Builders* refused, and as he foretold you, it has grinded you to *Powder* (q). Will you not yet confess, that *this is the Lord's Doing*, and that it is *marvellous in your Eyes*!

And now, O ye *People* greatly *beloved*, and grievously *punished*, Did your *God* ever fail you in any *Promise* that ever he made to you? You are, and have been many *Centuries* preserv'd only upon the *Almighty Power* that there is in his *Promise*, too strong for all the *armed Legions* of *Earth* and *Hell*, which have overthrown mighty *Empires*, and every thing else but you, and his *Church* represented by you. Believe it, your *Preservation* since your *Return* from *Babylon*, has been greater than in

(p) *Acts* v. 38. 39. (q) *Mat.* xxi. 42. 44.

it, in *Egypt*, or in the *Wilderness*. And can you imagine that he who has wrought so many *Miracles*, and still continues them, lest any of his Works should fall to the Ground; can you think that his great *Promise* of the *Messiah*, and the *Time* of his Coming, so particularly describ'd, is come to nought? As to the *Time*, you confess it has fail'd, if not fulfill'd in our *Jesus*. And where the *Time* (as of your 70 Years Captivity, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 21. *Jer.* xxix 10.) is nam'd, there it is impossible that there should be a Failure as to the *Time*.

See how exactly your Deliverance out of *Egypt* (r) was fulfill'd, even to a *Day* of the *Promise* (s) made to you. And your 40 Years in the *Wilderness*, to the 40 Days of your spying out the Land. Nor did your many and repeated *Provocations* all along that time, put off God's *Promise* one *Day* further. See then and consider, how punctually our *Messiah's* Coming was according to the stated Times and Ages prefix'd, as it is set down in the first Chapter of our *Gospel* according to St. *Matthew*, ver. 17. The Generations from *Abraham* to *David* fourteen Generations; from *David* to the *Captivity* fourteen Generations; and from the *Captivity* to *Christ* fourteen Generations. God's fix'd and determinate *Times* are not to be *alter'd*.

The

(r) *Exod.* xii. 40, 41.

(s) *Nom.* xiv. 34.

The *Time* and *Place* of the *Messiah's* Coming, as foretold in the *Prophets*, is one of the surest *Marks* by which we must know him. To that end they were so particularly set down: And if these fail, so may all the rest.

How do you expect to know your *Messiah* when he does come? He cannot vouch himself from the *Time* of his Coming foretold by the *Prophets*; for that is past, and there is no other *Time* prefix'd.

Will he prove his *Mission* by *Miracles*? And will he shew *greater* than our *Jesus* has done? Can he fulfil the *Prophecies* of the *Messiah*, by not coming at the *Time* they have nam'd; so much as our *Messiah*, by fulfilling all the *Circumstances* of the *Prophecies*, as to *Time*, *Place*, &c?

XII. Born of a *Virgin* (t) of the Seed of (u) *David*, in the Town of (x) *Bethlehem*. Within 490 (y) *Years* of the Building of the *Second Temple*. Before the *Scepter* had quite departed from (z) *Judah*. To whom the *Gathering* of the *Gentiles* has been, as to their *Messiah*, as well as the *Messiah* of the *Jews*. This is an astonishing *Mark*, and notorious, and insisted upon over and over again in

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the

(t) *Isaiah* vii. 14. (u) *Ibid.* xi. 10. (x) *Mick.* v. 2.
 (y) *Dan.* ix. 25, (z) *Gen.* xlix. 10.

the (a) *Prophets*. And of which none that ever took upon them to be the *Messiah*, except only our *Jesus*, had the least shadow of a Pretence. And consequential to this, that he should make the (b) *Heathen Nations* forsake their *Idolatry*, and destroy their *Idols*. No *Nation* of the *Heathens* was ever brought to this by the *Law*; but how many have by the *Gospel*! By the way, you may see by this, how unreasonable your Exception is against our *Messiah* from *Deut.* xiii. as if he introduc'd the *Worship* of the *Heathen Deities*; which he only has effectually destroy'd. He only stopp'd the Mouths of their *Oracles*; which within 100 years after his Coming, were all totally silenc'd in the Reign of *Trajan*. He only deposited his (c) *Flesh* in the *Grave*, in hope that it shou'd not see *Corruption*. They gave him (d) *Gall* to eat, and *Vinegar* to drink. They (e) *pierced* his *Hands* and his *Feet*; and *cast Lots* upon his *Vesture*. They upbraided him in the same (f) *Words* foretold. His very (g) *Price* was foretold, and how the *Money* should be disposed of.

That

(a) *Isal.* ii. 8. lxxii. 8, 11, 17. cx. 2. *Isaiab* ii. 2. xi. 10. xlix. 6. lii. 15. lv. 5. lxx. 3. lxxv. 1. *Zech.* ix. 10. *Hoj.* ii. 23. (b) *Isaiab* ii. 18. 20. xxxi. 7. *Ezek.* xxx. 13. *Zech.* xiii. 1, 2. (c) *Isal.* xvi. 9, 10. (d) *Ibid.* lxix. 21. (e) *Ibid.* xxii. 16, 18. (f) *Matth.* xxvii. 43. (g) *Zech.* xi. 13. *Matth.* xxvii. 6, 7.

That a *(b)* Bone of him shou'd not be broken. Again, the particular manner *(i)* of his *Riding* into *Jerusalem* upon an *Ass*; which your most learned Rabbi *Saabia* expounds of the *Messiah*; as also the *ii.* and *cx.* *Psalms*, and other *Scriptures* before-quoted. I cou'd enlarge upon this Head, and shew many more Particulars, wherein our *Jesus* did, and does, exactly answer to the several *Marks* given of the *Messiah* by the *Prophets*.

Which is so strong an Argument, so past all possibility of *Cheat* or *Contrivance*, that the *first* of our *Apostles* reckon'd it even beyond *Miracles*, or rather, as the greatest of *Miracles*, greater than those shewn to our outward Eyes. For proving the *Mission* of *Jesus*, from their being *Eye-witnesses* of his Majesty in his *miraculous Transfiguration*; and the *Voice* which then came to him from the excellent *Glory*: *(k)* *Which Voice* (says he) *we heard when we were with him in the holy Mount.* He adds as a yet further Proof, *We have a more sure Word of PROPHECY, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a Light that shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn, and the Day-star arise in your Hearts.* Pray God it may; and that he may open your *Understanding*, as he did of his *Apostles* *(l)*,
that

(b) *Exod.* xii. 46. *Joan* xix. 36. *(i)* *Zech.* ix. 5. *(k)* *2 Pet.* i. 16, 17, 18, 19. *(l)* *Luke* xxiv. 49.

that they might understand the Scriptures, that thus it is written, and that thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the Dead the third Day: and that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem. All which you see fulfill'd, yet you will not believe it! You see all fulfill'd that he foretold so particularly of the Destruction of Jerusalem; and that that Age in which he spoke, should not pass till it was fulfill'd, tho' there was then no appearance of it. (m)

XIII. What *Witchcraft* then is it, what heavy *Judgment* lies upon you, that you shou'd harden your Hearts against this *Messiah*, in expectation of another, in whom the *Prophecies* of the *Messiah* can never meet? For the *Time* is already past, as you your selves confess. Against this *Messiah*, who shed his *Blood* for you! Who dy'd praying for you! Who offer'd up himself a *Sacrifice* to purchase *eternal Redemption* for you! which the *Blood* of *Bulls* and *Goats* cou'd never do. The very Institution of *Sacrifices* does declare, that God wou'd require *Satisfaction* for the *Sins* of *Men*; and that without *shedding of Blood* there could be no *Remission*; not of *Blood* less noble

(m) See Ezek. xxi. 10, 13. vul. *The Sword that destroyed Jerusalem call'd the Scepter of Gow's Son.*

noble than our own; but of the great *Messiah*, of *Dignity* and *Merit* sufficient to make *Satisfaction* for the *Sins* of the whole *World*. And now I appeal to your selves, whether this *Scheme* of *God*, in *Christ*, reconciling to himself laps'd *Humanity*; and thus *Triumphing* over all the *Powers* and *Malice* of that *Serpent* the *Devil*, who seduc'd *Man* into *Disobedience*, be not more worthy of *God*; a *Demonstration* of greater *Power*, and *Wisdom*, and *Goodness*; and a more *literal* fulfilling of that first *Promise* of the *Messiah*, *Gen. iii. 15.* than giving to any one *Nation* (tho' it were your own) the *Conquest* over your *Enemies*, and a *Temporal* *Reign* upon *Earth*.

Yet this is the *Objection* you have against your *Second Moses*, as against the *First* (n); *Where is the Inheritance of Fields and Vineyards* that was *promis'd to us*? You hanker after these poor *perishing* Things, and neglect your *Eternal Inheritance*; which was *figur'd* by them. You long more after an *Earthly* than a *Heavenly Canaan*: And for a little *Rest* there, than a *Rest for ever*. Therefore you reject our *Spiritual*, and chuse to your selves an *Earthly* and *Fighting Messiah*. But you cannot have him. And *God*, in *Mercy*, has turn'd you out of your *belov'd Canaan*,
and

(n) *Nam. xvi. 14.*

and given it the basest of Men, to take off your Minds from it, and to instruct you, that that is not the *end* of his *Promise*. And because you prefer it to the glorious *Purchase*, that our *Messiah* has made for us; which the *Angels* desire to look into. But ye think scorn of that *pleasant Land*, where there is everlasting *Victory*, and *Triumph*, and *Sabbath*, and *Jubilee*! O shut not your *Eyes wilfully* against your 'own Happiness. Call it to Mind, and shew your selves Men. Is not this a more *exalted* and *rational Completion* and *Architype* of your *Law*, than the *Tables for Municipal Statutes*, to distinguish you of some short time, from other People? If that be all the *Import* (as you wou'd have it) of the whole glorious *Dispensation to Moses*. Was this *worth* or *proportionable* to that *astonishing appearance* upon Mount *Sinai*, and all that wonderful *OEconomy of Miracles*, by which your *Law* was established! But if you will look (with us) to the *end* of your *Law*, then you will see every *Tittle* and *Iota* of your *Law*, *Fulfill'd*, *Exalted*, *Glorify'd* in the *Heavenly Reign* of our *Messiah*, the second *Adam*; the innocent *Isaac* that was *sacrific'd*; the *Joseph* that was *sold* by his *Brethren*, for their future *Preservation*; the *Moses* who delivers us out of *Egypt*, the *Slavery* and *Thraldom* of *Sin* and *Hell*; and conducts us safe thro' the *Wilderness*, the *Temptations* and *Distresses* of this *wretched Life*; our *Joshua*, who opens our way into the *Heavenly Canaan*: thro' *Faith*,

in whose Blessed *Passion* and *Sacrifice* for us, when lifted up upon the *Cross*, like the *Brazen Serpent* in the *Wilderness*, the mortal biting of our *Spiritual Serpent* the *Devil* is cur'd; and our *Souls* eternally sav'd. These are the glorious things that were shewn to *Moses* in the *Mount*; after which *Pattern* (o) he was commanded to frame the *Tabernacle*, and all the *Institutions* thereof, as *Types* and *Shadows* of those things which were to be *perfected* in the *Heavens*. By Faith in which the *Just* shall live (p). And will you now reject the *Pattern* for the *Types*? Will you degrade your *Law*, to mean nothing beyond the outward *Senses*? Nothing but what is *Visible* and *Temporary*? To have no *Spiritual* and *Eternal* Signification? Do we therefore make void the *Law*? Yea, we *establish* the *Law*. We carry it whither it was intended. We shew an *eternal* and *heavenly* Light *shining* thro' it all, and every *Institution* of it. We look with *Reverence* and great *Veneration* upon it, as the *School-Master* that was ordained to bring us unto *Christ*, as the *Ladder* that was set to climb up into *Heaven*. But you will not *climb* with us; you say that the top does not reach to *Heaven*, therefore you stop short upon the lower *Steps*. The *Patriarchal* Dispensation before the *Flood* was one *Step*. The *Abramical* another: The *Mosaical* another:

(o) *Exod.* xxv. 40.

(p) *Hab.* ii. 4.

ther: And you still expect another, the *last*, and most *perfect* under the *Messiah*. Yet you reject it now it is come, and there is to be no other.

Be not afraid to lose your *Law*, or your *Prophets*, you will hear them read every Day in our *Churches*; and their true and full *Import* explain'd and fulfill'd in the *Gospel*. For the *Gospel* is the best *Comment* upon the *Law*: And the *Law* is the best *Expositor* of the *Gospel*. They are like a pair of *Indentures*, they answer in every Part: Their *Harmony* is wonderful, and is, of it self, a Conviction. No *human* Contrivance cou'd have reach'd it. There is a *Divine Majesty* and *Forefight* in the answer of every *Ceremony* and *Type* to its *Completion*. And there is one yet to be *completed*. O the glorious Day when that shall come! That is, the grafting you in again to your own *Olive-Tree*, the *Fatness*, the *Sweet*, the *Marrow* of your *Law*, fulfill'd in the *Messiah* (q). For we do believe, that *blindness* is happen'd to *Israel* but in *part*, till the *fulness* of the *Gentiles* be come in: And so that all *Israel* shall be saved. For the *gifts and calling of God are without Repentance*. God hath concluded all; *Us*, first, and then *You* in *Unbelief*, that he might have *Mercy* upon *All*; that the *Praise* may be to *God*, and not to *Us*, that no *Flesh* shou'd glory in his *Presence*. O the

(q) Rom. xi. 25. 26. &c.

the *Depth* of the *Riches* both of the *Wisdom* and *Knowledge* of *God*! How *unsearchable* are his *Judgments*, and his *Ways* past finding out! For of him, and thro' him, and to him are all Things. To whom be *Glory* for ever. *Amen.*

XIV. But tho' the *Judgments* of *God* are, in themselves, *Unsearchable*, yet they generally move in the *Road* of *Second Causes*: And so far it is *lawful* for us to look into them; and sometimes *necessary*, in order to our *Duty*, as being not only brought upon us for our *Sins*; but continued by them. So that by discovering the *Causes*, we may *prevent* or *shorten* our *Judgments*.

Therefore I wou'd here inquire a little into some of those most visible *Causes*, which have all this time, and do still harden the *Jews* in their *Obstinacy*, against receiving the *Doctrine* of *Christ*.

And some of these are on the *Jews* side, and some on the *Christian*.

I. First for the *Jews*. They have since *Christ* came, quite *alter'd* their own *Doctrine* and *Topicks* from whence they us'd to argue before, on purpose to avoid the plain *Proofs* thence drawn for our *Jesus* being the *Messiah*. To instance in a few:

1. There are great *Presumptions*, that they have alter'd and corrupted the very *Text* of their own *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, in those *Places* which speak of the *Messiah*, which gave the *Marks* of him, and pointed
out

out the *Time* of his Coming. However this they cannot deny, that whether by the loss of the *Vowels* in the *Hebrew Tongue*, or from whatever Cause, that *Language* is now render'd so *uncertain*, beyond any other in the World, as that one *Word* bears many different *Significations*, insomuch that every *Text* almost will afford perpetual *Jangling*: Which has made some of your most Learned *Rabbies* complain, that your *Scriptures* are become, in the words of the *Prophet*, before quoted, as a *Book seal'd up* to you: And that the true Sense of them will not be known till the coming of the *Messiah*, who will restore the *Vowels* and right Knowledge of the *Hebrew Tongue*.

It is long since the *Hebrew* has ceas'd to be the *Vulgar Language* of your *Nation*; and consequently to be well understood by the *Jews* themselves, who now learn it at *Schools*, as other Men do. *Josephus* complains of the loss of the *Hebrew Tongue* among the *Jews* in his Time; and it was so long before.

This occasion'd that the *Greek Translation* of the *lxx.* was publickly read in the *Jewish Synagogues*, many years before the coming of *Christ*.

This *Translation* they thought to have been *Divinely Inspir'd*. And made great *boasts* of it, as you may read in *Josephus*, and many other of your *Authors*. And it continu'd in this Reputation with you, and was read in your *Synagogues* till *Christ* came, and for
about

about an *hundred* years after. Then you rejected it, because of the plain *Proofs* that were brought out of it for our *Jesus* being the *Messiah*. And set up the spurious *Greek* Translation of *Aquila*, who was an *Heathen*, a *Christian*, and a *Jew*, which he then made when the *Hebrew Tongue* was so greatly decay'd from that Purity which it confessedly retain'd when your *lxx. Priests* made that famous *Translation* for *Ptolemy* King of *Egypt*, about 300 Years before *Christ*: And was never question'd by any of you, but held in the highest *Veneration* all that time, till after the coming of our *Saviour*, because of the flagrant *Testimonies* it bore to *him*. And were it now admitted, as it formerly was amongst you, and as it is truly the best *Comment*, at least, upon the *Hebrew Text*, to determine the *Sense* of it when the *Words* are *doubtful*, and (because of the present *defect* in that *Language*) of *various* and *different* *Significations*; I say if this were admitted (which you cannot refuse, without casting *Reproach* upon all your *Predecessors* for 300 Years before *Christ*, who did admit it; and upon your selves for so doing, and *Confessing* that you have done it *unreasonably*) you wou'd not be able to maintain your hold against *Christianity*. Are not the *Quotations* of your *Scriptures*, which are in your *Learned Philo* (who liv'd in the Days of *Christ* and his *Apostles*) and of others your chief *Rabbies* before that time, more according to the *Translation* of the *lxx.* than of the

Hebrew Text, as you have it at present? And what reason can you give, why you dare not quote that *Translation* still? But because it renders the *Sense* of the *Hebrew* so, as leads it directly upon *our Saviour*, and cannot be extended further; and it cuts off those *vain and precarious Excuses*, which you wou'd draw from the present *uncertainty* of the *Hebrew Text*. Yet none of your latter *Expositions* can pretend to any Authority *equal* to that of the *lxx*, even your selves being the *Judges!* This shews, that you are not dispos'd to find out the *Truth*; but bent to shut the Door against it.

2. As the *Jews* have thus manifestly stood out against the conviction of the holy *Scriptures*, by inventing and using these Arts to *corrupt* them, at least, to *hide* and *obscure* their true *Meaning*: So have they for the same Reason, *viz.* in prejudice to *our Messiah*, alter'd their former *Principles* and *Notions*, which they had receiv'd by *Tradition* from their *Fathers*. Thus finding that the Notion of the *Λόγος*, or *Word of God*, which was universally receiv'd amongst the *Jews*, before *Christ* came; and largely insisted upon by *Philo* that Learned *Jew*, even in the *Apostolical* Age, that, as before has been noted, he was *God*, and yet a distinct Person from *God*, the *Father* of all; that he was *Χαρακτήρ*, the express *Image of God*: The great *Δύναμις*, *Instrument* or *Power* by which *God* made the *Worlds*: The *Ἀρχιερεὺς*, *Supream Archetypal High-Priest*

Priest and *Mediator* betwixt *God* and *Men*; of whom the *High Priest* under the *Law*, was a *Type* and *Figure*; by *outward Communion* with whom, *Men* were made capable of, and had a *Title* to the *Inward* and *Spiritual Communion* with the *λόγος*, and by him of *Reconciliation* and *Acceptance* with *God*. From this *Notion* of the *λόγος*, *St. John* disputes, according to the receiv'd *Principles* of that *Age*: And having prov'd *Christ* to be the *λόγος*, he in his *Gospel*, *Epistle*, and *Revelation*, gives him the *Titles* which were usually ascrib'd to the *λόγος*, of *Light*, and *Life*, and *Truth*. And from having *Communion* with him, infers that we have also *Communion* with the *Father*. But the *Jews* finding that these *Principles* led directly to the *Divinity* of our *Saviour*, and all that is said of him in the *Gospel*; presently forsook their own *Principles*: And, as early as *Justin Martyr*, began to deny them, as *Trypho* the *Jew* did, and put *Justin* upon the proof of the *λόγος*, being a *Divine Person*, &c. which he did out of *Philo*, and other approv'd *Authors* of the *Jews*.

It is plain that the *Jews* thus understood it, when they accus'd our *Saviour* of *Blasphemy* (r), and of making himself *God*, because he call'd himself the *Son of God*. For they call'd themselves the *Sons of God*, in a

(r) *John* x. 33. 35.

large Sense, as so *adopted*, and in *Fæderal Covenant* with *God*: But they knew, it was the receiv'd Notion among them, that the manner how the *λέγος* was the *Son* or *Word* of *God*, was *Natural*, as proceeding from the *Nature* of *God*; and that for any to call himself the *Son* of *God*, in this Sense, was to make himself *God*. Whence it is plain that they thought the *λέγος*, to be *God*.

3. The *Jews* finding that the *Mystical* and *Primary Sense* of their *Law* did refer to the *Messiah*; and were most exactly and particularly *fulfill'd* and *completed* in our *Saviour*; rather than be convinc'd by this, they have now (as the learned *Jew* that disputed with * *Limborch*) deny'd that the *Law* was *Typical*, or refer'd to any more *perfect* State. The contrary of which is plainly intimated, *Exod.* xxv. 40. from whence our *Apostle* convincingly argues, *Heb.* viii. 5. But the *Jews* now will have no *Type* in the *Law*: Or the *Office* of the *Messiah* to extend beyond *Temporal Conquests*, to any *Spiritual* or *Heavenly Acquisitions*, sticking in the bare *Letter* of the *Law*.

But *Philo* and the *Jews* before him, did largely insist upon the *Mystical*, which they made the *principal End* and *Intendment* of the *Law*. As indeed it is, and most apparently so, if we duly consider the *Law* it self, and the
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* *Libell. n. p. 62. §. 1111.*

the *Prophets*, who often mind us of it. And without which they cannot be *verify'd* (as before is shewn) and their *Meaning* runs *Low* and *Contemptible*, no way answering the *Magnificence* and *Glories* which are there *reveal'd*.

Jacob confess'd himself (s) and his *Fathers* to be *Strangers* and *Pilgrims* on the Earth. Whence our *Apostle* (t) does argue very forcibly, *That they who say such things, declare plainly, that they seek a Country. And truly if they had been mindful of that Country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have return'd: But now they desire a better Country, that is, an Heavenly.* If the Land of *Canaan* had been all their View, and they had understood the *Promise* made to them of *Canaan* to have had no further meaning than the *Letter*, only the *Temporal* Enjoyment of that *pleasant Country*, they need not have wander'd from it, as they did. Or they might have had opportunity to have *return'd* to it.

When *David* (u) was in Possession, and *King* of it, he declar'd himself to be then in a *Pilgrimage*, and a *Stranger* in it.

This shews they had a further Prospect; and that they extended the *Promise* made to them of *Canaan*, to mean *principally* and *ultimately* the *Heavenly Canaan*; of which they under-

(s) *Gen.* xlviii. 9.(t) *Heb.* xi. 14, 15, 16.(u) *1 Chron.* xxix. 15.

stood the *Earthly Canaan* only as a *Type*. And if *Canaan* it self was a *Type*, no doubt *Jerusalem* must be so too, and the *Temple* with all the *Service* of it, that is all your *Law*.

Your *Cabala* makes your *outward Law*, but the *Cortex* or *Shell* of the hidden *Mysteries* that are contain'd in it.

Yet you are now grown to that violent *Prejudice* against this (tho' you wou'd stick to your *Cabala* too, and think it *Divinely inspir'd*) because it leads directly upon *Christianity*, that your learned *Jew* * has set up this Principle, *Quod cultus externus, ut talis, est interno multo perfectior*. And as a just Consequence of this, *Quod externus non minus Deo gratus, quam internus*, i. e. *That the outward Worship, as such, is more perfect than the internal*. And therefore, *That the outward Worship is not less grateful to God than the internal*. These are the *Titles* of his *Chapters*. And the end of setting up these desperate Positions is, to obviate the *Christian Argument*, That the *Inward* and *Spiritual* Worship is chiefly regarded by *God*: And consequently the *Inward* and *Spiritual* meaning of the *Law* is much preferable to the *Letter* and *outward Observances*: That therefore there is a *Spiritual* Sense in the *Law*, which exceeds the *Letter*, or which is *Typify'd* by it: That this is *fulfill'd* in *Christ*, who has thereby *Consummated*

* *Limbor. Collat. N. xi.---xii. p. 118, 120.*

mated and Perfected the Law. To oppose this, the *Jews* are driven to that Extremity, as here you see, to prefer the *Outward Worship*, as *such*, to the *Inward*. Contrary to the Tenor of their own *Law*, and their *Prophets*, where the *Inward Circumcision* of the *Heart* is so often inculcated and prefer'd to that *Outward* in the *Flesh*. Nay the *Outward Institutions* of the *Law*, where the *Inward* and *Spiritual* Meaning and Intendment of them is not regarded, are declar'd to be *Hateful* and *Abomination* to God (x). The *Inward* is not only prefer'd (y), *I desire Mercy and not Sacrifice*; and *the Knowledge of God more than Burnt-offerings* (z), *Sacrifice and Offering thou did'st not desire, but, mine Ears hast thou open'd* (a). But, in respect to the *Inward*, the *Outward*, are said not to have been *commanded* by God; that is, they were *commanded* for the sake of the *Inward*: And therefore without respect to the *Inward*, the *Outward* were not *commanded*.

To rid you out of this Perplexity, your learned *Jew* has advanc'd a strange sort of an Argument to maintain his *Paradox* before-mention'd, of preferring the *Outward*, as *such*, to the *Inward Worship* and *Sense* of the *Law*, where he explains his foresaid *Position* thus. That the *Outward* is not to be suppos'd with-

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(x) *Isaiab* i. 11, to 21. (y) *Hos.* vi. 6. (z) *Izai.* xl. 9.
(a) *Jer.* vii. 21, 23.

out the *Inward*: And that the *Outward*, as including the *Inward*, is preferable to the *Inward*. But this, instead of solving the *Case*, makes no *Case* at all of it. It is no more than this, whether *Two* be not *more* than *One*? Whether both *Outward* and *Inward* be not more than the *Inward* alone? Which no body will dispute with him. But then this cuts off all *Comparison* betwixt the *Outward* and the *Inward*: And consequently makes no Sense of those *Texts* before-mention'd, and many others, where the same *Comparison* is insisted upon. And when the *Jew* says, that the *Outward*, as *such*, is *preferable*, &c. what does he mean by *as such*? Is it the *Outward*, as *Outward*? Which any one would take to be the meaning. But his meaning, as he explains it, is, the *Outward*, as *such*, that is, as both *Outward* and *Inward*.

So very *Thin*, and *Contradictory* are these strain'd Excuses you have set up against the *Spiritual*, which is the *Main* and *Principal* Intendment of your *Law*: Because it cannot be *fulfill'd* but only in our Blessed Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, and his *Spiritual Kingdom*.

4. The modern *Jews* have, since *Christ's* time, gone away from the constant *Tradition* of their *Fathers* before *Christ* came, *viz.* That the *Messiah* would shew himself to the *World*, and vouch his *Commission* (*b*) by *Miracles*; of which,

(b) *Joh. vii. 31.*

which, sufficient has been said before. And that this Contrivance discovers plainly their *Guilt*, that it is not *Conviction* which they want: But that they are resolv'd not to be *Convinc'd*.

5. They have not only departed from the *Traditions* of their *Fathers*; but they have invented *new* and *strange Conceits*, of which their *Fathers*, before *Christ* came, never dreamt. As of *Two Messiahs*, the one a *Suffering*, the other a *Triumphing Messiah*: To answer these *two States*, of *Suffering* and *Triumphing*, which were told of the *Messiah*; and both fulfill'd in our *Blessed Saviour*. To avoid which, the *Jews*, since his time, have invented these *Two Messiahs*. The *Jews* in our *Saviour's* time, even the *Apostles* themselves, till after his *Resurrection*, had not the true Notion of the *Sufferings* of the *Messiah*, much less of his *Death*. When he spoke of it, his *Disciples* (c) rebuked him; and understood (d) nothing of it. And the *Jews* (e) told him, *We have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth for ever: And how say'st thou, the Son of Man must be lift up? that is, crucify'd.* They were looking out then, as you are now, for a *Temporal Fighting Messiah*, who shou'd (f) *restore again the Kingdom to Israel*. They thought not then (g) of the *Sufferings* of the *Messiah*.
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(c) *Matth.* xvi. 22. (d) *Luke* xvii. 34. (e) *John* vii. 34.
(f) *Matth.* i. 5. (g) *Luke* xxiv. 16.

Far less did they dream of *Two Messiahs*; one to *Suffer*, the other to *Conquer*. You can shew no Footstep of any such Doctrine amongst the *Jews*, before *Christ* came. And it shews the *Distress* your latter *Rabbies* were driven to, when they cou'd find no shift but so *groundless* and *foolish* an *Invention*: Which is of a piece with your other *fulsome* and *ridiculous Legends* (before-mention'd) of the *Messiah's* sitting these 1600 years amongst the *Lepers* at the *Gates of Rome*. That he is in *Paradise*, but *ty'd* in a *Woman's Hair*, that he cannot come. The *mad* and *nonsensical* Stories of your *Bebemoth* and *Leviathan*. Of *God's Weeping* when your *City* was *Destroy'd*. Of his daily *Study* in the *Reading* of your *Law*. And such other *Delirious Fancies*, as shew the greatness of your *Judgment*, threaten'd 2 *Thess.* ii. 11. and visibly fulfill'd upon you, more than upon any *People*, God sending you *strong Delusion*, that you shou'd believe such *Monstrous*, and even *Contradictory Lies*; because you receiv'd not the *Truth*, that ye might be *Saved*; but had *Pleasure* in *Unrighteousness*, in such *Rabbinical* and *shameless Fopperies*, they deserv'd not to be call'd *Forgeries*, on purpose to elude the *infallible Demonstrations* which *our Jesus* gave of his being the *Messiah*. These are the *Great*, tho' *pitiful Obstacles*, on the *Jews* side, which hinder their embracing of *Christianity*.

II. I come

II. I come now to other *Obstacles*, which lie on the *Christian* side.

1. The learned *Jew* * that disputes with *Limborch*, complains of the great *Scandal* given to the *Jews* in the *Popish* Countries, by the *Idolatry* which they see practis'd there. They cannot bear to see the *great God* painted like an *old Man* in their *Churches* and *Masj-Books*, in their *Shops* and *Houses*, and publickly sold by *Allowance*. This they take to be the *Sin* so strictly prohibited, *Deut. iv. 15, 16.* and in many other *Scriptures*. Besides their *worshiping of Saints, Angels, &c.* See *Sandy's Speculum Europæ.*

2. There is another strange sort of *Impediment*, which the *Jews* have met with in *Popish* Countries; that is, That if any of them turn'd *Christians*, they *forfeited* all their *Estates*, on pretence that they or their *Ancestors* had got them by *Usury*. Of this several good Men in the *Church of Rome* have complain'd; as *Bradwardinus, l. 1. de Causa Dei, c. 1. Corall. part. 32. Cardinalis a Severina in Catechismo generali pro Catechum. c. 20. Gasparus Belga* a *Jesuit*, in *Epist. Ormutina* (est inter *Epistolas Judaicas*) wrote *Anno 1549.* speaking of one *Rabbi Solomon*, who desir'd *Baptism*, says, that he, and many others would have embrac'd *Christianity*, if it had not been for that Law amongst the *Christians*, that they should

* *Limbor. Collat. p. 102.*

should be oblig'd to restore whatever they had got by *Usury*. This I have taken out of *Hornbeck contra Judæos. Lugdun. Batav. Anno 1655. in Prolegom. p. 31.* where he cites more Authorities; as of *Job. Gerson apud Bobellum, tit. de Judæis.* And amongst us, *Edwin Sandys, de statu Relig. cap. 41. Georgius Theodorus, de statu Judæorum in Repub. Christian. cap. 9.* He says, that this Custom was taken away by a particular Bull of Pope *Paul III.* by the Council of *Basil. Sess 19.* And of *Lateran,* under *Alexander III. c. 26.* How it is at this Day at *Rome, in Spain, Portugal,* and other *Popish* Countries, I cannot tell; but Sir *Edwin Sandys* in his Book before-quoted, wrote *Anno 1599.* says, that when he was in *Italy,* the same *Forfeitures* were still exacted of the *Jewish Converts,* except where the *Pope* gave *Dispensation;* which he knew granted only to some few *Physicians,* their Gains not being suppos'd as got by *Usury.* But it stopp'd the *Conversion* of others.

II. I come now to the *Reformed Churches,* where the *Jews* meet with neither of these fore-mention'd *Impediments.* But whether many of the *Jews* do come out of the *Popish* Countries, as the learned *Jew* confesses to *Limborch,* on purpose to avoid the *Idolatry* in the *Church of Rome,* to which many of them are forc'd to comply, to save their *Lives* or *Estates;* and others are tempted to it, and counterfeit

counterfeit *Christianity* for the sake of *Preferments*, especially in *Spain*, and *Portugal*, as before has been told; and whence many of them do fly into *Holland*, where there is *Universal Liberty of Conscience*, and that they may *profess* and *practise* their *Judaism* openly. This has brought so many of them into *Holland*, more than to other of the *Countries* call'd *Reform'd*.

1. But there is another sort of *Impediment* which they meet with there, that is, the various *Seets*, which are *Tolerated*, and own'd as *Churches*, tho' most *Opposite* and *Contradictory* to one another. This goes violently athwart the fixt and stated *Principle* of the *Segullab* or *Peculium*, which God deliver'd to the *Jews* from the Beginning, and implies the true Notion of a *Church*, as being a *Peculium*, or *Select Society*, gather'd from amongst the rest of *Mankind*; under *Governours*, and *Laws*; with *Promises* and *Privileges* of their own, *peculiar* to themselves, and *independent* of all others upon the Earth. Now the *Jews* cannot think this *Segullab* transferr'd to a *Christian Church*, where there is no Notion of any *Segullab* at all; or such a lame one, as *admits* and *excludes* no Body. A *Park* without *Pales*! Which reduces the *Church* from a *Society* to a *Seet*, only to *believe* such things, without being subject to the *Governors* or *Laws* of the *Society*; without any *Principle* of *Unity*. A *Church* without a *Bishop*! A *Body* without a
Head!

Head! This *Latitudinarian No-principle* is so perfectly adverse to the receiv'd Notion of the *Jews* all along, that they can as easily believe no *Faith*, as no *Church*. And can never think their *Faith* terminated or fulfill'd in that *Church*, whose *Constitution* is not fram'd alike to *theirs*: For how otherwise was *theirs* a *Type* of *Ours*? A *Type* is so call'd from its *likeness* to what it does *Represent*. And what *Resemblance* is there 'twixt the *Church* in *Jerusalem*, under one *High-Priest*; and in *Holland*, where *Episcopacy*, of which that was the *Image*, is *Abolisb'd*? What agreement betwixt the *Temple*, into which none were admitted but *Profelytes* to the *Constitution*, as well as *Faith* of the *Jews*; and that *Church*, whose *Doors* are open to all *Comers* and *Goers*; which has no *Communion*, by admitting of all *Communions*: And makes no *Communion* necessary? How was the *One Altar* of the *Jewish Church*, a *Type* of *Altar* against *Altar* in every *Parish*? Of 100 opposite *Altars*, that is, *Communions*, at *Amsterdam*, yet all acknowledg'd to belong to the *Christian Church*? It is true, opposite *Communions* may agree in *many* things; as all do in *some* things: But how they can be call'd *One Church*, is as difficult for a *Jew* to apprehend, as a *Church* without a *Communion*, that is, a *Society* which has no *Society*. A *Church*, and not a *Peculium*, is an *open Inclosure*. And a *Society* without *Government* is as great a *Contradiction*. And
other

other *Government* than *Monarchical* in the *Church* the *Jews* never understood, nor did *God* ever appoint. Not that all *Churches* in the *World* shou'd have one *Visible*, and *Universal Head* upon *Earth*; more than all the *Kingdoms* of the *Earth* are to have *One Universal Monarch* under *God*: to whom the whole *World* is one *Kingdom*, tho' compos'd of many *different* and *independent Kingdoms*: As the one *Catholick Church* may consist of many *Independent Churches*, which all make one *Church* to *Christ*. Of each of these under her own *Bishop*, the *Church* of the *Jews* at *Jerusalem* (being it self a *particular Church*) was a *Type*, under her *High-Priest*. And as he was a *Type* of *Christ*, the *λόγος*, the *Arche-typal* and *Universal High Priest* and *Bishop* of the *Catholick Church*, so the *Church* of the *Jews* may be call'd a *Type* also of the *Universal Church*; as that *Nation* was a *Type* of the *whole World*; of which the *High Priest* wore a *Representation* as well of the *Segullah*, as before has been observ'd from *Wisd.* xviii. 24. For *God* is *King* of all the *Earth*; tho' more especially of his *Church*.

The *Miraculous Performance* of that *promise* of *Perpetuity* which *God* made to the *Nation* of the *Jews* has been discours'd before. But here I wou'd take notice of one great *means* by which it has been brought to pass: Which is, the strict *Notion* that the *Jews* still retain of the *Segullah*. Those many
Myriads

Myriads of them who, at first, went over to *Christianity* found as strict a Notion of the *Segullab* there. And saw how it was transferr'd, as from the Beginning it was intend'd, from the *Segullab* of *Moses*, to that of the *Messiah*. It was indeed but the same *Church*, or *Segullab*, under different *OEconomies*, or *Dispensations*. But those whose Eyes were blinded, that they saw not this, remain'd in their *Infidelity*, and stuck to their old *Segullab*. And *God*, who brings *Good* out of *Evil*, has made this a *Means*, the great *Means*, of keeping them a distinct *People* to this Day. For shou'd the *Jews* turn so much *Latitudinarians*, as to lose this Notion of the *Segullab*; and grow *indifferent* in their *Rites* and *Customs*: If they shou'd *Inter-marry* with the *Nations*, whither they are scatter'd, and conform to their *Customs* and *Manners*, they wou'd soon lose both their *Name* and *Religion*; and by being *mixt* with the rest of the *World*, grow undistinguish'd from them, as a *River* when it is empty'd into the *ocean*.

If it be objected, that then the foresaid *Promise* of *God* wou'd be broken, of preserving them for ever a distinct *People*: And therefore, That this *Promise* stands in the way against their *Conversion*.

I answer, that it did not stand in the way against their *Conversion*, in the beginning of *Christianity*. For the *Jews* who then turn'd *Christians*, did not at all, for that, lose their
Name

Name or Nation. And they were plainly distinguish'd from the *Converts* of the *Gentiles.* (b)

To make this more clearly understood, let us consider, that when *Christ* first sent forth his *Apostles*, their *Commission* was limited to the *Jews* only, in the strictest Sense, (i) *go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any City of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel.* Here the *Samaritans*, tho' *Jews*, are excluded, because they were *Schismatics*, and not strictly within the *Segullah*. And thus it continu'd all *Christ's* Lifetime. The *Gospel* went not without the *Pale* of the *Segullah*. After *Christ's Resurrection*, then he extended their *Commission* further, and bade them, (k) *go, and Preach among all Nations, but still beginning at Jerusalem.* To shew that there the *Christian Segullah* was first establish'd; and deriv'd from thence, as from the *Root*, to spread among all *Nations*. But it appears not that the *Apostles*, even long after that time, understood the full extent of this their *Commission*: For till the *Vision* of the *Sheet*, *Acts* x. *Peter* himself did not know that the *Gentiles* were capable of being admitted into the *Christian Segullah*: Of which he was convinc'd by a great *Miracle* then shewn in the *Descent*

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of

(b) *Acts* vi. 1. xxi. 25.(i) *Matth.* x. 5.(k) *Luke*

of the Holy Ghost upon *Cornelius*, &c. which satisfy'd the rest of the *Church* who contend- ed with him, for his Preaching to the *Gentiles*, *A&ts* xi. So that till this time, the *Christian Segullah* consisted of none but of the *Jews* only. Into which the *Gentile Profelytes* were afterwards admitted, even as into the *Jewish Segullah* under the *Law*. *Christ* fore- told the future Calling of the *Gentiles*, (l) *O- ther Sheep have I which are not of this Fold; them also I must bring, and they shall bear my Voice*, said *Christ* to the *Jews*. And signify'd to them, that the *Gentile Converts* shou'd at last be made equal to them; and in some Re- spects be preferr'd before them, in that *Para- ble* of those call'd at the *Eleventh Hour* (m). And that the *First* call'd shou'd be *Last*, and the *Last*, *First*. He shew'd likewise that his *Mercy* extended even to the *Gentiles*, by his *Compassion* to the *Woman of Canaan*. But at the same time, he asserted the *Prerogative* of the *Segullah*, or *Church* of the *Jews*: Whom he calls the *Children* (n), in comparison of whom the *Gentiles* were but *Dogs*, that is, out of the *Segullah* (as it is express'd, *Rev.* xxii. 15.) *I am not sent* (said *Christ* to her) *but to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel*, that is, the *Segullah* was to be set up only with them, to whom only he himself Preach'd;

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(l) *John* x. 16. (m) *Matth.* xx. (n) *Ibid.* xv. 26.

The *Gentiles* were to come in only as *Profelytes* to the *Jews*. And that not by the *Ministry* of *Jesus* himself, but only of his *Apostles*, after his *Ascension*. In all things the *Preferrence* was given to the *Jews*. And the *Christian Segullab* was first fix'd among them. They are the *Natural Branches* (o). *Theirs* is *Christ*, the *Apostles* and first *Christian Church*. And we freely confess, as our *Blessed Lord* has taught us (p), that *Salvation is of the Jews*. He reveal'd not himself to the *Gentiles*, he wou'd not answer a word to *Herod*, or *Pontius Pilate* (q). But he declar'd himself expressly (r) to your *High Priest* and *Sankedrin*. He did good to all, even to the *Gentiles*, and heal'd the *Sick*. His *Mercy* is over *All* his *Works*: But much more eminently to his *Church*, his *Segullab*. The *Childrens Meat* is reserved only for them. *There* only it is to be had. Therefore are all invited to go *thither* for it. All are capable of being adopted *Children*, by their Admission into the *Segullab*: And the *Children* who forsake it, or are justly turn'd out of it, fall to the Condition of *Dogs*, for *without* are *Dogs*.

The *Twelve Apostles* were chosen with respect to the *Segullab* of the *Twelve Tribes*. Our *Saviour* himself makes the Allusion. When he said to them (s), *Ye shall sit upon*

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Twelve

(o) *Rom.* xi. 24. (p) *John* iv. 22. (q) *Luke* xxiii. 9. *Matth.* xxvii. 14. (r) *Ibid.* xvi. 64. (s) *Matth.* xix. 28.

Twelve Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel. And the *Names of the Twelve Tribes* are describ'd (t) as written upon the *Twelve Gates of the New Jerusalem*: And answering thereunto, the *Names of the Twelve Apostles*, upon the *Twelve Foundations*. Then the calling of the *Gentiles* after the *Jews*, was in the like manner signify'd in the *Number of the lxx. (u)* whom our *Lord* ordain'd some time after the *Apostles*. For the *Jews* divided the *World* into *Seventy Nations*; there being just so many *Sons of Shem, Ham, and Japheth*, recorded in the *xth of Genesis*, who are said to be divided after their *Tongues*, and after their *Nations*. Thence the *Jews* conclude, that there was *Seventy Nations*, and *Seventy Languages*: The *Languages* distinguishing the *Nations*; because each sort'd to those of his own *Language*; and so those of each *Language* made a distinct *Nation*. It would be hard otherwise to conjecture how the *World* shou'd be divided into several *Nations*, without such a *force and necessity* put upon them, and leading them, I may say, *Irresistably* into it, by the *Miraculous Division of Languages*. For we cannot very easily suppose, that the *whole World* shou'd meet together, to *Canton* it out into several *Nations*, by a *free and equal Vote*, and to *number out who*, and how *many* shou'd belong

(t) *Rev.* xxi. 12, 14.(u) *Luke* x. 1.

belong to each *Nation*: And to name all the *Kings* or *Governors* of each *Nation*, as it is done in the xth of *Genesis*.

Now the *Jews* believe that this *Division* of the *World* into *Seventy Nations*, was done by *God* with a particular Respect to his *Segullab* to be afterwards set up in *Israel*; whose *Sons*, that descended with him into *Egypt*, are Recorded, *Gen.* xlvi. and are just *Seventy*. They think this to be intimated, *Deut.* xxxii. 8. where it is said, *When the most High divided to the Nations their Inheritance, when he separated the Sons of Adam, he set the Bounds of the People, according to the Number of the Children of Israel.* And ver. 7. shews this to have been a *Tradition* of the *Jews*, in the *Days of Moses*.

Therefore, as our *Blessed Saviour* sent out at first *Twelve Apostles*, with respect to the *Twelve Tribes*, and limited them to preach to none other: So did he afterwards appoint other *Seventy* also, with respect to the other *Nations* of the *World*, who were, in time, to be brought into the *Segullab*. And it is observable, that in the *Commission* given to the *Seventy*, *Luke* x. there is no such *Restriction* as is given to the *Twelve*, *Matth.* x. 5. of not going to the *Gentiles*, or *Samaritans*. Tho' the *Door* was not fully open'd to the *Gentiles*, till the *Vision* of the *Sheet*, *Acts* x. as before has been said.

After this, the *Gentiles* came in abundantly to the *Segullah*. But the *first Christian Church* was wholly of the *Jews*, and establish'd in *Jerusalem*. Whose *Bishop* did answer to the *Higb Priest*; and was the *Principal of Unity* to the *Christian Jews*, as the *Higb Priest* was to the other. So that the *Segullah* was prefer'd intire; only transferr'd from the *Jewish Higb Priest*, to the *Jewish Bishop*. It was not the *Gentiles* who converted the *Jews* to *Christianity*; but the *Jews* converted the *Gentiles*: And the *Gentiles* came in to the *Christian Jewish Church*: And appeal'd to it, upon all Occasions (x). And thus it continu'd till after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. But the Name of *Jews* seems to have been appropriated to the *Infidel Jews* upon their many and notorious *Rebellions*, under their several *false Messiahs*, in which the *Christian Jews* were not concerned; nor in the *Punishments* and *Odium* which thereupon follow'd, and the *Laws* that were made against the *Jews*, and so, by degrees, came to lose the Name of *Jews*; and became undistinguish'd from the *Gentile Christians*: For then the Name of *Jew* grew by Custom, to be a Discrimination of *Religion*, and not only of a *Nation*. So that when a *Jew* now turns a *Christian*, he is no longer call'd a *Jew*.

But

(x) *Acts* xi.

But when the time shall come (God send) that there will be a *General Conversion* of the *Jews*, then there will be no reason to take from them the Name of *Jews*: That Name will then only distinguish their *Nation*. And it will then, no doubt, be the most *Honourable* of any upon the Earth: To whom pertaineth the *Adoption*, and the *Glory*, and the *Covenants* (y), and the giving of the *Law*, and the *Service* of *God*, and the *Promises*; whose are the *Fathers*; and of whom, as concerning the *Flesh*, *Christ* came.

Then it will no longer be thought a *Reproach* in *Spain* and *Portugal* to own, that they are (as before has been quoted from the *Learned Jew*) descended of the Race of the *Jews*: And to take that *Name* upon themselves. And other *Nations* will strive for the same *Privilege*. Then may be fulfill'd, even literally, what is written (z), *One shall say; I am the Lords; and another shall call himself by the Name of Jacob: And another shall subscribe with his Hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the Name of Israel*. And thus the *Name* and *Nation* of the *Jews* will be *Magnify'd* and *Exalted* above all that are upon the face of the Earth: And *perpetuated* according to the foremention'd *Promise* of *God*, while *Sun* and *Moon* shall endure. And then, when the fulness of the *Gentiles* shall

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come

(y) *Rom.* ix. 4, 5.(z) *Isaiah* xliv. 5.

come in, the *Jews* will be the *Head* and not the *Tail*, and, as God has promis'd you, (a) *Thou shalt be above only; and thou shalt not be beneath. And the Lord thy God shall set thee on High, above all the Nations of the Earth.*

Then shall the *Ten Tribes* appear; who now perhaps are the greatest *Monarchies* upon Earth, and then will be acknowledged as such.

See what a *Glorious State* of your *Nation* depends upon your *Conversion!* And it may be more *Glorious* than all this that I have said. Even all that *Temporal Grandeur* and *Empire* which you expect. Tho', when all that is done, it comes infinitely short of the *Heavenly* and *Eternal Glories*, which our *Messiah* has purchas'd for us. And of which all these *Earthly Greatnesses* are, in their utmost Extent, but faint *Types* and *Shadows*; and therefore far from the *Primary* and *Ultimate* Intendment of the *Law*; which is already fulfill'd in the *Spiritual Conquests* and *Reign* of our *Messiah* over all the *Powers of Hell* and *Death*.

I take not upon me to determine, that the Preservation of the *Name* and *Nation* of the *Jews*, upon their *Conversion*, will be just as I have said. But this we may depend upon, that the *Promise* of God will be fulfill'd: And that he will never want means to bring it to pass. And therefore, that the *Conversion* of the
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(a) *Deut.* xxviii. 1, 12.

the *Jews* will be no hindrance to the *perpetuating* of their *Name* and *Nation*, as he has *promis'd*.

And let their *Conversion* begin (*cum Bono Deo*) in this *Church* and *Nation*; where the good *providence* of *God* has prepar'd the way, by freeing you *Jews* here from those *Obstacles* which obstruct your way in other *Christian* Countries. Here you see no *Images* or *Pictures* of the *great God* in our *Churches*; nothing in our *Worship* which you can call *Idolatry* or *Superstition*. Here you may see * an *Episcopacy*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*, answerable to your *High Priest*, *Priests*, and *Levites*: And the *Segullab* of the *Temple* perpetuated and continu'd in the *Church*. In which, as in the *Temple*, and now in your *Synagogues*, the *Publick Service* and *Worship* of *God* is celebrated in the *vulgar Language* of the *Nation*, with the *Solemnity* and *Gravity* of a well compos'd and digested *Liturgy*. And lastly, here are no *Forfeitures* or *Mulcts* upon you for your acknowledging and returning to your true *Messiah*. But you may reasonably presume, that all due encouragement will be given to you towards so glorious a *Change*: And to convince you, that we seek not *Yours* but *You*, the *Lord* open your *Eyes*!

2. Let me add, that you will be here free from another great *Scandal* which you have met

* *Hierom ad Ecagr.*

met with more frequently in *Holland*, that is, *Socinianism*, to which some that oppos'd you there made too near Approaches. And if they had Converted you, it had not been to *Christianity*, but rather to *Idolatry*, in paying *Divine Honours* and *Adoration* to *Christ*, while they suppose him but a *Creature*. And they deny * any to be *Christians*, who refuse this *Divine Adoration* and *Invocation* to *Christ*. Whereby they have excluded all our *English Unitarians* (as the *Socinians* here call themselves) from being *Christians*, who deny this to *Christ*; tho' they (sometimes when they boast of their *Antiquity* and *Universality*) derive themselves from these transmarine *Socinians*; and pretend to be of one *Faith* with them. But your Learned *Jew* before-mention'd argues against them, that *Christ* cou'd not be the *Heavenly King*, unless he were *God* himself (whatever the *Socinians* dream to the contrary) because that no mere *Creature* cou'd be present and assist every where. † *Non potest esse Rex Cælestis, nisi fuerit Deus ipse (quicquid Sociniani contrarium somniaverint) et enim nulla pura Creatura potest ubique Assistere & Providere.* This vast *Prejudice* you will likewise avoid in the *Church* of *England*, where these *Socinian Heresies*, on both sides, are detested and exploded.

If

* *Racov. Catech. Sect. 6. c. 1.* † *Limbor. Collat. p. 69.*

If you take *Scandal* that such difference shou'd be amongst those who call themselves *Christians*, remember that your *Sadduces* deny'd the *Resurrection* (b), and both *Angels* and *Spirits*. Which takes away the future State of *Heaven*. And this you now believe *, and make it a great *Article* of your *Creed*: And say, that it was always the *Faith* of the *Jews*. Therefore you cannot object it against us, that there shou'd be *Divisions*, even in *fundamental* Points, and *Schisms* amongst us; since there has been the same amongst your selves, your *Samaritans*, *Sadduces*, &c. And you will not think that this hurts the *Truth*, to those who hold it.

III. There is yet one Great and the Master-Difficulty of all, that stops the way to your Conversion, which I have reserv'd to consider by it self in this last Place, because it is the *Foundation* of all those that lie on your side: And which, if clearly remov'd will compleat your *Conversion* so far, as to leave you no other Defence, but plain *Obstinacy*. It is that loose and *precarious* Account which you give of the *Ground* and *Foundation* of your *Faith*, on purpose to avoid that Demonstration which there is for the truth of the *Gospel*, and as said before, there is the same for the truth of the *Law*: But you will rather quit that *Irrefragable*

(b) *Acts* xxiii. 8. * *Limbor. Collat.* p. 105.

gable and sure *Foundation*, and lose the *certainty* of your *Law*, than yield to the *same* or *greater Certainty* that there is for the *Gospel*. Or otherwise you have not yet known the true *Foundation* upon which you ought to stand.

For the learned *Jew* * before-mention'd establishes the *Faith* of the *Jews*, not upon any grounds of *Certainty* of which other Men may judge besides the *Jews*, which are common to all Men, and stand upon the general *Reason* and *Conviction* of *Mankind*: But only upon the *Credit* they are to give to their *Fathers*, not as *Men*, but as their *Fathers*, and as they stand in that particular *Relation* to them: For *God* (says he) *does not send us to the Gentiles, to ask of them; but bids us ask only of our Fathers, and give full credit to them. And therefore* (continues he) *if the Tradition of our Fathers told us the same of Moses, as it does of Christ, that is, That those Matters of Fact which are written of him in the Law, were not so done as he there tells; we shou'd as little believe Moses, or what he wrote, as we do the Gospel; which we disbelieve for the same Reason, viz. Because our Fathers tell us, that those things related in the Gospel, were not so done, as is there related.*

Ans. 1. Your *Fathers* have not told you so. They have confess'd to the *Matters of Fact* recorded

* *Limbor. Collat.* p. 130.

recorded in the *Gospels*. Nor can you deny them, without answering the *first Part* of this Discourse, and joining with the *Deists* against all *Revelations* whatsoever, as well those made to *Moses*, as those given by *Christ*. Your *Fathers* indeed said, that *Christ* wrought wonderful Works by the Power of *Beelzebub*. But that is confessing to the *Matter of Fact*. And may be objected against the *Miracles* of *Moses*, or any other whatsoever. Which is before consider'd, *p. 2, 3, &c.*

But as your *Fathers* who believ'd not in *Christ*, when he came, cou'd not, nor did they deny the *Matters of Fact* of *Christ*; and so give the strongest sort of *Evidence*, that of *Enemies* to the *Truth* of them; and, consequently, to the *Truth* of his *Doctrine*; which they were brought to vouch: So, as before is told, *p. 65.* Many *Myriads* of your *Fathers* did embrace his *Doctrine*; and by the Computation there made, there must be many more *Myriads* of their *Posterities*, than of the *Infidel Jews*. So that here the question is not betwixt the *Tradition* of your *Fathers* and of the *Gentiles*: But of those of your *Fathers* who did believe, and those who did *not believe* in *Christ*. For *Christianity* is nothing else but a *Tradition* of the *Jews*: to which the *Gentiles* did come in. For as shewn before, the *First Christian Church* was wholly *Jewish*, without any mixture of the *Gentiles* for a considerable time.

Now

Now then, since you have the *Tradition* of your *Fathers* on both sides, what method are you to take? What method did you take in the contrary *Traditions* of the *Ten Tribes*, which grew among them, in succeeding Ages, after their defection to *Idolatry* under *Jeroboam*? Your learned *Jew** gives a good *Rule*, viz. To recur to the *Original* pretended of each *Tradition*: And there see upon what *Foundation* it began. That of *Moses* was grounded upon *Miracles* exhibited before all the People. Not so of *Jeroboam*, who pretended no such thing: Only to give a different *Exposition* of the *Law* of *Moses* to countenance his *Idolatry*; which *Exposition* became, in time, a *Tradition* to their *Posterities*.

And this is exactly your Case, as to *Christianity*. Your *Fathers* did at first embrace it upon the *Conviction* of those many *Miracles* shewn publicly before their Faces. But those of your *Fathers* who did not believe, did not deny the *Matters* of *Fact*; only put a different *Construction* upon them, saying that they were wrought by *Beelzebub*.

And those *Jews* who *believed*, and their *Posterities*, are many more (as before shewn) than those *Jews* who remained in their *Infidelity*. If that were an *Argument*. For the *Tradition* of *Two Tribes* was *true*, and that of *Ten* was *false*. Therefore we must recur to the *Original*;

* *Limbor. Collat. N.-v. p. 138. 140.*

Original; and that must determine the *Tradition* on either side. And the Argument insisted upon in the *first Part* against the *Deists* stands *whole* and *irrefragably* on our side: And besides has the *Tradition* of all your *Fathers*, so far as to acknowledge the *Matters of Fact* (which in Consequence is the whole) and the Major Number were *convinc'd* by them. Or if not the Major Number then, yet certainly much more so now in their *Posterities*; having, by the *Miraculous Providence* of God, escap'd the dreadful *Destruction* at *Jerusalem*, and under your several *false Messiahs*, which pursu'd those of your *Fathers* only who *harden'd* themselves in their *Obstinacy* against *Christ*. So that the *Tradition* of your *Fathers* does not lie in your way, to *prejudice* you against *Christianity*: The most it can oblige you to, is to examine the several *Traditions* of your *Fathers*. And that is it to which we wou'd invite you. Consider then first the *Tradition* of your *Christian Fathers*, who call themselves by the *Name* of their *Messiah*, as you have done by the *Names* of your *Fathers*, *Heber*, and *Israel*, and *Judah*. And this was foretold by the *Prophet*, (c) *Thou shalt be called by a New Name, which the Mouth of the Lord shall name*. Therefore tho' these your *Fathers* have lost the *Name* of *Jews*, yet they may say in the words of the same *Prophet*,

(c) *Isaiah* lxii. 3.

phet (d), Doubtless thou art our Father, tho' Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy Name is from Everlasting. This is an *Everlasting Name* by which they are now call'd, even the *Name of our God*; whereas they were heretofore call'd only by the *Name of your Fathers in the Flesh*; but now of your *Father in Heaven*. Consider I say the *Tradition* of these your *Christian Fathers*, that it is on the *Affirmative* side; whereas the *Tradition* of your *unbelieving Fathers* is altogether upon the *Negative*, particularly in that great *Article* of our *Faith* the *Resurrection of Christ*. Which being done in the sight only of a few *Soldiers* who were capable of being *brib'd*, you trust wholly to their *no Evidence*, That *his Disciples stole him away while they slept*. For how cou'd they know this, if they were *Asleep*? Yet this is all the *Foundation* you have for your *Negative*. But for the *Affirmative*, there were (e) *many infallible Proofs*, *Christ being seen of his Disciples forty Days*, and *speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*. (f) *He was seen of Cephas, then of the Twelve, after that he was seen of above 500 Brethren at once; of whom the greater Part* (says our *Apostle*) *remain unto this present*, when he wrote. These were too many to be *brib'd*, not with *large Money* (g), as you
gave

(d) *Isaiah* lxxiii. : 6. (e) *Acts* i. 3. (f) *Cor.* xv. 5, 6, 7, 8.
(g) *Matth.* xviii. 12.

gave to the *Soldiers*: But with *Stripes* and *Imprisonments*, and *Death*, to have conceal'd such a *Forgery*; when any *one* of them might not only have avoided these *Persecutions*, but, no doubt, have got much more *large Money* than you gave to the *Soldiers*, for such a foolish *Excuse* as they made: For any *one* of these 500 cou'd have effectually discover'd the *Contrivance*, if it was one; and stitied *Christianity* in its *Cradle*. And one *Evidence* on that side, would, at that time, have born down 500 on the other. And the *Christians* putting you to the *Trial* of this, when these *many Witnesses* were *alive*: And that not one of them cou'd be tamper'd with, either by *Bribes* or *Threats*! That *all* shou'd stand it out, even to the *Death*!

But we have surer *Evidence* than all this. Even *Infallible*. And that is, the many *Miracles* which the *Apostles* shew'd in Attestation to the *Truth* of this. *Miracles* as *Flagrant* and *Notorious* as those which *Christ* himself had wrought. And which have all the *four Marks* before mention'd, that do *infallibly* demonstrate the *Truth* of any *Matter of Fact*.

These are the *Grounds* of the *Tradition* of your *Christian Fathers*.

And all the *Ground* for the *Tradition* of your *Unbelieving Fathers*, is nothing else but that *senseless Story* of the *Soldiers*, sufficiently *ridiculous* to confute it self, were there no *Evidence* at all on the other side.

Let me add to this, That your *Christian Fathers*, had all these Difficulties to struggle with, which do now keep you back from *Christianity*. They hung as much as you upon the Expectation of a *Temporal Kingdom* of the *Messiah*. The very *Apostles* of our Lord were not wrought off of this, all the time that he liv'd with them. And they resum'd their Hopes of it, after his *Resurrection* (b). They were ignorant of his *Resurrection* (i). For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the Dead. And so far were they from *Concerting* of this, that they wou'd not *Believe* it, when it was first told them by those who had seen it. (k) Their words seem'd to them as idle Tales, and they believed them not. And when all the other *Apostles* had seen the Lord, yet wou'd not *Thomas* believe even them; till he had more than even *Ocular Demonstration*, to thrust his Hand into his Side, and put his Finger into the print of the Nails (l). Nor was this peculiar to *Thomas*. For when *Christ* appeared first to the rest, they were as hard to believe. And he afforded them the like *Demonstration* (m), not only to see and hear him speak to them, but to handle him, and examine the Wounds in his Hands and Feet, and further to eat before them. And as a yet more forcible

(b) *Acts* i. 6. (i) *John* xx. 9. (k) *Luke* xxiv. 11. (l) *John* xx 25, 27. (m) *Luke* xxiv. 39 to 49.

ble Conviction, he minded them how he had told them all this before. And that it was agreeable to the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*. And he said unto them, *these are the words I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me. Then opened he their Understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures; and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the Dead the third Day: And that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name, among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are Witnesses of these things.* Our Blessed Lord suffer'd his *Disciples* to be thus slow in believing, thereby to confirm *our Faith* the more. But he wou'd not permit them to proceed upon their *Mission*, notwithstanding all this *Evidence*, till they should have yet further *Credentials*, such as no Man cou'd refuse, without the highest *Obstinacy*; and which is the utmost that *God* can outwardly exhibit, that is, the *Power of Miracles*. But tarry ye (says he) *in the City of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with Power from on High.* And this was granted them at first, by a most *Stupendous Miracle*, in the *descent of the Holy Ghost* at *Pentecost*, and inspiring them, in an *Instant*, with all *Languages*: Which was visible not only to the *Jews*, but to *Multitudes* of other

Nations, then at Jerusalem (n). And the same Day, about three Thousand were Converted. And by the many Miracles which the Apostles were enabled to work afterwards, many *Myciades* Myriads of the Jews, and a great Company of your Priests were obedient to the Faith (o) These were your Fathers. Therefore reject not their Tradition. Compare with this, the Tradition of your other Fathers who believ'd not; which is built only upon a Negative, of which there is no proof at all.

Then I desire you to recollect what has been said before, from p. 111, to p. 123. of your having forsaken the constant Tradition of your Fathers before Christ came, in so many Particulars as are there set down; and having invented new and contrary Traditions, on purpose to prejudice your selves against Christianity. See likewise before Sect. iv. p. 26.

And if Tradition must take place, why not the most Ancient? These sure are most Authentick. And they are more Traditions than the latter: For it is Age that makes Tradition. Yet you reject the most Ancient Traditions of your Fathers; while you set up their Tradition, as your only infallible Rule!

This is the first Answer I give to your Objection of following the Tradition of your Fathers,

(n) Acts ii. 41.

(o) Acts xxi. 20. vi. 7.

thers, upon which you lay so great a Stress. And which being remov'd, you will have little left to say. But tho' I think this *Answer* very sufficient, yet because this is the main *Hinge* of the *Controversy*, as your Learned *Jew* has stated it: And *insists* mightily, and almost *solely* upon it, thro' all his *Dispute* with *Limborch*: And thence we may reasonably suppose that it is the *Jugulum Causee*, the last *effort* you have to defend your selves, I will therefore proceed upon it, even as stated by your selves, and shew further the weakness of it, supposing that none of your *Fathers* had embrac'd *Christianity*.

Answ. 2. This, as stated by your selves, is running into that *Circle*, in which the *Church* of *Rome* have intangled themselves, of proving the Authority of the *Church* by the *Scriptures*: And the *Authority* of the *Scriptures* from the *Church*. Which cannot be avoided, while, in this *Dispute*, they consider the *Church* as exercising any *Act* of *Authority*: For that *Authority* must be *prov'd*, before it can be *acknowledg'd*. And if it be *prov'd* from the *Scripture*: And the *Scripture* receives its *Authority* from the *Church*: Then the *Authority* of the *Church*, is *prov'd* only from the *Authority* of the *Church*.

But if the *Church* be brought herein only as *Witnesses*, with the rest of *Mankind*, upon the Common *Reason* and *Principles* of *Mankind*; the assurance of the *Senses* of *Mankind* and the infallible manner of deducing *Matters*

of *Fact* from former *Ages*, and distinguishing the *true* from the *false*; and those which are *certainly true*, from those which only *may* be true (which is the method taken in the *first Part* of this Discourse) then the *Authority* of the *Holy Scriptures*, and the *Facts* therein contain'd, being established upon the *Common Principles* of *Mankind*; the *Church* may justly build her *Authority* upon what she finds given to her in the *Holy Scriptures*.

And thus may you justly argue from what you find attributed to your *Church* by the *Law*: Having first *vouch'd* the *Truth* of the *Matters of Fact*, of *Moses*, as deliver'd in your *Law*, from the *Notoriety* of the *Facts*, and *Impossibility* of any *Imposture* therein, as is done in the *first Part*.

But if, as this your *Learned Jew* does, you ground the *Truth* of *Moses* himself, and all that is said of him in your *Law*, and consequently of the *Law* it self, upon that *Credit* only which your *Law* bids you to have to your *Fathers*, as being *your Fathers*, you give up the whole Cause; you run into the *Circle* of believing the *Law*, for your *Fathers*; and your *Fathers*, for the *Law*, which is proving the same thing by it self.

Ansiv. 3. Your *Samaritans* vouch'd the *Tradition* of your *Fathers* and theirs, against you.
(p) *Our Fathers worshipp'd in this Mountain;*
and

and ye say that in Jerusalem is the Place where Men ought to worship.

Your Ten Tribes did vouch likewise the Tradition of their Fathers (q) for their Idolatries, and many vile Abominations. Nay even the Two Tribes, in their Captivity vouch'd the same. (r) *We will burn Incense unto the Queen of Heaven; and pour out Drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our Fathers, our Kings, and our Princes, in the Cities of Judah, and in the Streets of Jerusalem.*

If you say, that they deviated in this from the Law. And that in this Case we must have recourse to the first giving of the Law, and the Ocular Evidence that was then shewn to all the People of its being sent to them from God; as has been before quoted from your Learned Jew. I answer, that this is still appealing from the Tradition of your Fathers; and shews that there is something else to be look'd to. This is owning that there may be a corrupt Tradition of your Fathers.

And therefore tho' the Jews were bidden to learn these things from their Fathers, who had seen them (there was all the reason in the World for it, for they cou'd learn them from none other) yet the Assurance and Credibility of what their Fathers had seen was not grounded upon that Relation in which

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they

(q) Jer. ix. 14.

(r) Jer. xlv. 14.

they stood to them, as being their *Fathers*; but as their *Fathers* were *Men*, and as such cou'd not be *deceiv'd* in what they *saw* and *heard*. And the *assurance* of that *Tradition* by which these *Facts* were convey'd to *After Ages*, was not solely grounded upon the *kindness* and *affection* of their *Fathers*, who cannot be suppos'd *willing* to *impose* upon their *Posterities*, as this *Learned Jew* does argue: But upon the *Nature* of the *Tradition*, which was *incapable* of any *Imposture*, as has been argu'd in the *first Part*.

For other *Men* will pretend to the same *kindness* towards their *Children*, as the *Jews*. And *Men*, that are *deceiv'd* themselves, will transmit their *deceits* to their *Children*. Thus all *Errors* are continu'd. Therefore we must recur to the *Original*, and there examine the *Truth*, upon the common *Principles* of *Mankind*: And see how this has been transmitted to us: And bring the *Nature* of the *Tradition* to the *Standard* of the same *Common Principles*.

But if the *Jews* will stick to the *Tradition* of their *Fathers*; as the ultimate *Rule*, from which there is to be no *Appeal*, then they must stick to *all* their *Traditions*, *Right* or *Wrong*. For if they pretend to any *Rule* whereby to judge of their *Traditions*, then their *Traditions* are not the *Ultimate Rule*.

And it is strange to see how far this *false Notion* has carry'd the *Jews*, even to acknowledge no other certain *Proof* for the Being of a
God,

God, but the *Law* of *Moses*! Nor any other for that, but the *Tradition* of their *Fathers*, which I come next to insist upon.

Ans. 4. This *Foundation* which the *Jews* have given of their *Faith*, can never convert any other People to their *Religion*: Because others have the same deference for their *Fathers*, as the *Jews* have for theirs. And the *Jews* can give no Reason to the contrary. Therefore the *Jews* insisting only upon the *Tradition* of their *Fathers*, without further Proof, give the same liberty to all in whatsoever they have receiv'd from their *Fathers*.

This our Learned *Jew* confesses. For being press'd by *Limborch* to shew what Arguments the *Jews* have against the *Heathen*, he freely owns, that they have none at all. And bestows a whole *Chapter* to * prove it. That the *Jews* can only dispute with the *Christians*, who acknowledge the Books of *Moses*. For that the *Jews* have no other *Topick* whereby to prove certainly even that there is a *God*. Nor any other Proof for the Books of *Moses*, than the *Tradition* of their *Fathers*, who they suppos'd wou'd not deceive them; and because these *Books* bid them hearken to their *Fathers*, and not to the *Heathen*. And if any shou'd deny these *Books*, says he, *Est Atheus, quia non habet aliunde Dei existentiam certissime*

* *Limbor. Collat.* p. 136.

me & indubitanter credat. Quamvis ex aliis principiis possit probabiliter conjectari: Neque enim sufficit Ratio, neque quod aliquis dixerit, de quo eadem fieret Inquisitio. Hunc igitur convincere est impossibile, æque ac Dei existentiam ac Mosis Prophetiam, per quam nobis unice constat esse Deum. i. e. He is an Atheist, because he has no other way whereby certainly to believe the existence of a God: Tho' from other Principles it may probably be conjectur'd: For neither is Reason sufficient, nor what any Man says, of which the same Inquisition is to be made. Therefore it is equally impossible to convince such a one, of the Existence of a God, as of the Prophecy of Moses; by which only it appears to us that there is a God. This is mad Work! For there cou'd be no ground to believe Moses; but upon the supposition of the Previous Notion of a God, who sent him. How else did his Miracles vouch his being sent of God? And yet, says the Jew, by the Prophecy of Moses ONLY it appears to us that there is a God! And therefore he concludes, that as for a Heathen who rejects both the Law and the Gospel, Ille neque ad Legem Mosis, neque ad Evangelium solida Ratione convinci queat. i. e. That he cannot be convinc'd by any solid Reason, of the Truth either of the Law of Moses, or of the Gospel. And therefore, that there is no disputing with such an one. Contra Ethnicum non oportet disputare, is the Title of this Chapter, i. e. That we ought not to dispute

dispute against an Heathen. For this the Jew confesses freely, when being ask'd, *If an Heathen shou'd deny that Moses was a Prophet, only a cunning Man who impos'd upon the People, by what Arguments the Jew cou'd prove the Divine Mission of Moses, which wou'd not as strongly prove the Divine Mission likewise of Christ? Respondeo* (says he) *me nulla Demonstratione Mosis Prophetiam Divinam esse, contra Ethnicum probare posse: Quippe id demonstrabile non est. i. e. I answer, that I cannot prove by Demonstration against an Heathen, that the Prophecy of Moses is Divine; because it is not demonstrable.*

And he says the same as to the *Mahometans*, that they have their *Tradition* too, deriv'd from their *Fathers* of the *Miracles* and *Divine Mission* of *Mahomet*. And therefore that they can say to us, *Quod si Mahometi Revelationem negaverimus, Mosis etiam & Christi negare possunt, cum nullam Rationem producere queamus, quæ sive seclæ confirmationi non inserviat, i. e. That if we deny the Revelation of Mahomet, they may likewise deny those of Moses and of Christ, seeing we can produce no reason for them, that will not serve likewise for the Confirmation of their Sect.* And he grounds all upon this Bottom, which he takes as granted, *Quod alicujus Præteriti nec etiam Dei existentia, ulla Ratione demonstrari potest. i. e. That the existence of any thing that is past, no not of God, can be demonstrated*

monstrated by any Reason. Ideo argumentum nequit esse cum Ethnico. That therefore there cannot be any Argument against an Heathen.

Now here I beseech you to consider, how you have given up the whole *Foundation* upon which the *Truth* of your *Law* does stand; lest you shou'd be forc'd to submit to the *Truth* of the *Gospel*, which stands upon the same *Foundation*. You have render'd your *Law* wholly *precarious*, while you tell all the *World*, that there is no *Reason* to be given for it, that is, none to convince an *Heathen*, a *Mahometan*, or any who denies it. For *Reason* is *Reason* to all the *World*. And nothing can be *true*, for which there is not a *Reason* sufficient to convince *Gainfayers*.

You have by this confirm'd both *Heathens*, and *Mahometans*, as well as *Christians* in what you think to be gross *Errors*, and displeasing to God, by allowing them the same *Foundation* for their *Faith* that you have for yours, i. e. The *Tradition* of their *Fathers*. And therefore you think that they have the same *Reason* to stick to *theirs*, as you have to stick to *yours*. Which your *Learned Jew* often confesses. Speaking of the *Reasons* produc'd on the *Christian* side, he says *, *Et mea saltem sententia satis Bonæ sunt & Efficaces, ut Christiani eas amplectantur, & in sua Fide roborentur:*

* *Limbor. Celsat. p. 132 & sibi p. 135.*

reborentur: Non vero ut Judæi Christiani fiant. i. e. They are, in my Opinion, good Reasons and sufficient for the Christians to embrace them, and to be strengthened in their Faith: But not for the Jews, that they shou'd become Christians. This is a strange sort of Reasoning! For these *Reasons* cannot be *good Reasons*, unless they are *true*. And they cannot be *true* to *one*, and *false* to *another*, if they are rightly Apprehended; unless the same *Reason* can be both *true* and *false*. It is impossible that both *Judaism*, and *Christianity* can be *true*; as impossible as that our *Jesus* is the *Messiah*, and that he is *not* the *Messiah*. And there can be no good *Reason* for our believing him to be the *Messiah*, which must not operate as strongly for *your* believing of it. That is, if it be *true*, you ought to believe it. And if it be *not true*, we ought *not* to believe it. Therefore your yielding that we have *sufficient Reason* to believe it, must conclude inevitably against your selves, that you think it to be *true*: Otherwise you cou'd not think that we had *sufficient Reason* to believe it.

If you say, that this was a *slip* in that learned *Jew*: That he ought not to have made this *Concession*: And that you are not bound by it. Consider, that this was all that was left him to say. That he has manag'd your Cause with great *Subtilty*. That he took this way to avoid *answering* the *plain* and *undeniable Reasons* which prove the *Truth* of the *Gospel*; by yielding them to be such as to *Christians*, but that

that they are not the same as to the *Jews*. Which turns the Cause upon a new Foot; and diverts the Question.

But if you like not his Management, and think you can make a better *Plea* for your selves, then you must answer the *Reasons* given on the behalf of *Christianity*, particularly those urg'd in the *First Part* against the *Deists*. And this is all that I desire to bring you to. And now you have your Choice, whether you will do this; and put your Cause upon this Issue: Or otherwise stick to that *Evasion* which this Learned *Jew* has made for you.

There is another thing I wou'd ask you upon this Head. You expect the *Conversion* of all the World to your *Religion*, in the Reign of your *Messiah*. And you have given this as one Reason of your *Dispersion*, that you might *Convert* all *Nations* among whom you are *scatter'd*, as has been taken notice of before.

Now I wou'd ask, how you are to *Convert* them? You confess that there are no *Arguments* to be us'd against them. You leave the *Christians* in full possession of their *Faith*, and say, they have *sufficient Reason* for it. And for *Heathens*, &c. who do not acknowledge the Books of *Moses*, you say, they are not to be *disputed* with. How then are they to be *converted* by you.

Besides that your learned *Jew* complains (see before p. 61.) that the *Jews* are *per-*
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verted to the *Idolatries* and other *Corruptions* of the *Nations* where they live, instead of *Converting* these *Nations*.

But suppose that it will be otherwise when your *Messiah* comes; and that then, or some time before, you will begin to convert the *Nations*; this *Conversion* cannot be by *Arguments*, for you confess you have none against them. How then? There is no other *Way* but that of *Mabomet*, by the *Sword*. And this is the way it seems that you expect. Your learned *Jew* * says, that there is no other *Miracle* needful for the *Messiah*, whereby to vouch his *Mission*, but one only, viz. *To gather the Jews out of all Countries of the World; to restore the Throne of David to its ancient and a greater Majesty: And to bring all Kings and Nations to the true Worship of God; and to love and esteem the Jews, which (says he) would be such a Miracle, and so Notorious, as to leave no room to doubt of it.*

The *uncertainty* of this *Mark* of your *Messiah*, is shewn before, p. 44.

In the next place, this would be no greater a *Miracle* than the *Successes* of the *Romans*, and others from a small *Beginning*; or of *Mabomet*, who boasts the same. And to which every *Wickedness* has a *Title*, so it be *prosperous* enough.

Your *Rabbi Menasse* (*de Resurrectione*, l. ii. c. xxi. as quoted by *Hornbeck contra Judæos*,

* *Limbor. Collat.* p. 55.

dæos, l. ii. c. i. p. 114.) gives up this Argument, and says, *Non est tantum Miraculum---* That it is not so great a Miracle, if the Messiah shou'd conquer many Nations and Empires; since we see it often happen, that mean and abject Men have arisen to Kingdoms and Empires, and become Lords of many Lands. Yet this Learned Jew, who writes later, is forc'd to come back again to this no Miracle; for they can find no other.

And in expectation of this, you reject all the true and indubitable Miracles of our Messiah: And his much more Miraculous Conquests of the Gentile World, as well as of Myriads of the Jews, without force of Arms, or any Allurements to Flesh and Blood: But on the contrary, by inviting them to Self-denial, Sufferings, and Death. Which sure is a more Extraordinary, and more Miraculous sort of Conquest, and shews more of Divine Power, than what is perform'd by the Arm of Flesh, outward Force, or sensual Incitements, like that which you expect, and like that of Mahomet, and other Impostors

But tho' you shou'd Conquer, as you expect, yet it will not follow that you will thereby Convert all Nations.

It is not in a Man's own Power to change his Sentiment of Things, without Sufficient Reason to convince him, at least what he thinks a Sufficient Reason. Much less can such a Force be put upon him by any other. No outward Conquest can reach to the Soul, or
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alter our *Judgment* and *Understanding*.

And therefore, according to what you now profess, that you have no *Argument* on your side, but your long expected *Conquest*, it will not follow, if you obtain'd it to *Morrow*, that you shou'd thereby *convert* any one Man in the *World* to your *Religion*. For perhaps there is not one Man in the *World* that thinks *Conquest* alone to be the true *Decision* of *Controversies* in *Religion*. And if so, then every Man must think that *Religion* to be *false*, which pretends to no other *Title* but that of *Conquest*.

See how *inextricably* you have *involv'd* your selves on all sides, in those various *Shifts* you set up to harden your selves against the flagrant *Truth* of the *Christian* Religion! You have thereby undermin'd the whole *Foundation* upon which the *Truth* of your *Law* it self is demonstrable; and which you can never recover by any other means than those which establish the *Truth* of our *Jesus* being the *Messiah*. Which are the same that establish the *Truth* of *Moses*. And (as has been said) are not compatible to any *Impostor* whatsoever.

You pretend to us *Christians*, that you have no *Arguments* against the *Deists* or *Heathen*. Why? Because it is impossible for you to bring any *Arguments* for the *Truth* of *Moses*, which will not likewise demonstrate more strongly the *Truth* of our *Jesus*. But to the *Heathen*

you say not so. You pretend to *argue* with them, when you can get out of sight of *Christianity*. Then you proceed freely upon the *certain* and *indubitable* Proofs which you have for the *Truth* of *Moses*, when you are not afraid that *Christianity* shou'd come in at the same Door. This appears in your Book *Cofri*, (whether that Story be real or feign'd) which contains your *Arguments* against the *Heathen*. But in the presence of *Christianity* they are all struck dumb, like the *Oracles* among the *Heathen*. Not that the Arguments for the *Truth* of *Moses* are *Fallacious* like those *Oracles*: But as their *Deceit* was superseded by the *Brightness* of the *Gospel*: So are you stopt from daring to make use of the *Truth*, because it makes against you. And you are forc'd to betray the Cause of *Moses*, while you stand out against that of *Christ*. You cannot be true *Jews* or *Disciples* of *Moses*, till you turn *Christians*. Then may you (as we do) freely urge the *Absolute Certainty* of the *Revelation* made to *Moses*: Which now you dare not do, because the same *Topicks* prove as demonstrably the *Truth* of *Christianity*. Rather than admit of which, you have laid your *Foundation* in the *Sand* of your *Fathers Traditions*, so explain'd, as to give you no Advantage above all the *Traditionary Fables* of other *Nations*. Which you allow to have the same *Motives* of *Credibility* to them, as yours to you: And consequently, to be as true as yours.

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This was not the method you took to make *Profelytes* before *Christ* came. Then you had free use of your *Arguments*; and a *Success* proportionable. But now you seem careless what becomes of your *Religion*, so you can overthrow *Christianity*. Therefore having chosen a *False* and *Insufficient Foundation* for your own *Faith*, you wou'd Complement ours with the same.

As your learned *Jew* * does, when he asks, *What Reason there is why a Heathen shou'd believe any who preach'd to him the Christian Faith, and Miracles of Christ and his Apostles?* The *First Part* of this Discourse against the *Deists* is a direct *Answer* to this *Question*. And serves the *Jews* as well as the *Deists*. But this learned *Jew* did, and all the rest of you must think that *Question* to be *Unanswerable*: And as such it is here propos'd. But then will not the *Question* occur, *What Reason the Christians have to believe it?* Or the *Jews* to believe the *Law* and *Miracles* of *Moses*? Your learned *Jew* was aware of this: And therefore obviates it thus, *Neque par Ratio est de Christianis & Judæis, qui non interrupta Traditione, &c.* That there was not the same Reason for the *Belief* of the *Christians* and the *Jews* who receiv'd it by an uninterrupted *Tradition* from their *Fathers*. This puts the *Christian Faith* upon as good a Bottom as the *Jewish*, that is,

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the same, viz. *Tradition* from their *Fathers*. And if they have no other, they both stand *Precariously*, and have no more to say for themselves even than the *Heathen*. This the learned *Jew* does not oppose, and therefore explains himself, that by his *Question* he did not mean those *Heathen* who had long since believ'd the *Gospel*, and so receiv'd it by *Tradition* from their *Fathers*. *Sed quare nunc barbaræ Gentes, in suis Ritibus semper educatæ, nostris Traditionibus fidem præstabunt, eo solum quod a nobis proponantur.* i. e. *But why the now Heathen Nations, who have always been educated in their own Rites, shou'd embrace our Traditions, meerly because they are propos'd to them by us? Indeed meerly because they are propos'd is a very bad Reason.* And yet it is all that the *Jew* thinks there is in the Case, as before is shewn. But here he joins the *Christian* and the *Jewish* Faith together; and makes both stand upon the same Bottom: And that the same with the *Foundation* even of the *Heathen Religion*. That rather than not overthrow *Christianity*, he wou'd sink his own *Religion* with it; and leave no true reveal'd *Religion* in the World (all others but these *falsly* pretending to it) and so serve the ends of the *Deists* to all Intents and Purposes.

He endeavours to rivet this, as he thinks, securely by the long *Tradition* of the *Popish Legend*;

Legends, which, he says *, were believ'd by all *Christendom* for more than a *Thousand* years: And no less Faith given to them than to the *Gospel* it self. His mistakes in reciting *Matter of Fact* I am not now upon. These prevail'd only in the *Latin Church*, nor in all that neither; nor for so long a time as he imagines. The greatest part of the *Christian Church*, in the *East*, in *Africa*, &c. never heard of most of them, nor have to this Day: And those of the *Church of Rome*, who, tho' Men of *Sense*, pretended to believe them, yet durst not put them upon the same foot with the *Holy Gospel*: The *Learned* and more *Knowing* among them call'd them *Piæ Fraudes*, and pleaded for them only as such, as *Pious Cheats* to raise the *Devotion* of the *Simple*, and more *Ignorant* amongst the *People*. But (as said before, †) none of them can pretend to those *four Marks* set down, || whereby the *Truth* of the *Miracles* of *Moses* and of *Christ* are *infalibly* demonstrated. And therefore if any of these *Legends* were *true*, in *whole* or in *part*, yet we cannot have the same *Grounds* for *believing* of them, as we have for the *Law* and the *Gospel*.

IV. Both of which you seem willing to mistake, in your deep *prejudice* to the *Gospel*. For the chief end of the *coming* of the *Messy-*

M 3

ab

* *Limbor.* *Ibid.* p. 133. † *Shon and Easie Method with the Deists*, p. 5. || *Ibid.* p. 42.

ab being (*s*) to bruise the Serpent's Head, who had seduced Man to Sin. (*t*) To finish the Transgression, and to make an end of Sin, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity: You now contend, that Men were never under the Curse of God. * *Quod neque aliquando fuerunt Homines sub Dei Maledictione — Quod non constat ex toto sacro Textu illa Ira Dei contra Genus Humanum, neque illa Æterna Maledictio: Neque memini in quatuor Evangelis me legisse hoc Secretum a Christo fuisse detectum: Quare putamus id postea inventum, ut aliis Dogmatibus fundamentum substerneretur. i. e. That this Wrath of God against Mankind, nor that Eternal Curse, does appear in the whole sacred Text: Neither do I remember to have read in the four Gospels that this Secret was discover'd by Christ: Therefore we think that it was invented afterwards, to lay a Foundation for other Opinions. This is a bold and desperate Assertion. Let any Man read Matth. xxv. 46. and John v. 29. and see whether eternal Judgment be not there threaten'd? And whether these be not as it were repeating the very words of Daniel, Chap. xii. 2. That many of them that sleep in the dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt. Compare likewise, Mark ix. 44. with Isaiah lxvi. 24. And then tell whether there is not a Punishment*

(*s*) Gen. iii. 15. (*t*) Dan. ix. 24. * *Limbor. Collat. p. 54, 55.*

ment after *Death* for the *Wicked*: And whether this be not *reveal'd* as well in the *Old Testament* as in the *New*?

If the *Jew* will *criticise* (as some *Christians* have done) upon the words *Eternal* and *Everlasting*, and say, that they mean not a *Duration* without *End*, I will give two *Answers*.

1. That my business with the *Jew* is not now about the *Eternity* of *Hell*: But whether there be any *Punishment* at all after *Death*. Because all the *Ends* which the *Jew* proposes of the *Messiah's* coming, respect only this *Life*. And they deny any that are *Dead* to have any benefit by the *Messiah* *. And, if so, then his making *Reconciliation* for *Iniquity* cannot deliver any *Mortal* from the *Punishment* after *Death*.

And this *Punishment* being describ'd in the *Texts* before quoted, and several others of the *Old Testament*, to be exceedingly *greater* than any we can endure in this *Life*; consequently the *greatest* benefit that we can receive by the *Messiah*, is totally frustrated by the *Jews*. And they cannot deny but that the *ends* which the *Christians* propose for the coming of the *Messiah*, are exceedingly more *Noble* and more *Beneficial* than those which they propose; And fully as agreeable to the *Letter* of the *Text*, of *bruising* the *Head* of the *Serpent*, and mak-

* *Limbor. Collat.* Num. xvii. p. 70.

ing *Reconciliation* for *Iniquity*, and something more so, than our *Deliverance* from *Worldly Enemies*, who are not so *properly* call'd the *Serpent* as the *Devil* is: And our *Deliverance* from his *Power* is more *strictly* call'd a making an *end* of *Sin*, and *finishing* of *Transgression*; and more *truly* an *everlasting* *Deliverance* (in whatever *Sense* you will take that *Word*) than any *Temporal* *Deliverance*. For if by *Everlasting* you mean only *Temporal*, yet it is the *highest* *Expression* of *Temporal*, and the *greatest* of *Temporal* *Deliverances*.

Let me not be mistaken, as if by *Eternal* and *Everlasting*, the *Worm* not *dying*, and the *Fire* that *never* will be *quenched*, &c. I favour'd at all their *Constructions* which wou'd make all these to mean nothing but *Temporary*, tho' a very *long* *Duration*; but I would not intermix new *Subjects* in this *Discourse*, and expatiate into long *Digressions*; especially where the present *Controversy* does not require it. Therefore I go to my *Second Answer*.

2. If these words, *Eternal*, &c. can be thus turn'd, or if they cannot, I desire to know from the *Jews*, what *plain Text* they have in all the *Law* of *Moses* for *Everlasting Life* in *Heaven*, and in order thereunto, for the *Resurrection* of the *Dead*, which they profess firmly to believe? They gather these from *Texts* which, as themselves confess, do bear another, and a *Temporal* meaning, respecting their

their *outward State* in *this World*: But which withal do (they say) *Typically* represent their *future glorious State* in *Heaven*, their true and everlasting *Canaan*. Yet they will not allow any thing in their *Law* to be a *Type* of the *Messiah*! Why? Because the *Law* does not expressly say, that such a thing is a *Type* of the *Messiah*. Which yet it says as much as that *Canaan* was a *Type* of *Heaven*: That there will be any *Resurrection* of the *Dead*; or *Eternal Life* after that. What expresses *Scripture* have they for what Rabbi *Manasseh Ben Israel*, in his *Treatise of the Resurrection of the Dead*, does affirm to be the common Opinion of the *Rabbins*, viz. *That all the Israelites, even those that are Dead, shall be partakers of the Kingdom of the Messiah*: * *And that to this end, all those that are Dead, shall be rais'd again, by which Miracle the Wicked being converted, shall acknowledge the true God, and forsake their Errors: That then there shall be an end of this World, and a new one arise, or a change of this into a much better Condition, wherein the Moon shall be as bright as the Sun, and the light of the Sun sevenfold more than it is now: At which time the Demons and Evil Spirits shall be destroy'd; and the Trees bear fruit every Month: And then that God shall make a noble Feast to the Righteous out of*
the

* *Liber. Collat. p. 221, 222.*

the Fish the Leviathan: And that there shall be Peace among the wild Beasts; neither shall they hurt Men in that Holy Land: That then the Temple of God shall be built again; and the Holy Land be again divided amongst the Tribes: Where they shall eat, and drink, beget Children, and each be marry'd to his own proper Wife, &c. This *Turks Paradise* after *Death*, they can gather out of the words of the *Law*. They can find there their sumptuous *Fish-dinner* upon the great *Whale Leviathan!* But nothing of the *Heavenly Kingdom* of the *Messiah!* Nothing of their *Deliverance* from *Sin* and *Hell*; but *Eating* and *Drinking*, and *lying* with *Women!* They shou'd, upon this their *Scheme* of the *State* after *Death*, answer the *Question* which one of the *Sadduces* askt our *Saviour*, concerning the seven *Brethren* who had one *Wife*, *whose Wife she shou'd be at the Resurrection?*

And now I beseech you to consider, is it not a fatal *Delusion* this, that you shou'd reject all the plain *Prophecies* of the *Messiah*, because they do not, in such express words as you wou'd dictate, lay open every *Particular* of his *Spiritual State* and *Government*: And (at the same time) turn these *Prophecies* to such *Wild* and *Groundless Fancies*, as are no ways *Typify'd* by your *Sacrifices*, or any *Institution* in your *Law*; nor can fill up, in any tolerable *Measure*, the *Glories* and *Extent* of all those *Magnificent Prophecies* concerning the *Kingdom* of the *Messiah*, wherein God hath prepared

prepared for those who shall be thought worthy of it; not *Wine* and *Women*, and *Eating*, such *Gross Carnal Pleasures*, as we are made capable of in this *frail Life*: But such things as (u) *since the Beginning of the World Men have not heard, nor perceiv'd by the Ear, neither hath the Eye seen.* Yet because they are not particularly *describ'd* (which cannot be so as we cou'd understand them) you will not believe them, or that they reach beyond *Enjoyments of Sense!* And for this sole Reason, you reject your *Messiah*, because he brings you *Glories* so far beyond all that you looked for. Tho' that likewise, in the above quoted *Text*, and many others of your *Scriptures*, has been foretold to you.

And it is likewise shadowed out to you in this, that there was no *Sacrifice* or *Expiation* in your *Law* for the most *heinous Crimes*, such as *Blasphemy*, *Idolatry*, *Murder*, *Adultery*, *Incest*, &c. as your *Learned Jew* confesses*.

Nay *lesser Sins* than these, as that of *Eli's* (x) not effectually *Restraining*, tho' he *Reprov'd* his *Sons*, *were not to be purg'd with Sacrifice, nor Offering for ever.*

Some *Jews* fancy, that the *Yearly Sacrifice* of *Expiation* made an *Atonement* for all their *Sins*.

We

(u) *Isaiah* lxiv. 4.

* *Limbor. Collat.* p. 209.
iii. 14.

(x) *I Sam.*

We see not for this of *Eli's*, and consequently not for *greater Sins*.

The *Yearly Sacrifice* was but a *Sacrifice*, tho' more *Solemn* than the *Daily Sacrifices*; And therefore it purg'd *all* those *Sins* only which cou'd be purg'd by *Sacrifice*.

If *all* the *Sins* of the *Jews* had been purg'd every *Year*, then had they not been *Remember'd*, brought to *Account*, and so grievously *Punish'd* as we have seen, and was oft *threatned* in the *Law*, in after *Ages*, more than to the *Third* and *Fourth* Generation. And it was a noted *Observation* of your *Fathers*, that there was a *Grain* of the *Golden Calf* in all your after-*Judgments*, i. e. That that *Sin* was never totally *Forgiven*: Eut still call'd to *Remembrance* upon every fresh *Provocation*. It is said (y), *I will visit upon her the Days of Baalim, wherein she burnt Incense to them*. And all the *Goodness* and *Godly Reformation* of *Josiah* cou'd not pacify *God* for the *Sins* of *Manasseh*; which (z) *he wou'd not pardon*; but for them, remov'd *Judah* out of his sight. (a) *And surely this Iniquity shall not be purg'd from you, till ye Die, saith the Lord God of Hosts*.

Therefore there were *some Sins* which were not purg'd by the *Legal Sacrifices*: And these were the *greatest* of their *Sins*. They were but

(y) *Hof. ii. 13.*

(z) *2 Kings xxiii. 26. xxiv. 3, 4.*

(a) *Isaiah xxii. 14.*

but the *lesser* sort of *Sins* that were *purg'd* by them. How then were the *Greatest* *purg'd*? If you will say, by *Repentance* only, without any *Sacrifice*.

Ans. The *Lesser Sins* require *Repentance*: And do they need *Sacrifice* too; when the *Greater Sins* are *purg'd* without it? Or are *Greater Sins* more *easily* *purg'd* than the *Lesser*?

Here then behold your *Law* declaring of it self, that it is not *Perfect*. That there was a *Further* and more *Efficacious Sacrifice* and *Atonement* for *Sin* than what was under the *Law*. And this for the *Greatest* of your *Sins*. Then cast your *Eye* upon that *Text* in your *Law*, (b) *Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this Law to do them*. And consider, that there was no *Atonement* or *Sacrifice* in your *Law* for the *Greatest* and most *Heinous Breaches* of the *Law*. How then shall you be deliver'd from this *Curse*? Or can you enter into *Eternal Life* without your being *Purg'd* from this *Curse*? Do you expect to be admitted into *Heaven*, while *Cursed* and in your *Pollutions*? Can any *Cursed* thing enter there? Then reflect upon the *Desperateness* of that *Position* of yours, * *Nos vero nec Redemptionem quam expectamus, nec Messiam ipsum pro Animarum salute, nec pro*
Gloria

(b), *Deut.* xxvii. 26. * *Limbor. Collat.* p. 93. *ad finem*.

Gloria æterna consequenda, necessaria esse credimus. i. e. We do believe that neither the Deliverance which we expect (by our Messiah) nor our Messiah himself are necessary towards the Salvation of our Souls, or for the obtaining of Eternal Glory. Now then if neither in the *Law*, nor in the future *Reign* which you expect of your *Messiah*, there will be any *Propitiation* or *Sacrifice* for the *Greatest* of your *Sins*, how do you expect to be *Purg'd* from them? Or must you enter into *Heaven* before you are *Purg'd* from them? Or were *Sacrifices* only *Needless Ceremonies*, and not *Effectual* for the *Purging* of those *Sins*, which were *Purgeable* by them? Or were *Greater Sins* easier *Purg'd*, that is, by *Repentance* only; than *Lesser Sins*, which besides *Repentance*, were not to be *Purg'd* without *Sacrifice* also?

I confess, all this is out of Doors, and urg'd to no purpose, if it be true which you have advanc'd (as before quoted) that *Men*, by the *Fall*, were never under the *Curse* of *God*: And therefore needed no *Deliverance* from it. That *Israel* was an *Holy Nation*, because they are so call'd in *Scripture*, and that *Aaron* was commanded to *Bless* them: And *God* said to *Balaam* that they were *Blessed*. All which, says your learned *Jew**, is so contrary to their being *Eternally Cursed*, *ut neque Deus ipse*

* *Limbor. Collat. p. 55.*

ipse possit ea Componere. That God himself cannot Reconcile it.

I suppose he intends to come off by the word *Eternal*, that it is not Reconcilable with their being *Eternally* under the *Curse* of God: Because there are so many Places in the *Law* and the *Prophets* which speak of their Great *Wickedness*, and being under the *Temporal Curse* of God.

But *Blessing* is as contrary to *Cursing* in this World, as in the *next*: For they are *Opposites* in the *Nature* of the Thing. And therefore if the Authority of such *Texts*, as those before quoted will free them from the *Eternal*, it must also from the *Temporal Curse*, or from any *Curse* at all.

But why then are they call'd *Holy* and *Blessed*, if they be under the *Curse*? I suppose neither *Jew* nor *Christian* need be instructed in this, it is so *Known* and *Common* a *Distinction*; Men are call'd *Holy* or *Blessed* upon a *Personal*, or a *Relative* Account, as they are *Holy* in themselves, or *Related* to *Holy* things. Thus a *Nation* or *People* taken into *Federal Covenant* with God, more *Peculiarly* than any other *Nation* upon the *Earth*, may be call'd *Blessed* above all the *Nations* of the *Earth*: And an *Holy People*, in respect of the *Holiness* of their *Laws*, *Covenant*, *Promises*, &c. given to them by God.

Yet these may be a *Wicked* and a *Cursed People*, in respect to their *Practise*, if they live

live not pursuant to their *Holy Law*. Thus said *Moses* to your Nation, (c) *Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good Land to Possess it, for thy Righteousness; for thou art a Stiff-necked People.* And says *God* himself, (d) *As I live saith the Lord God, Sodom thy Sister hath not done, she nor her Daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy Daughters — — — Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy Sins.* And again, (e) *Ye are cursed with a Curse; for ye have Robbed me, even this whole Nation.* Yet all this while, that Nation was called the *Holy Nation*: And *Jerusalem* the *Holy City*, when it was full of *Murderers*, because there was the *Temple* and stated *Worship* of *God*. Are these now such *Contradictions* that *God* himself cannot *Reconcile*! Behold the same People (f) *Blessed* and *Cursed*, at the same Time; but not in the same Respect. Therefore trust not in your being call'd the *Holy People*, notwithstanding of which you see you may be *Cursed*: Not only *Here* but *Hereafter*! For, as said before, to be *Blessed* and *Cursed*, is as great a *Contradiction* in *this Life*, as the *next*: And for a *Moment*, as for *Eternity*. And you find and *Complain*, that you are *Cursed* here upon many *Temporal* Accounts. And urge your *great Sins* as the cause

(c) *Deut.* ix. 6(d) *Ezek.* xvi. 48, 51.(e) *Mal.* iii. 9.(f) *Jer.* vii. 4.

cause of your *Messiah* delaying his Coming. Now *Sin* is as much a *Contradiction* to *Holiness*, and more than the *Curse* of *Afflictions* and *Punishment*. Therefore if you can reconcile your being the *Holy People* with your being, at the same time, such great *Sinners*, you have *solv'd* the *Contradiction* your selves, which you thought too hard (when it made against you) for *God* himself! And you must at last grant, after all your struggling, that, by the *Fall of Adam*, Men were put under the *Curse of God*: From which there were no *Sacrifices* in your *Law* sufficient to *purge* our *Souls*: That therefore *Another* and more *Efficacious Sacrifice* than the *Blood of Bulls*, and of *Goats*, was necessary for the *purging* of our *Sins*. And you reject this *Sacrifice* of our *Messiah*, upon pretence that it is not *clearly* and in *Express Words* reveal'd in the *Old Testament*, without any *Figurative* and *Dubious Phrases*. While, at the same time, you build your hopes of *Heaven*, and explain the *Resurrection* of the *Dead* in such a manner, and upon such *Texts*, as, by no *Force*, can be screw'd to those wild Meanings you put upon them.

And on the other side, when the *Death* and *Sacrifice* of the *Messiah*; and the *Satisfaction* thereby made to *God* for our *Sins* are reveal'd in those *plain* and *express* Words, (g) That *He made his Soul an Offering for Sin*:

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That

(g) *Isaiah* liii.

That God saw the Travel of his Soul, and was Satisfy'd: That he laid upon him the Iniquity of us all: That he poured out his Soul unto Death: And was Number'd with the Transgressors: And he bare the Sin of many: And made Intercession for the Transgressors, &c. Then (as before shewn p. 17.) Death must not mean *Death*, nor must any of those words be taken *Literally*; but you put such forc'd and *figurative* Interpretations upon them, as can by no means bear, which is prov'd p. 18.

You except against *Figurative* Expressions; yet you use them. You turn the *Plainest* words into *Figures*; and then tell us, we have no *Plain* words; You deduce *Consequences* (as your Notion of the *Resurrection*, &c.) from words which are no ways *Plain*, nor can mean what you infer from them: You raise *Doctrines*, (as of the *Leviathan*, &c.) from no *Words* at all in your *Scriptures*; yet you require for our *Doctrines*, positive *Words* out of your *Scriptures*! And when you have such, you will not accept of them.

What *Scripture* can you produce for your monstrous Story of *Armillus*? which *Hornbeck* (*contra Jud.* p. 253.) relates out of your Author *Avkat Rochel*, *sub signo Messie septimo apud Hulsium* p. 51. You suppose that a Company of most *profligate* Fellows, will invent a new *Sin*; that they will take a beautiful *Stone Statue* of a *Woman*, that is in *Rome*; and *Warming* it, will *Lye* with it; that from
thence

thence it will *Conceive*, and at last bursting, there will come forth a *Child*, whose Name shall be call'd *Armillus*; that he shall be *twelve* Cubits high, and the length of a *Span* betwixt his *Eyes*: That he will say to the *Wicked*, I am your *Messiah* and your *God*; that they will believe in him, and make him their *King*; and that to him will be gather'd all the *Posterity* of *Esau*. That your first *Messiah* *Ben Joseph* of the *Tribe* of *Ephraim* will fight against him, with 30000 *Israelites*; and shall have Success in the *First Battel*; but in the *Second Battel*, that your *Messiah* will be *kill'd*, and his *Army* routed. That the *Angels* will take away the *Dead Body* of your *Messiah*, and keep it with those of the *Patriarchs*. That after this shall arise your *Second* *Messiah* *Ben David*, of the *Tribe* of *Judab*, and *Elias* with him; to whom the *Jews* that are left shall be gather'd, and oppose *Armillus*. That God shall destroy *Armillus* and his whole *Army* by *Fire* and *Brimstone*, and great *Stones* cast down upon them from *Heaven*. Then that *Michael* shall sound a *Trumpet* so loud, as to open the *Graves*, and raise the *Dead* in *Jerusalem*: And that the *First* *Messiah* *Ben Joseph*, shall then be rais'd, who was kept under the *Gates* of *Jerusalem*. That then the *Messiah* *Ben David* shall be sent to gather the *Dispersed* of the *Jews* from amongst all *Nations*: All of whose *Kings* will bring them upon their *Shoulders*, &c.

This is the manner by which you interpret the *Scriptures*: Several of which are quoted in this Relation, (as *Pfal.* cx. 1. *Zech.* xiv. 3. *Ezek.* xxxviii. 22. *Obad.* i. 18.) as being to be fulfill'd in the above mention'd Story of *Armillus*.

Which as it is wholly destitute of *Truth*, or even *Probability*, the mad *Excursion* of groundless *Imagination*: So does it in no sort come up to the *Prophecies* in the Holy *Scriptures* concerning the *Messiah*; or the *Types* of him therein exhibited: which are all fulfill'd, even to an *Iota*, in our Blessed *Lord* and *Saviour*.

Yet you reject *Him*, as not being sufficiently reveal'd in *Scripture*: While you think you can deduce from thence this *Beastly* and *Unworthy Legend* of *Armillus*!

You have been told before of the strange *Uncertainty* you are at in the *Marks* you have set up, whereby to know your *Messiah*, when he comes, which you have reduc'd all to *Success*: which cannot be known till the *Trial*: And that has ended in your *Destruction*, all the way hitherto, in the many *Experiments* you have made under your several *False Messiahs*. And you can never be *sure*, in any other who shall hereafter set up

Nay further, you must be *sure* to be *ruin'd*, by whomsoever shall *first* set up, by this *Scheme* which you have laid down: For your *Messiah Ben Joseph* must *first* come and be *Slain*, and your *Armies* routed by *Armillus*. So that it is not *Success*, but *Ruin* that must be

be the *Mark* of your *First Messiah*. This is great *Encouragement* for any of you to follow whomsoever shall set up *next* for your *Messiah!*

You have had many such *Messiahs* already. And whenever *Ben Joseph* shall come, he must be *another* unfortunate *Messiah*. You must, by your own *Reckoning*, be once more *Undone*, before your *Messiah Ben David* can come. And when your *Messiah Ben Joseph* shall come, and be *Defeated*; How will you know, by that *Mark*, that it is he? That *Mark* you have had in all the *Messiahs* you ever yet set up. So that you will be still left to expect a further *Destruction*. Thus *Deplorable* is your *State!*

Besides, which of these *Messiahs*, is it *Ben Joseph*, or *Ben David*, to whom all those *Marks* given of the *Messiah* in the *Scriptures* do belong, as to the *Time*, *Place*, and other *Circumstances* of his *Coming*? Or do some belong to *one*, and some to the *other*? Then you must tell which belong to which, or else you may be *deceiv'd* in *Both*: At least, you can be sure of *Neither*.

XV. Neither of them can possibly now have that *Mark* insisted upon before, *Sec. v. p. 28, &c.* of the *General Expectation* of the whole *Earth*, not only of the *Roman Empire*, but of all the *East*, that a *Wonderful* and *Extraordinary Person* shou'd be sent into the *World*, about that *Time*, who shou'd be *Universal*

Monarch of all the *Kings* of the *Earth*. And accordingly *Three Kings* came out of the *East* to *Worship* our *Jesus*, guided by the *Miraculous* leading of a new *Star* rais'd in *Heaven* to point him out.

But there is no such *Expectation* now in the *World*, but only amongst *You*. Therefore none of your *Messiahs* can come with that *Mark*, which seems even *Necessary*, to introduce such a *Saviour* into the *World*.

For to suppose such a *Person* design'd by *God*, from all *Eternity*, to be *Universal Lord* and *Saviour* of the whole *Earth*: And that all the *Dispensations* which *God* ever gave to *Man*, were directed to him, as the *Center*, and *Completion* of all; it wou'd seem *Necessary* and *Proportionable* to such an *Oeconomy*, that so glorious a *Person* shou'd be not only *Foretold*, but *Prefigur'd* in *Types* and *Observances*: Nay it cou'd not be otherwise, if all the *Institutions* of *Religion* were to be *Compleated* in him; for that wou'd naturally infer that they were, that they cou'd be no more than *Types* and *Fore-runners* of him to whom they pointed.

Thus *Christ* is said to have been *Promis'd* (b) $\pi\rho\acute{o}\ \chi\rho\acute{o}\nu\omega\ \alpha\iota\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$, which words if they shou'd not reach the length of our *English* Translation, *viz.* *Before the World began*, by which the *Revelation* of the *Great Messiah* must have

(b) *Tit.* i. 2.

have been made to the *Angels* in *Heaven*, before the *Creation* of *Man*, or of this lower *World*,

Yet this we are sure of, that *Moses* has told us (i) he was *Promis'd* to *Adam* and *Eve*, immediately upon their *Fall*. Then were *Sacrifices* instituted, as *Types* of the *Great* and *only Sacrifice* which cou'd *bruiſe* the *Serpent's Head*, and make *Atonement* for *Sin*: Which by that *Promiſe*, was reſerv'd for the *Seed* of the *Woman*; and therefore cou'd not be *fulfill'd* in the *Blood* of *Beaſts*.

This *Institution* of *Sacrifices* deſcended from that time, thro' all the *Posterities* of *Adam*, as a neceſſary Part of *Religion*, and the *Worſhip* of *God*. And even the *Heathen* retain'd ſo much of their *Original Institution*, that they look'd upon them in the nature of a *Vicarious Suffering* of *others* for *our Sin*: and the *Wiſeſt* of them did thence conclude, that there muſt be ſome more noble *Sacrifice* than that of *Beaſts*, whereby *our Sin* ſhou'd be *Purg'd*. This led ſome of them to *Human Sacrifices*: But ſtill that was not *Blood* more *Noble* than *our own*. And they cou'd go no further.

Yet they were in *Expectation* of the *Coming* of a *Glorious Perſon* from *Heaven*, who ſhou'd *Purge* their *Sins*; and introduce a *New* and *Golden Age* of *juſtice* and all *Goodneſs*, to extend through the *Whole Earth*: And

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they

(i) *Gen.* iii. 15

they *Generally* all over the *World* did *expect* him then to come at that *Time* when our Blessed *Jesus* was born, as before has been shewn.

But that *Expectation* is now over. There never was such at any *Time*, either *Before* or *After* that very *Time*. The *Expectation* was always, long before that *Time*: But no *Time* except that *Time*, was the *Time expected* for his *Coming*. Therefore none of your *Messiahs*, whom you still expect, can possibly *enter* the *World* with this *Necessary* and *Glorious Mark* of the *Messiah*. For that *Time* being over, to which the *General Expectation* was *Determin'd*, it *Ceas'd* there, and cannot now be taken up again; because, as it cou'd not be *begun* by *Concert*, through so many *Distant Nations*, who held no *Correspondence*; and its *Beginning* was never known: So for the same *Reasons*, it cannot now be *begun* again; for then the *Beginning* wou'd be known; and it cou'd not, without a *Miracle*, gain such *Acceptance* as to become *Universal* through the whole *World*, as it was before.

And without this, it cou'd not be said, (k) *The Desire of all Nations shall come*. For how was he their *Desire*, if they *expected* no such *Person* to come?

But as neither of the *Messiahs* whom you pretend to look for, are *expected* by any *Body* but

(k) Hag. ii. 7.

but your selves: And that not by *all*, if *any* of you, (as we have reason to believe) in good *Earnest*: So, if they were *expected* according to the *Schemz* that you have drawn, the *First* wou'd be the *Contempt*, and the *Second* the *Terror*, but neither of them the *Desire* of all *Nations*.

And neither of these Motives either of *Terror* or *Contempt* cou'd perswade the *Gentiles* towards the fulfilling of what is written concerning the *Messiah*. *The Gentiles shall come to the Light, and Kings to the Brightness of thy Rising.* (l)

This began remarkably to be fulfill'd in the Coming of the *Three Kings* from the *East*, to the *Light*, whether *Literal*, of the *Miraculous Star*, or, what that signify'd, the *Light* of the *Gospel*. And these came to the *Messiah*, not, as you expect, after being *reduc'd* by force of *Arms*, and *Converted* by his *Success* in *War*, but they came to the *Brightness* of his *Rising*, to his *Birth*; and (m) *Ador'd* him in his *Swadling-Cloaths*. They *Rejoyced* with *exceeding great Joy*, when they saw his *Signal* hung out in the *Heavens*. This *Joy* cou'd not come from *Contempt* or *Fear*. But he was truly the *Desire* of all *Nations*. Which neither of your *Messiahs* can be, by your own *Account* of them.

He was not to come as a *Terror*, but a *Light*
to

(l) *Isaiah* lx. 3.

(m) *Matth.* ii. 10

to the *Gentiles*; as he has prov'd, not by *Conquering* but *Converting* of them.

And towards this, it was necessary that he should come under all those *Circumstances* which were proper for the obtaining of such an End. To persuade the *Gentiles* to receive him, as a *Legislator* sent from *Heaven*, for *Spiritual* and *Eternal* Purposes: And not with any Design upon their *Temporal Government*, or for any *Secular By-ends* of his own.

Therefore he ought not to have come in the *Outward Pomp* and *Grandeur* of the *World*: But the *farthest* remov'd from it that was possible: Of *Mean*, but *Virtuous Parentage*, his *Life* to be led in *Poverty* and *Afflictions*, and his *Death*, *Ignominious*. He must have come in a *Corrupt* and *Wicked Age*, to oppose *Iniquity* in its *Torrent*. And hence it naturally follows, that he must be *Persecuted*, even to the *Death*. And that his *Death* cou'd not be deferr'd *Long*, after his beginning to *Preach Publickly*; for that a *Wicked World* cou'd not *Long* bear it. Which was the Reason *Socrates* * gave at his *Trial*, why he taught *Privately* so long; for that otherwise he must have *Perish'd* sooner: And so have been able to do less Good.

And we may reasonably suppose that this was one Cause why our Blessed *Saviour* (n) did not *begin* to *Preach*, till he was 30 *Years* of *Age*. And about 3 *Years* after was *Crucify'd*.

Plato

* Plato. *Apol. Socr.* (n) *Mattó.* iv. 17. *Luke* iii. 23.

Plato † describing the *Character* of a perfect *Just Man*, says, that he shall be *Scourged, Tormented, Fetter'd*, and at last having *Suffer'd* all manner of *Evils*, that he shall be *Crucify'd*, or *Cut in Pieces*, as the *Sacrifices* were.

And says, ‡ *That it is necessary they shou'd wait, till such a One shou'd come, to Teach them, how they ought to behave themselves, towards God, and towards Man: O when shall that Time come? (says he) And who shall be that Teacher? How greatly do I desire to see that Man, who he is?*

And he says, * that this *Lawgiver* must be somewhat more than of *Human Race*. For that as *Beasts* are *Govern'd by Men*, so must *Men*, by a *Nature* which is *Superior* to their own: And therefore, that this *Man* who was to be the *Universal Lawgiver* to *Mankind*, must likewise partake of the *Nature of God*. This was the ground of the *Heathen* Notion, in *Feigning* their *Heroes* and *Demons* to be *Begotten* by the *Gods*. So *Agreeable* (but far *Exceeding*) was our *Jesus* in his *Nature*, and all his *Qualifications*, to the *Notion* and *Expectation* of the *Gentiles!* And therefore have so many of them, gladly *Submitted* unto him.

But

† Ὁ δίκαιος, μαστιγώσεται, σφραδῶσεται — Τελούτων, πάντα κακά παθών, ἀνακινδιλοθήσεται. De Repub. l. 2.

‡ Ἀνασκαῖον ἔν ἐσι περιμένειν ἕως ἂν τις μάθῃ ὡς δεῖ πρὸς Θεὸς καὶ πρὸς Ἀνθρώπους διακείσθαι. Πότε ἔν παρῆσαι ὁ Χρῆστος ἔστῃ; Καὶ τίς ὁ παιδείων; ἤδησα ἡδ' ἂν μὲ δοκῶ ἰδέην τῶτον τ' ἀνθρώπων τίς ἐσίν. Alcibiad. II. de Precat. * De Leg. l. 4.

But such a *Messiah* as you *Jews* do now describe yours to be, as it was far from what the *Gentiles* expected; and therefore he cou'd never *Convert*, tho' he shou'd *Conquer* them: So it seems not indeed, that your selves do *expect* any such an one, as you *Pretend*, only for an *Excuse*.

Some of your *Rabbies* saying, that he is come: Some, that he will never come: Some, that he will not come in this World, till the *Resurrection* of the *Dead*: Others, that his coming is not *Material*, nor to be plac'd amongst the *Fundamentals* of your *Faith*: Others, that his coming is no way *desireable*, as bringing greater *mischief* with it, than *Advantage* to the *Jews*: Others, forbidding all *Inquiry* into the *Time* of his coming, as indeed *despairing* of it.

Of all these Particulars see the *Authorities* of your own *Rabbies*, in *Hornbeck contra Jud. l. 2. p. 114, 115, and 123*. There you will find, in *Codice Sanbedrin, R. Hillel* saying, *That no Messiah shall be given to Israel, for that they have had him already, in the days of Hezekiah King of Judah*. And in your *Talmud R. Ula* says of the *Messiah*, *let him come, but let me not see it*: That is, for the *miseries* it will bring to the *Jews*, in gathering them out of all Countries, where they are *peaceably* settled, to forsake their *Houses* and *Possessions*: And follow their *Messiah* to *Wars*, and the *Calamities* that attend it. Especially considering
what

what has been before said, that they must certainly expect *destruction* and *ruin*, under their *First* Messiah *Ben Joseph*. For all which, their Possessing, at last, the Land of *Canaan*, will be no sufficient *Reparation*; they living now in *Countries* as good as that, and enjoying both *Ease* and *Plenty*: That the *Conquests* of their *Messiah* may bring greater *Glory* to him; but no good to the *Jews*, proportionable to the *Miseries* they must endure in *Fighting* for him. Upon all which Considerations, *R. Ula* had reason to say, *Let him come, but let not me see him*. The same said *Rabba*, and *Rabbi John*, in *Codice Sanbedrin*.

And the many *Disappointments* you have met with in your *Messiahs* hitherto, has made you forbid any to inquire into the *Time* of the *Messiah's* Coming, your *Schebet Jekuda* p. 245. (as quoted by *Hornbeck*, p. 123.) *Curjes* those who set any *Time* for the Coming of the *Messiah*; and gives this Reason, *That if the Messiah does not come at that Time, the Peoples Hearts do fail; and they think that they are put off with perpetual fruitless Hope*. Therefore in the *Talmud*. *Cod. Sanbedrin*, cap. xi. *Rabbi Samuel* says, in the words of *Rabbi Jonathan*, *Let their Bones be broken, who compute the Periods of the Times*. And this may the better be forbid, because *R. Josephus Albo* has struck this *Article* concerning the Coming of the *Messiah* out of the number of your *Fundamental Doctrines*. So that

that now you may believe it, or not, as you please.

And how then will the *Gentiles* be *Convert-ed* by you? You have confess'd (as before shewn, p. 153, &c.) That you have no *Arguments* against them. And now you seem to *Despair*, even of *Conquering* them. Tho' if that were done, it wou'd rather obstruct their *Conversion*, as has been argu'd before.

And plain Reason does evince, that the *Qualifications* of a *Messiah* for the *Conversion* of the *Gentiles*, cou'd be no other than what were found in our *Jesus*: And such a one they did *Expect*: And therefore, so readily did give up their Names to him.

As his *Miracles* were so *Flagrant* and *Undoubted*, as to vouch him sent of *God*: So cou'd not *Malice* it self find out the least *Possibility* of any *Sinister* or *Self-End* in him. Therefore he liv'd *Poor*, and *Persecuted*, and poured out his *Soul* unto *Death*, as a *Demonstration*, that *his Kingdom was not of this World*.

He chose *Followers* that were *Poor*, and *Unlearn'd*: And this was *Necessary* to obviate the *Objection*, that either *Interest* or *Craft* had any part in the framing of his *Doctrine*. He enjoin'd to all his *Disciples* the *Doctrine* of *Self-Denial*, and the *Cross*; and bade them look for nothing but *Afflictions* in this *World*: And this was *Necessary*, to obviate the *Objection*, as if either *Lust*, *Pleasure*, or *Ambition*, had any part in the framing of his *Doctrine*.

He

He was *Rejected* by *You*, of his own *Nation*: And this was *Necessary*, to obviate the *Objection*, as if he sought to gain you on his side, upon the account of obtaining the *Dominion* over you; and then to turn your *Arms* against the *Gentiles*.

His *Conquest* of the *Gentiles*, by their *Conversion*, did not begin, till after his *Ascension*: And this was *Necessary*, to obviate the *Objection*, as if he had sought the *Temporal Rule* over them; as *Mahomet* did over his *Converts*; and as you propose of your *Messiah*.

And not in the first *Conversion* of the *Gentiles*, nor for 300 *Years* after, were any of their *Kings* or *States* brought in to *Christianity*: And this was *Necessary*, to obviate the *Objection*, as if the *Forgery* of the *Gospel* had been supported by *human Authority*; which render'd it *Hazardous* for any to have *Detected* the *Deceit*. This was so *Necessary*, as that we see the *Deists*, for want of this, have yet the *Impudence* to suppose it, contrary to all *Truth*, viz. that * *Authority* and *Laws* being on the *Christian* side, was the *Cause*, that its *Deceit* was not *detected*, at the *Beginning*: Which is now too late to be done, for the distance of the *Ages*.

Therefore, we may now see the *Wonderful Providence* of *God*, in this *Conduct*; for if
the

* *Tolnald's Life of Milton.* p. 91, 92. Printed, Anno 1699.

the *Deists* had the *Argument* (as they *Foolishly* pretend it) of the *Gospel* being abetted by *Kings* or *States*, in its *Infancy*; or before it was fully *Settled*, and *Spread* over the *Earth*; we shou'd never get their *Mouths* stopt, and it would bear a great face of *Suspicion*, that some *Cheat* might have been put upon us, when none who knew it, durst *Discover* it, without apparent *Hazard* to themselves.

And again, *Kings* and *States* might have come, by this time of *Day*, to think, that their *Authority* had something to do, in settling of the *Church*; and that the *Gospel* was beholding to them. At least *Sycophants* and *Flatterers* would so have *complimented* them: And *Eraastianism* wou'd have had a plausible *Plea*. It is a *Branch* of *Deism*. It *Stands* and *Falls* with that. And if it had such an *Umbrage* as this, it wou'd *Over-run* us: For it keeps its *Ground*, without it.

But *Christ* wou'd not permit *Kings*, to become his *Servants*; till he had first endur'd 300 *Years* of their *Persecution*: To teach them, that his *Church* was not built upon their *Shoulders*; nor depended upon their *Authority*. And to stop the *Mouths* of these several *sorts* of *Deists*.

In all things, in every *Step* of his *Conduēt*, there does appear such *Divine Wisdom* and *Forefight*, as that if any *Part* had been otherwise than it is, the whole wou'd have been visibly *Defective*; and consequently, not

from *God*. Not that many things *Defective* may not be from *God*. He makes every thing *Perfect*, in its *Kind*; to the end for which he has *Ordained* it: But he makes some things for *Higher* ends, than others: And in *Comparison*, one thing is more *perfect* than another.

Thus the *Law* of *Moses* was *Perfect* in its *Kind*; for those *Ends* and *Purposes* to which it was *Design'd*. But *Moses* was not *Design'd* for the *Ultimate* and *Universal Lawgiver*: He never pretended to it; but, on the contrary, he pointed out (o) to one who was to come after him; and *Denounces God's* Judgments against those who shou'd not *Hearken* unto *Him*.

Moses was not *Design'd*, nor his *Law* *Calculated* for the *Conversion* of the *Gentiles*.

And he had *few* of those *Qualifications* which the *Gentiles* requir'd in the *Supreme* and *Universal Law-giver*. He was bred up at *Pharaoh's* Court; the adopted *Son* of *Pharaoh's* Daughter; and *Learned* in all the *Wisdom* of the *Egyptians*, who were then the most *Learned* Nation upon the face of the Earth: He was *Mighty* in *Words*, and in *Deeds*. He march'd out of *Egypt*, at the Head of 600000 Men: (p) And having rescu'd his own *Nation*, he became their *King*. Therefore he was not free from the *Suspicion* of *Design* in the *Case*: And was a Man every way *Qualify'd*, both for *Wisdom*, *Courage*, and *Education*, to have *Contriv'd* and *Effected* it.

O

And

(o) *Deut.* xviii. 13, 19. (p) *Ibid.* xxxiii. 5

And after him, his *Disciples* went on according to his Example, (*conquering with the Sword*. And you now tell us, That they had no other Design, but to gain that pleasant *Country* to themselves: That the *Law* which *Moses* gave them, propos'd nothing to them beyond this: And that you hope for no more from the *Messiah* whom you expect, but *Temporal Conquests*, to restore you to *That Land* again; and to *Subdue* the whole *World* under you, by *Force of Arms*. That there is nothing at all *spiritual* or *heavenly* in his *Kingdom*; but only a *temporal earthly Grandeur*. That it was not meant to carry you to *Heaven*, but to make you *Great upon Earth*. That the *Offices* of the *Messiah* respect only *Temporal Things*; and are no ways necessary towards the *Salvation* of our *Souls*, or *Eternal Life*, as your learned *Jew* *, before quoted, has asserted. See before, p. 173.

Now what wou'd *Socrates*, or *Plato*, or any of the *Wise Men* among the *Gentiles* say to this Notion of a *Messiah*? Wou'd they not have *detested* it, as *Vicious*, as recommending of *Pride*, *Ambition*, *Covetousness*, and the *Vanity* of this *World*; against which they fought, and thought them unworthy of a *Philosopher*, or a truly *Virtuous Person*? Therefore such a *Messiah* could never have *Converted* them.

But on the other hand, there is not *any*
one

* *Limbr. Colur.* n. iv. p. 53. and n. xiv. p. 65.

one *Circumstance* or *Qualification* which they cou'd desire in a *Messiah* which is not *fill'd* up, nay far *Exceeded*, in their own way, beyond what they cou'd have *Contriv'd*, as to the strictest *Rules of Virtue*, in the *Person, Life,* and *Death* of our *Messiah*, and in all his *Conduct*: Shewing beyond the *possibility* of a *deceit*, or a face of *Suspicion*, that he was a *Legislator* sent from *Heaven*, without any *Temporal Designs*; *First*, To give the *Sanction* of *God* to *Morality*; which tho' these *Philosophers* taught truly; yet cou'd they not *Stamp* upon it such a *Seal of divine Authority*: And, *Secondly*, To carry them further, and teach them the true *Worship* of *God*; and *Expiation* of their *Sins*; with the *Assurance* of *Everlasting Life*; and the *Means* of obtaining it. All which they confess'd they *Wanted*; and that they did *expect* such a *Messiah*, or a *Person anointed*, a *Christ*, that is, *delegated* and *authorized* by *God*, to be *born* into the *World*, who shou'd teach this *Gospel*, or *Glad-Tidings* unto them. And he came with such *Demonstration* of his *Commission* and *divinely wise Conduct* in all his *Administration*, that a *Socrates*, a *Pythagoras*, or a *Plato*, cou'd not only have found no *Objection*, but must have *admir'd* and *ador'd*, as so far *Exceeding* whatever they *Imperfectly* had *Conjectur'd*; tho' they were assisted with the greatest *Wisdom* and *Virtue* that was in all the *Gentile World*.

Thus you see that the *Objections* which you *Jews*, and some of the *Lowd*, and *Foolish*
 O 2 *Deists*,

Deists, have made against the *Poverty*, *Sufferings*, and *Death* of our *Messiah*, turn all into *Demonstrations* of his *Truth*: And were so *Necessary*, that, as he cou'd not have *fulfill'd* the *Law* without them; so cou'd he never any otherwise have been *Receiv'd* of the *Gentiles*.

For God *Forces* not, tho' he *Governs* the *Wills* of *Men*. That wou'd be to *destroy* the *Creature* he had made: For without the *Freedom* of *Will*, *Man* wou'd not be a *Reasonable* Animal. And the *Wisdom* of God is *chiefly* known, in so *disposing* of *Things*, as to bring his own *Purposes* to pass; and yet leaving *Men* to the full *Freedom* of their own *Wills*.

This was one *Reason*, why our *Jesus* would not suffer the *Devils* to *confess* to him: And charg'd several whom he *cured*, not to *make* it *known*, till the *Time* shou'd come that he was to *suffer*: For that wou'd have *hasten'd* his *Sufferings*, before the *Time*, for the *Reason* before given out of *Socrates's* *Defence*.

It was in his *Power*, to have *forc'd* the *Jews* to a *Confession* of him: But then they had not acted *freely*. Therefore having given them all *Reasonable* *Conviction* of his *Mission*, he left them to their *Freedom*, whether they wou'd *Acknowledge* him, or not. And their *Obstinacy* did *Harden* them still more, and *deprav'd* their *Judgment*: Which was a just *Punishment* of their *Obstinacy*, as well as a *Natural* effect of it: For *Sin* does always *Punish* it self. It is its own *Accuser*, *Judge*, and *Executioner*. This
I *linded*

Blinded the Obstinate among the Jews, that they knew not their Messiah: For, had they known Him, they wou'd not have Crucify'd the Lord of Glory. And thus that wonderful OEconomy for the Salvation of Man, was brought about, by the greatest Conduct of Wisdom, and Goodness that was Possible.

And by the same Means, the Conversion of the Gentiles was Contriv'd: For had the Jews all Generally follow'd Christ, the Gentiles, being left to their own Freedom, wou'd never have Receiv'd him; because they wou'd have look'd upon him as a Legislator sent only to the Jews: Whose Law kept them at the utmost distance and detestation of the Gentiles: (9) Whom therefore the Gentiles hated, and despis'd, and thought it Abomination, so much as to Eat with them; and therefore wou'd have Disdain'd to have receiv'd a Law-giver from them; who pretended to a Right and a Promise to Conquer and Overcome all the whole Gentile World, and Subdue them under their Messiah; which they understood was to be by force of Arms. And tho' such Messiah had set up, with never so much Guise of Humility, and Meekness, and put out the most specious Declarations (as other Conquerors have at first done) if he had led the whole Body of the Jews after him, the Gentiles wou'd have look'd upon all this as a Trick to disarm them, by

rendring them *Secure*; and wou'd not have so been caught.

On the other hand, the *Jews* cou'd never have receiv'd a *Messiah* from the *Gentiles*: That was contrary to all the *Promises* made to them in their *Law*.

Therefore, as it was necessary, with Respect to the *Segullab*, that the *Messiah* shou'd be of the *Jews*: So was it *Necessary*, in Respect of the *Gentiles*, that *he* shou'd be *Rejected* by the *Chief* of the *Jews*: That *he* shou'd be *persecuted* and *destroy'd* by them. He cou'd not otherwise have become an *Universal Law-giver* both to the *Jews* and the *Gentiles*.

And let me say, in respect of the *Deists*, it was *Necessary* that there shou'd be a *Segullab*, or peculiar *Church* of *God* set up somewhere, in some one *Nation* of the *World*; else the whole *Earth* wou'd have been *Irrecoverably Sunk* in *Idolatry*. And there cou'd never, in such a *Frame* of Things, be any *Expiation* for the *Sins* of *Mankind*; Who therefore, were all *Represented* in the *Nation* of the *Segullab*; and to be, by Degrees, *Incorporated* into them; and *Converted* by them. As is shewn before, p. 99.

And it was likewise *Necessary*, that this *Nation* of the *Segullab* shou'd be the *Fewest* and most *Neglected* *People* of the *Earth*, as shewn, p. 99.

And it was *Necessary*, that the *Messiah* shou'd have been *Rejected* by the *Chief* and *Governing Part* of the *Jews*, the *Chief-Priests*
and

and *Sanhedrim*: So was it as *Necessary*, that he shou'd have been *Receiv'd* and *Follow'd* by others of the *meanest* and less *notic'd* of the *Jews*; because the *Gentiles* were to be *Converted* by the *Jews*, and brought into their *Segullah*, as shewn before p. 134. and backwards from p. 118.

And these *Jews*, who at first follow'd *Christ* were to be but *Few*, and *Inconsiderable*, during his *Life*: To take away all *Umbrage* from the *Gentiles* as well as the *Governing Part* of the *Jews*, that he design'd any *Infraction* upon their *Civil Rights* and *Liberties*.

Therefore the great flowing in of the *Jews* first, particularly of their *Priests*: (r) And afterwards of the *Gentiles*, was not till after the *Ascension* of our *Blessed Lord*: To put them out of all *Fear* of his going about to set up a *Temporal Kingdom*, after his *Resurrection* (as his *Disciples* expected, *Acts* i. 6.) For that had made a great *Noise*, and given the *Alarm* both to the *High Priest* and *Governors* of the *Jews*, as well as to the *Gentiles*: Therefore, tho' he shew'd himself *Openly*, after his *Resurrection*, and to so many, and at sundry *Times*, and by such *Infallible Proofs*, as to confirm the *Truth* of it, past all *Possibility* of a *Deceit*, or *Ground of Scruple* to after-Ages: Yet he shewed not himself (s) *Openly* to *All the People*. That wou'd have set the whole

(r) *Acts* vi. 7. (s) *Acts* x. 42, 41.

World in a *Flame*, all on the *Sudden*; who were not *Prepared*, for they knew not as yet the *design* of his *Kingdom*, that it was to be *Spiritual* and *Heavenly*; till he shou'd in a long tract of *Time*, and by *Degrees*, bring over the whole *Kingdom* of the *Earth* to his *Subjection*, in the *Belief* of his *Gospel*. not by force of *Arms* (for that cou'd not have done it,) but according to the full *Freedom* of their own *Wills* by a *Rational Conviction*.

And it is observable, that tho' one great *Article* of the *Apostolical Office*, (t) at first, was, *Particularly* to be *Witnesses* of the *Resurrection* of *Christ*: That this, at first, was necessary to the *Constitution* of an *Apostle*: And therefore *Christ* did shew himself, in a *Miraculous* manner, to *St. Paul*, to qualify him for that *Office*: Yet, as himself says, it was, *Last of all*, as *One born out of due Time*. For he was *Constituted* to be the *Apostle* of the *Gentiles*; who came in to the *Gospel*, *Last of all*, as *Born out of due Time*.

And he was the only *Man* among the *Apostles*, who had *acquir'd Learning*, by *Study* and *Education*: Therefore he was not admitted, till the *Gospel* had been first *Preached* by the others; and fully *Establish'd*; and he was, at first, a *Persecuter* of it: To take away the least *Suspicion*, that his *Parts* or *Learning* had any *Share* in the *Contrivance* of the *Gospel*.

(t) Acts i. 22.

pel. And then his coming in at last, did remove the *Prejudice*, that no Men of *Learning* and *Sagacity* had embrac'd it. He broke the *Ice* for the *Gentiles*, who were Admirers of *Learning*; and for this they *valued* him the more, and *Hearkened* to him.

I cou'd enlarge, in many other *Particulars*; indeed in every *Particular*, through the whole *Oeconomy* of the *Gospel*, to shew the *Wonderful Conduct*, and most *Minute Proportion* that there is in every *Part*: Which, of itself, were sufficient to *Convince* any *Considering* Person, that the whole *Contrivance* was *Divine*; and that no lesser *Wisdom* cou'd have so *Disposed* of it.

But that wou'd require a *Treatise* by itself. And thus much I thought necessary for my present *Subject*. To shew how we *Gentiles* were *drawn* into the Belief of the *Gospel*, by the *Cords* of a *Man*; by such *Methods*, as *Overcame* our *Reason*, without *destroying* the *Freedom* of our *Will*. Such as give us the utmost *Demonstration* of the *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of *God*, without the *Interposition* of his *Almighty Power*; by which he *Governs* the *Unthinking* Part of his *Creation*.

And as the *Jews* first brought Us into the *Gospel*: So wou'd we now provoke them to *Emulation* by the same *Methods*, in which *God* has dealt with Us: By shewing them the *Beauty*, the *Harmony*, and *Irrefragable Demonstration* of *Fact*, that has convinced us of the *Truth* of the *Gospel*.

The

The *Infidelity* of so many of you *Jews*, was *Necessary* (as shew'd before) towards our receiving of the *Gospel*; till the *Fulness* of the *Gentiles* shou'd come in.

(u) And if the *Casting away* of *You*, be the *Reconciling* of the *World*; what shall the *Receiving* of *You* be, but *Life* from the *Dead*! *Amen*.

XVI. Let me now *Conclude*, and *Apply* all that has been said, by a short *Recapitulation* and *Enforcement* of the *Principal* Parts of it.

You have given up all the *Credibility* that there is for the *Truth* of *Moses* and your *Law*, rather than admit of the same *Credibility* (and *stronger*) that there is for *Christ* and the *Gospel*. So that, as said before, and has been prov'd, you have involv'd your selves under the *Necessity*, either of *Rejecting Moses*, or *Embracing* of *Christianity*.

Your *Objections* have been answer'd, *ex Abundanti*; for after the full *Proof* of the *Miracles* of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, there needed no more to have been said, as to receiving the *Doctrine* which they taught, and those *Expositions* they gave of the *Law*, which stand upon as sure a *Foundation*, and carry the same *Infalible Credentials* of *Divine Authority* as the *Law* it self.

And these cannot be *Overthrown* by ever
so

so great a *Cloud of Difficulties or Objections*, tho' they cou'd not be *Answered to Satisfaction*, without *disproving* the *Motives of Credibility* upon which they are Receiv'd.

For we may have sufficient *Reason to Believe* many things: And yet not be able to *solve* all the *difficulties* that may arise concerning them.

As in *Natural* things, we cannot explain the *Manner and Conveyance of Sensible Objects*, thro' our outward *Organs* to our *Soul*: Nor the thousandth part of those *difficulties* which are started concerning the *Soul* itself: Yet no Man doubts but that he has a *Soul*, that he *Sees, Hears, Thinks, Reasons, &c.*

So in *Supernatural* things, who can solve all that may be ask'd concerning the *Being and Operations of God?* Yet all this is no *Argument* against the *Belief of a First Cause*, and its *Essential Perfections*; because it is forc'd upon Us by *Undeniable Reason*.

Therefore, unless you can shew the *Fallacy* of those *four Marks*, which in the *first Part* are set down, to *Ascertain the Truth of Matters of Fact*: Or, *Secondly*, shew that the *Matters of Fact of Christ* want *any* of them; all your *Objections* borrow'd from other *Topics*, can signify nothing against the *Truth of Christianity*.

And if you can shew the *Uncertainty* of these *Marks*: Or that they are *Wanting* to the *Evidence of Christianity*: Then *down* comes your *Law* with it: And we must all together turn *Deists*.

You

You say (as has been before quoted) That if *Christ* after he *Rose* from the *Dead*, had *appear'd* to the whole Congregation of *Israel*, &c. that this wou'd have remov'd all *Scruple* from you; and that you wou'd, without all *doubt*, have believ'd him.

And now, I beseech you, have you not had as *Miraculous* Confirmation of him, as even this which you require? Was not the *Visible* Descent of the Holy *Ghost* upon him, at his *Baptism*; and the *Audible Voice* from *Heaven*, before all the *People*, telling them from the Mouth of God, *This is my beloved Son*, &c. was not this a much stronger Indication from *God*, than if a Man formerly *dead*, had appear'd? Might not one Man be like another? Have not many been deceiv'd upon that *Point*? Were not the *Apostles* hardly brought to believe it, even by many *Miracles*? Wou'd there not be more Questions to be ask'd in that Case, than in such a visible *Apparition* from *Heaven*, before the *Eyes* of so many *People*, and of *Words* spoke from *Heaven* in all their *Hearing*?

Our Blessed *Saviour* said to some of your *Fathers*, (x) That if they heard not *Moses* and the *Prophets*, neither wou'd they be persuaded, tho' one *Rose* from the *dead*. And the Reason is plain, because the *Proofs* for *Moses*, &c. are more *Indubitable* than the *Apparition* of the *Dead Man*.

But

(x) Luke 16. 31,

But do you want even this Proof? Did not *Christ* appear, after his *Resurrection* to above 500 of your *Fathers* at once? And has not this been *Attested* by a *Multitude* of *Miracles* wrought by those of your *Fathers*, who *Saw* him, who *Eat* with him, and *Convers'd* forty Days with him, after he *Rose* from the *dead*? Did he not appear to *Paul* from *Heaven* after his *Ascension*? If not, wou'd not some of those *Jews* who then journied with him, who *saw* that *Light*, above the *Brightness* of the *Sun*; and *Heard* the *Voice*, tho' not the distinct *Words* of him that spoke to *Paul*; who were struck down to the *Earth*, and greatly *Terrify'd*, who saw *Paul* struck *Blind* upon the *Spot*, and led him by the *Hand* into *Damascus*: Wou'd none of these have discover'd the *Cheat*, if all this *Story* had been a mere *Invention* and *Forgery* of *Paul's*? Wou'd none of these have done it, who were so far from being favourable to the *Christian* side, that they were then going along with *Paul* to *Persecute* that way, even unto the *Death*? Would they not have done it, when *Paul* trump't it up, and the *Christians* laid such *Stress* upon it, that it is told at large in three several places of the *Acts*, Chap. ix. xxii. and xxvi? When *Paul*, within *Three* Days, began to *Preach Christ* in *Damascus*, and *Confounded* the *Jews* there, where those who *Journied* with him were then *Present*; and might have *Confounded* him, if they had deny'd that *Matter of Fact*, when he adduc'd them

them as *Witnesses* of it. But above all, the *Miracles* which *Paul* wrought, as great even as this, do vouch his *Truth* in this matter. Seeing they are deduc'd to us, with all the *Four Marks* before mention'd, which do *Infallibly* demonstrate the *Certainty* of any *Matter* of *Fact*.

Moreover consider, that all these *Witnesses* to the *Resurrection* of *Christ* were *Jews*, and none other. It has been before observ'd that *Christ* Preach'd to none but the *Jews*, before his *Death*: So after his *Resurrection*, he shew'd himself to none other but to *Them*. And from the *Jews* only have We, *Gentiles*, receiv'd the knowledge of his *Resurrection*, and of all the *Gospel*. This is a *Tradition* of the *Jews*: and deduc'd through a greater Number of them, and their *Posterities* (as before has been shewn) than there are *Jews* who now stand out against it. These reject the *Tradition* of their *Fathers*, upon which they now lay the whole stress of their *Religion*. And are Proof against those Convictions which have converted the *Gentiles*. The *Christian Jews* did not set up *Christ* for their *Messiah*, (y) they *Chose* not *Him*, but he *Chose* *Them*. They knew him not to be the *Messiah*, till they were Convinc'd by many *Miracles*: They understood not the Nature of his *Kingdom*; but were brought by him from their Notion
of

(y) *John* xv. 16.

of *Reigning*, to that of *Suffering* with him upon the Earth. Therefore these are to be less suspected than those others of your *Fathers*, who set up *Messiahs* for themselves, in hopes to *Reign* with them in the Land of *Canaan*; and have been as often *deceiv'd*, and suffer'd miserable *Destruction* by it.

But as before has been argu'd, there is no such visible means in the World to bring them to that *Temporal Grandeur* which they expect; and the *Nation* of the *Jews* to that *Universal Honour*, *Super-Eminence*, and *Dominion* through the *whole Earth*, as their *Conversion* to *Christianity*. Then will *Christ* be not only a *Light* to the *Gentiles*, but the *Glory* of his People *Israel*.

But chiefly and above all, I earnestly Recommend to you *Jews* the Consideration of your *Eternal State*; towards which you expect no *Benefit* from your *Messiah*: And yet without whom, you can give no account how you shall be *deliver'd* and *purg'd* from those *Sins*, for which there were no *Sacrifices* or *Expiation* under the *Law*, as has been discours'd before.

There was none for those who *fled* to the *Cities of Refuge*. (z) Nothing cou'd *deliver* them from thence, but the *Death* of the *High Priest*. Which was a plain *Type*, that nothing but the *Death* of our *Great High Priest*, can
deliver

(z) Num. xxxv. 25. 28.

deliver us from the *Guilt* of *Sin*. The like *Parallel* might be carry'd on through every *Branch* of your *Law*, pointing to the *Messiah*. But that wou'd *divert* too much. You have only a few *Instances* here. The whole wou'd take up a *Discourse* longer than all I have written to you.

I wish even the *Temporal Glory* of *Israel*: And shou'd Rejoice that, in the *Day* of their *Conversion*, I shou'd be found among those who are sprung from their *Stock*, and shall *Exult* to Re-assume our *Ancient* and most *Honourable* Name of *Jews*.

And let the *Chiefest Glory*, as in *Heaven*, so on *Earth* be to those of *You*, who shall lead the *Way*, and be *Instrumental* in the *Restoration* of the *Families* of *Jacob*.

Towards which I will with these my small *Endeavours*, join my hearty *Prayers*; made more effectual as offer'd up in the *Communion* of the *Holy Catholick Church*, that part of it especially in *England*, which *Prays* for *You*, on this *Blessed Day*, to *Your God*, and *our God*, through the *Mediation* and *Satisfaction* made for us by *Your* and *Our* only *Messiah*: And after *his Holy Example*, who, this *Day*, poured forth his *Blood*, with his *Prayers* for you upon the *Cross*. O *Lord*, that this were the *Time* when they shou'd be heard! *Amen*. *Lord Jesus*, come quickly.

Good-Friday,
1689.

THE
Truth of Christianity

DEMONSTRATED.

WITH A
DISSERTATION
CONCERNING
Private JUDGMENT and AUTHORITY

To which is prefixed,

A

VINDICATION

OF

The Short Method with the DEISTS.

By CHARLES LESLIE.

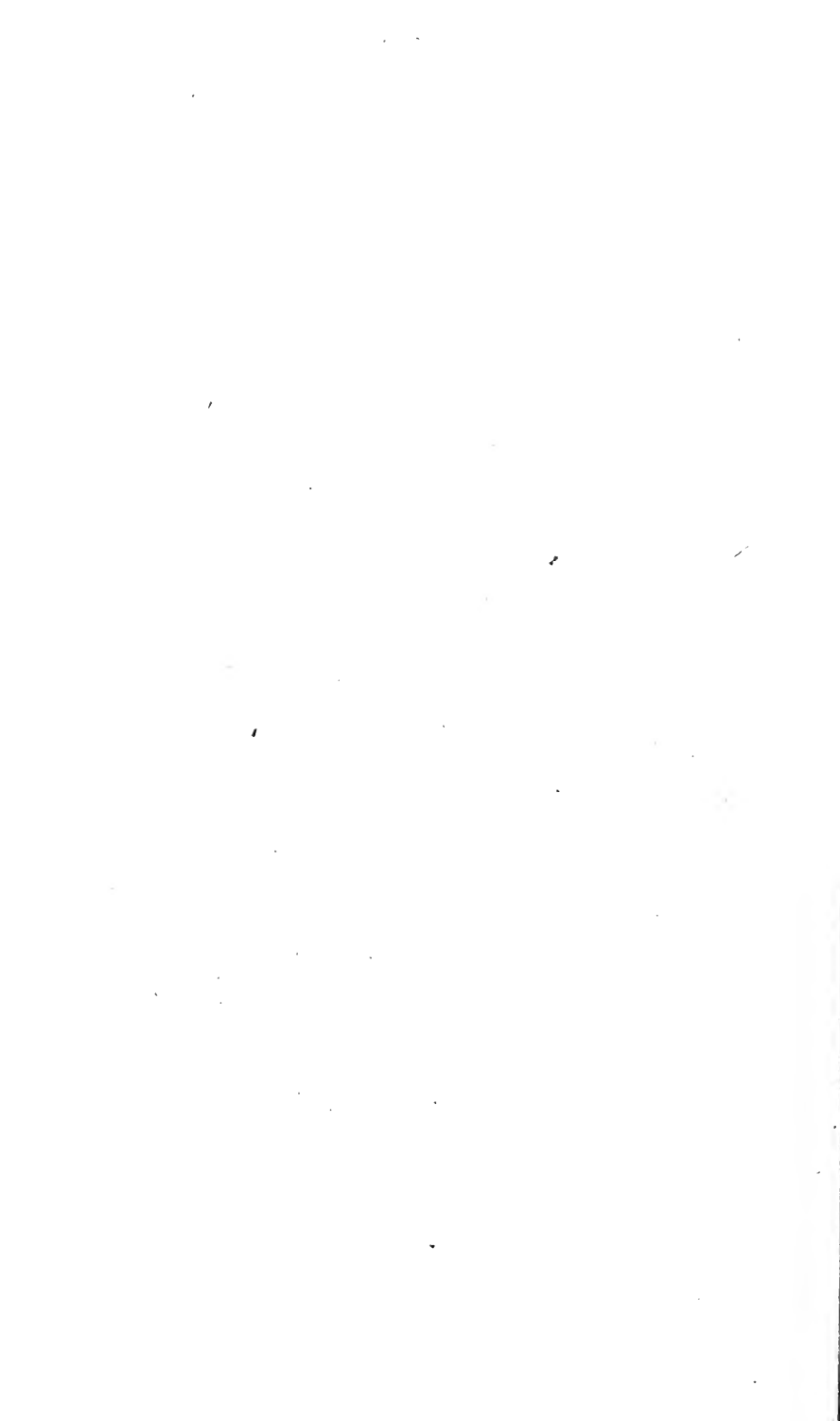
The Sixth Edition.

*Clarior e tenebris.
Depressa resurgit veritas.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for GEORGE STRAHAN, at the *Golden Ball*, over against the *Royal Exchange*, in *Cornhill*.

M D C C X X V I.





T H E

P R E F A C E.

WHEN first I saw this Detection, I went to it with great Expectation, to see what could be said against the four Marks set down in the Short Method, &c. But the Title Page calling them the Marks of the Beast, and charging the Design to be Popish and Wicked, I concluded it to be Grub-street, wrote by some Impotent Whigg or Dissenter, in Spite to the Author, rather to give him Ill Names, than to Answer his Arguments.

But when I had read it over, I own it Confounded me! I was filled with Horror and Amazement, to see Christ our Lord not only Blatphemed, but Ridiculed, and the Truth of His Facts and of the Gospel, put into a lower Class of Probability than the most jennys Legends either of the Papists or the Heathens! Here the Cloven-Foot appeared Notoriously, and showed out of what Quiver this envenomed Arrow came, even of an Inveterate and Malicious Deist, flid with all the Rage of Hell against the Glory of God Manifested in that Revelation He gave to the World for the Salvation of Mankind.

And it gave me a very Melancholy Reflection, to see the Spirit of Infidelity let loose amongst us, and of late Years appear Open and Bare-fac'd; and by this Means to have made so many Profelytes from Christianity among all Orders and Degrees of Men; insomuch, That it is become a Recommendation, and Mark of Wit to be one of these Free-thinkers; and all others are Loaded with the Contemptible Name

of Priest-Ridden and Slavish in their Understanding.

For these Ends this Detection was wrote. But (Blessed be God) so Poor and Mean, as to the Reasoning Part, that it must Confirm any Man of Sense much more in the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Religion; to see how wretchedly Silly all these Efforts are which are made against it. For this Reason I thought to Neglect it, and let it Sink under its own Weight of Nonsense and Contradiction. But I was told that it had effect with many, not only of the Unthinking and Lowest Size of Understandings, but with others of more Capacity, whose Prejudice and Inclinations made every thing of this Sort most Acceptable and Valuable to them. And that some had boasted of it, not only as a very Shrewd but an Unanswerable Piece; against Priest-craft and all the Fourb of Revelation, to use their own Expression, as they have given it us in Print.

This determined me to Write an Answer to the Detection. And in Thinking this Matter over again, I found there were other Marks or Evidences for Christianity, very material, besides those Four which I had set down in the Short Method with the Deists. Not that these Four do not sufficiently Evince the Truth of Christianity, and distinguish it from any False Facts ever were in the World: But there are other Evidences of Christianity which no other Fact, how True soever, either has had, or can have. These add to the Evidence, tho' not to the Truth of Christianity. And it is Glorious to see this Fact of Christ stand Single in the Creation, with Evidence peculiar to it self Alone!

I have answered the Detection by the first Four Marks only, because these are what we Undertook to Disprove. And I have put that Answer first by it self, because I wou'd not intermix it with that Demonstration of Christianity which follows, and would be much interrupted, if the Discourse should break off as frequently as the Answering the Detection upon every Particular would require.

quire. And though the last Four Marks which I have now added to this Demonstration, wou'd at first Sight overthrow all the poor Sophisms in the Detection; None of the Facts he produces as a Disproof of the first Four Marks, having the least Shadow or Pretence of coming up to the Evidence of any of the other Marks; y. these not being in his View when he Wrote the Detection, he might think he had gain'd his Point against the first Four Marks, and so overthrowen the Short Method; and put me to bring in fresh Succours for the Support of Christianity: But having demonstrated the Truth of Christianity by the first Four Marks, I now by the Others shew the Glory of it; which, as the Sun, not only dispels the Darknes of Error, but Obscures all Inferior Truths, that, like the lesser Lights of Moon and Stars, Disappear at the Approach of this Superior Light, and have no Glory, by reason of the Glory that Excelleth'

And here I bring in the Jews, to let them see how far the Evidence of the Fact of Christ outshines that of their Moses, who has no share in the sixth, seventh, and eighth Evidence here produced for Christianity; which has likewise all the Other that are or can be produced for Moses or the Law.

I have not made the Jew a Party in this Dispute, because indeed I could not find what to say for his Cause, supposing myself a Jew; which is the Method I take in Representing and Discussing the Opinion of my Adversary, to joy all I can for it, as if it were Really my own Opinion. But in this Case, it was not in my Power to put any tolerable Answer in the Mouth of a Jew, unless I should make him totally give up his Cause; which in an Opponent would seem a Betraying it. Therefore I have left it to themselves, to say more on their own behalf than did Occur to me, if they can find it out; for I think their Cause more Naked than even that of the Deists, because they must run counter to their own Principles, and overthrow all their Foundations, in Defending

ing themselves against Christianity, which is built upon them.

But in the Third Part of this Discourse concerning Private Judgment and Authority, I have introduced the Jew as a Speaker, because though he has so very little to say against the Evidence of Christianity, upon the Foot of Reason, or of the Prophecies concerning the Messiah in the Old Testament: Yet if we put the Proof of Christianity, and the Truth of the Scriptures upon the Authority of the Church, as is done in the Church of Rome; there the Arguments of the Jew seem to me Irrefragable against this Foundation of Christianity. And this is the clearest Manner wherein I can shew to a Sincere and Honest Roman Catholick the Prejudice which his Church has done to Christianity, in this New Topick she has taken up to Defend her Self against the Reformation, of resolving our Faith into the Authority of the Church, and denying us the Use of our private Judgment, or the most Flâgrant Proofs in the World against such Authority!

But as I said before to the Jew, so I do now to the Roman Catholick, That I have made his Cause my own, and argued for it all that is Possibly in my Power. But not to Preclude him in from offering whatever further may Occur to him in Defence of his own Tenet; which I shall be most Willing to hear, and Promise to Consider it as impartially as I can. Because it is for my own Sake, and I would not Pawn my Soul for my Party.

Whoever is in earnest with Religion, would wish all the World of his Mind. And therefore as he is Zealous to Persuade others, so he ought to be Patient in hearing the Contradiction of those who oppose themselves; instructing them with Meekness, while they shew any Docible Temper. And when this meets on both Sides, the Christian Church may have hopes of Peace.

All I have desired of the Roman Catholick in this Dissertation, is, To give us free Liberty of Reasoning together, and not to say, I have already determined my self

self upon the Authority of the Church, and will Hear no more nor admit any Argument against it; I will not Suffer any Dispute concerning whatever the Church has proposed to me as of Faith! It is in vain to offer to shew a Man any thing, till first you have persuaded him to open his Eyes. Yet I despair not, for Christ is the λόγος, the Reason or Wisdom of God, and that Ray of it Communicated to us makes us Men and His Image, it is Part of our Nature, and we cannot divest ourselves wholly of it; for we must make Use of our Reason, in finding out Arguments why we should not make Use of it! And since Reason must be our Instructor, why should we deny it to be our Guide? Why would we exclude it in Religion, where we have the greatest Occasion for it, to See that we are not Misled? Must we be Sharp sighted in our Temporal Affairs, and carried Blindfold as to our Eternal? Must we not Examine why we Believe in Christ, rather than in Mahomet? Why we are not Jews this Day, but Christians? Or do we take up our Religion by Chance? according to the Place where we were Born and Bred? And does not this befall most Men, by Stopping their Ears against Reason? Does God admit us to Reason with Him? Come now and let us Reason together, saith the Lord; does he Appeal to our private Judgment? He says, Judge I pray you betwixt me and my Vineyard; did he permit Abraham to argue with Him? Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right? And shall Man say to us, you are not allowed to ask us any Questions at all, but to Believe Implicitly whatever we declare unto you?

Isa. i. 18.

I pray you

chap. v. 3.

Gen. xviii. 25.

This is the Cause I have Undertaken. And how shall I not hope that Reason will Prevail.

Christo duce, & auspice Christo.

From my Tusculum.

All Saints, 1710.

The

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 2. *Heathenism*, p. 122. 3. *Mahometism*, p. 125
1. The

1. The *Rhapsody* of the *Alcoran*; And Monstrous Simplicity of their *Legends*, *ibid.* 2. The *Majesty* and Heavenly *Doctrine* of the Holy *Scriptures*, p. 127
3. The *Alcoran* confesses to the Holy *Scriptures*, p. 27. And *Mahomet* Prefers *Christ* to himself, p. 128. 4. *Mahometism* is *Arianism* revived, with a Mixture of *Judaism* and *Heathenism*; All which are given up by the *Deists*, p. 129
1. The Plea of *Natural Religion* set up by the *Deists*, p. 132. 2. The *Reasonableness* and *Necessity* of *Revelation*. Owned by the *Heathen*, particularly by *Plato*. With his *Prophecy* of *Christ* and his *Sufferings*, *ibid.* 3. All *Nations* were always govern'd by *Revelation*, either *real* or *pretended*, p. 134
4. No *Revelation* ever given by *God* to the *World* but that of *Christianity*. Of which all other *Religions* are but a *Corruption*, *ibid.* 5. Why so many *Unbelievers*, tho' the *Evidence* is so plain, p. 135
6. They would be thought *Brutal*, who should deny things of far less *Evidence*, and of no *Concern*, p. 137. 7. The Case of *Miracles* discuss'd, p. 140
8. There is a *Preparation* of the *Heart* necessary to *Believing*, p. 144. 9. A *Prayer* for the *Jews*, p. 179

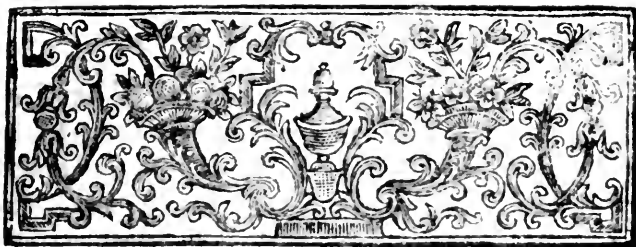
The Four Marks of the Truth of Facts, upon which the Short Method proceeds.

I. That the *Fact* be such, as that Mens *Outward Senses*, their *Eyes* and *Ears* may judge of it.

II. That it be done *Publicly* in the Face of the *World*.

III. That not only publick *Monuments* be kept up in Memory of it, but some outward *Actions* to be performed.

IV. That such *Monuments* and such *Actions* or *Observances* be *Instituted*, and do *Commence* from the *Time* that the *Fact* was done.



The SHORT

METHOD

WITH THE

DEISTS,

VINDICATED.

(I.)



Y Short and Easy Method with the Deists, bears Date July 17th 1697. And was but two Sheets of Paper, being wrote for the Satisfaction of a Gentlewoman, (tho' it is address'd as to a Man) who had been staggered with the Arguments of *Deism* even to Distraction; for tho' (as she told me) she was not come to be a down-right *Deist*, yet she was not able to answer their Arguments, nor to clear up the Matter to her own Mind; and what had been so often rung in her Ears, of the Story of *Christ* being but a *Fable*, like that of *Mabomet*, or the Heathen Gods, would

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dart into her Thoughts in the midst of her *Devotions*, even at the *Holy Sacrament*; which, said she, if *Christianity* be a Truth, seemed to me to be *blasphemous*, and that I was provoking *God*, while I pretended to *worship* him. This at last wrought so powerfully with her, that she came to abstain from all *Prayers*, even in private; and was in a most deplorable Condition, owning that she was often tempted to destroy herself, which she was afraid would be the Issue. I found discouraging with her had but little Effect, for in that violent Discomposure, she cou'd not give Attention, but wou'd fall out into terrible Exclamations, and wishing herself dead, or that she had never been born. I then wrote this *Letter* to her, free from all Intricacies, and suited to her Capacity; and prevail'd with her to copy it in her own Hand, thinking that wou'd fix her Attention the more, and prevent those wandering Thoughts which interrupted her Consideration of what was offered to her in Discourse. And by the Blessing of God, this had the desired Effect, for she came to reason calmly, and at last was fully convinced, as she still remains; and she was able to keep her Ground with the *Deists* by the *Four Marks*, which none of the Stories they told her of the Heathen *Gods*, of *Mabomet*, or the Legends, could come up to. Some had the *First Mark*, some the *Second*, and some the *Third*, but all stuck at the *Fourth*, none of them had all the *Four*. And it was by her Perswasion,
and

and of some others, to whom she shewed my Letter, that I was prevailed with to let it be made publick. And it meeting with a favourable Reception, I enlarged it to four or five Sheets in the next Edition. And took in the Case of the *Jews*, which made a larger Volume.

(II.) I had several Conferences with some *Deists* upon the Argument. And the Issue was, They were to find out some Fact that was false which had all the *four Marks*. And tho' they nam'd many, yet none was found that would bear the Test. Nor could they find any supposititious Book which had these four Marks for its Veracity, as the Holy Scriptures have. Which commenced from the time they speak of, and were written by the Actors of the Facts they relate, or by Eye and Ear-Witnesses. And thus the Matter has stood these 13 Years, till this *Detection* is at last come out, and, like the Mountain so long with Child, has brought forth a Mouse!

(III.) His Proofs begin *p.* 14. And the first Instance is out of *Livy*, of a Decree made at *Rome* for one Day's Supplication to *Æsculapius*, to remove a *Plague* that was in the City.

1. Then he quotes a very modern Author, *Frcinskemius*, who wrote a Supplement to *Livy*, and there tells a strange Story of a Serpent that came into a Ship at *Epidaurus*, and was carried to *Rome*, where being arrived it swam into an Island in the *Tyber*, and was no more seen. And they supposing the Deity of *Æsculapius*

culapius to be in the Serpent, and that the God had chosen this Place for a Temple to be built to him, did accordingly build a Temple in that Island for *Æsculapius*, and the Plague ceased. And he says *Freinshemius* quotes several Authors for this. And so he might: No doubt a Story may be handed from one to another. But who was the original Author? And what Cause of Knowledge had he? Was he an Eye-Witness of it? Or did he dream it? Perhaps he had it from an old Woman in a Chimney-Corner, or out of a Romance, or fram'd it as such himself. Yet he has the Confidence to say, That this has all the *four Marks!*

But suppose this Story were true, what would he make of it? Did this Serpent speak, and teach the World any Doctrine as sent from God? Or was it to vouch the Mission of any Person who pretended to be sent? I think we need stay no longer with this.

2. His next is *p. 19.* Of two unknown young Men who charged on the Front of the Roman Horse against the *Latins*. And the same Night they two, or two such like, were seen at *Rome*, and told them the *Latins* were routed. And the *Romans* fancying these to be *Castor* and *Pollux*, built a Temple to them, and appointed a yearly Procession in Memory of the happy Conclusion of that War with the *Latins*. To which I say,

1. That this is told by none who were Eye-Witnesses, or who lived near the Time.

2. Here

2. Here is Nothing but the pure Fancy of the *Romans* that these were *Castor* and *Pol-lux*. For it is not said that these two Men told them so.

Suppose the Fact true; This was not to confirm any Doctrine, or vouch the Mission of any Prophet or Teacher as sent from *God*.

If you say, That it was a Confirmation of the then *Roman* Idolatry, that *God* suffered such a wonderful Thing to be done among them. It will not follow, for greater Wonders than this Apparition (suppose it true) were done by the Magicians in *Egypt*, and by the Devil when he brought down *Fire* upon *Job's* Cattle. And this Apparition to the *Romans* was not out of the Power of the evil Spirits to perform, if *God* so permitted them. Of this see more in what is said hereafter upon the Head of Miracles, the last *Num.* 7. of this Book.

3. His next Instance is *p.* 25. of *Sommonocodom* now worship'd in *Siam*, where he draws a most blasphemous Parallel betwixt him and *Christ*, as to his *Birth*, and several Passages of his Life. For answer to this, I refer you to the Letter hereunto annexed from an ingenious Friend of mine, whom I desired to search for *Father Tachard* and *Mr. Gervaise* quoted for this Story in the *Detection*, I not having the Books, and not well able at this Time to go about and look after them. There you will find that the *Siamese* do not reckon this *Sommonocodom* as the Founder of their Religion. That

they neither know when or by whom the Book they have of him was written. That they believe no *God*, but a continual Fluxation and Transmigration of Souls from Eternity. That they have no certain Account, or History, even of their own Kingdom, or their Civil Affairs. In short, That they are a most stupid and brutal People. And for the senseless Stories they have of their *Sommonocodom*, without the Appearance of Truth or any Foundation for them, you will see in the Letter. But from what they tell of *Sommonocodom*, his being born of a Virgin, and forced to fly when a young Child to another Country, from a King that would have destroyed him, and several other Passages of our Blessed *Saviour's* Life; it is apparent that they have heard of the Gospel, or that Christianity was sometime in that Country, tho' it is now lost among them, as in other Places. But as to the Author of the *Detection*, he is desired to tell us when that Book which relates the Facts of *Sommonocodom* was written, and who was the Author of it? Was he a Witness of the Facts? And has that Book been extant ever since? Till he can answer these Things, he cannot say it has the *four Marks* as our *Bible* has. But it shews what true Pains he has taken to banter and ridicule Christianity, in picking up Stories from every Corner, which he thinks may blast and confound it.

The Lord rebuke him.

He

He says, p. 24, 25. That this *Sommonocodom*, after a long Expectation of the whole Universe, was born about 400 Years before our Blessed Saviour. For this he quotes none of his Authors. It was a Stroke put in by himself, that he might make it a Parallel to what I mention in that Part I added to the *Short Method*, relating to the *Jews*, Sect. V. p. 28. &c. Concerning the general Expectation among the *Gentiles* from *East* to *West*; about this I proved, not from the Holy Scriptures only, but from the best of the heathen Authors themselves; from the *Sibyls*, and the Decree of the Senate of *Rome*, pursuant to them, and grounded the Time of our Saviour's Coming, of a *Jew* to be then born, who should be universal King of the whole Earth. And upon this general Expectation then current among the *Romans*, as well as throughout all the *East*. Whence the *Magi* came to worship this King newly born. We have Histories of the Times 400 Years before *Christ*. And if there was such a general Expectation of the whole Universe at that Time concerning *Sommonocodom*, as the *Detection* says, it is strange that no Author in the whole Universe should make the least Mention of such an Expectation of an universal Monarch to be born at *Siam*! Therefore till the *Detection* produces his Vouchers, and others besides the *Siamese*; who could not answer for the whole World, we must look upon this as a meer Figment of that Author's own

Brains; and which has fully discovered the Nonsense and Forgery of his Detection. And shews how hard it is for Lies to imitate the Truth.

4. He next comes to the *Popish Legends*, p. 30. and quotes one *E. W.* who wrote against Dr. *Stillingfleet*, for some Miracles wrought by *Thomas Cantelupe* Bishop of *Hereford*. And some after he was dead. The only one he names is, p. 31. of a Child who fell from a Bridge belonging to *Conway* Castle in *Wales*, into the Ditch Twenty-eight Foot under the Bridge, and was taken up dead, as was supposed, but recover'd upon Prayers to St. *Thomas Cantelupe*. Now I can tell him of a Man who fell from a much higher Place, and yet had no Hurt at all. Was not that a greater Miracle? But he goes on, and tells from this *E. W.* p. 31, 32. how the Virgin *Mary* appeared to a Bishop of *Arras* with a burning Wax-Candle in her Hand in the great Church before all the People. And that the Candle is still preserved there, and *spends it self, yet loses nothing*. That is, (says he) like the *Bush* which *Moses* saw burn, but not at all consumed. Here you see the Man, and to what End he brings in all these Stories! He believes the one no more than the other! He says of that of the *Candle*, it is no very difficult Matter to give a near Guess how this Juggle was contrived. And that of *Moses* he thinks was such another Juggle! But, Sir, cou'd *Moses* juggle to make six hundred thousand
Men

Men believe, That he led them through the Sea in the Manner he tells; That they were fed with *Manna* from Heaven; That he brought Water out of the Rock before their Eyes to quench their Thirst? Could Christ juggle to make five thousand hungry Men believe he had filled all their Bellies with five Loaves they saw in his Hands and two *Fishes*? That he had raised *Lazarus* after being four Days in the Grave? Can all the Miracles of *Moses* and of *Christ* be juggled off like that of the Wax-Candle? Yes, you think so, and say, p. 38. “ That (Miracle) of *Arras* not only exceeds the “ *four Marks*, but transcends any *Miracle* that “ was wrought by *Christ*, or his *Apostles* !

Can *Christian* Ears bear this *Blasphemy* !
O thou full of all *Subtilty* and all *Mischief*,
thou *Child* of the *Devil*, thou *Enemy* of all
Righteousness, wilt not thou cease to pervert
the *right Ways* of the *Lord* ?

5. This *Elymas* in the next Words falls a raging with all the Malice of Hell against those who make use of Revelation, that is, of the Holy Scriptures in Matter of Government, deducing it from *God*, as from the Original, and having his Authority, which is here call'd Slavery and Popery. And he says, “ They “ both depend upon the same *Principle* (that “ is, of Revelation) and whosoever is capable “ of entertaining heartily any one of these “ *Notions*, must necessarily fall at last into the “ other.” And I have observed on the other Hand, That whoever is capable of entertain-
ing

ing heartily the Notion of all Power being in the People, and making them the original of Government, fall most commonly, I will not say *necessarily*, into the other of *Deism*, so that they are almost convertible Terms. For throwing off the Authority of *God* as to Government, leads naturally to the laying it aside in Religion too, if that may be called Religion which has not *God* for its Author. And for my asserting the Authority of *God* in both, he says, I am a *Papist*, (ridiculous!) and have a miscreated Understanding. And *p.* 39. “ These (Priests) are the Dogs of “ Hell, that are let loose from the Infernal “ Regions---These are the *Harpies* that defile “ with their filthy odious Gripes whatever “ was designed by *God* or *Nature*, for the Plea- “ sure, Health, or Welfare of the poor sub- “ jected Laity.” This is always the Burden of the Song, *O, these Priests!* And you see in what a handsome Manner he treats them! And how they would be treated in *England*, if his Principles should prevail! And they have sadly prevailed! Pray *God* stop the Progress, and raise Labourers that will be faithful in his Vineyard; for the wild Boar of the Forest doth now root it up, many Foxes spoil the Vines, and all that go by pluck off her Grapes.

6. He returns, *p.* 40. to give another Instance of a Falshood that has all the *Four Marks*, which is the known Story of the *Pied Piper* at *Hamel*, who piped an hundred and thirty Children out of Town, and led them to a
 little

little Hill, in the Side of which a wide Hole opened, into which they all went, and it closed upon them again. But whether this Story be true or false, yet he cannot say it has all the *Four Marks*; for in the Relation which he sets down of it from *Verstegan*, it is told, *p.* 41. That as to this of the opening of the Hill, and their going into it, there is but one Evidence, that is of a lame Boy who lagged behind. This wants the *second Mark*, of the Fact being done publickly in the Face of the World. And if the Boy lied, or was mistaken in a Fright, there is an End of the whole Story. But all the Use this Author makes of it, is, That if it was a Cheat, he is sure, as he says, *p.* 42. *That the Priests had the chiefest Hand in the Contrivance.* Tho' there is not a Word of a Priest in all the Story, unless he takes a Piper for a Priest. But this shews his Equality, and how ready he is to do Justice to the Priesthood!

7. His last Instance is *p.* 43. which leads us to the Author of the Detection. It is a noble Performance of his own which he quotes, entitled, *Priestcraft in Perfection, &c.* And here he enlarges, with intolerable Assurance, upon what he there endeavoured to prove, *viz.* The Detection of a Forgery of the *English Divines*, in foisting a Clause into the 20th Article of our Church. And he has the Folly to say, That this *Detection* too has all the *Four Marks*. But he has had the Mortification since to see the Church of *England* vindicated, and the

the Forgery turn'd upon himself and Partners. And to encrease his Torment, done by a Priest; which makes the evil Spirit that possesses him, gnash his Teeth, and rage in his impotent Malice, being now overcome by those who shall judge him at the last Day.

8. These are all the Instances brought in the *Detection* to overthrow the *Four Marks*, which he calls, *p. 45. destruere aliena*, to confute these Proofs in Defence of Christianity. But he promises, *ponere nostra*, to give his Proofs for it, in another Work of his, soon (or never) to see the Light. If he had intended it, he would have given us some Specimen of it in this, where he spends much the greatest Part of his Book in bitter railing and most scurrilous Reflections, first upon my self, and upon all Clergy and Priesthood. Which I think not worth my while to answer.

9. He concludes with personating a *Deist*, and telling what he would say, which he does very naturally, thus, *p. 47.* “ That he would
 “ so far have entered into a nice and critical
 “ Disquisition of the Matter, Weight, and
 “ Authentickness of the Books of the *Old* and
 “ *New Testament*, as to have rendered them
 “ both spurious and incredible; and conse-
 “ quently no competent Witnesses of what
 “ they relate, either concerning Miracles, or
 “ any other extraordinary Accounts, or super-
 “ natural Occurrences contained in revealed
 “ Religion.”

This

This is the Work he has been lately about in *Holland*, with his Friend *Toland*, (who consecrates the Sacrament for his Dog!) and other Freethinkers, of which I have seen an Account from good Hands. And they are in quest of some fine old Manuscript, which will prove that *Jesus* was thirty Years in *Egypt*, and more skilled in all the Learning of that Country than *Moses*. And that they both did their Miracles by *Magick*. I remember an old *Jew* with whom I had frequent Conversation, after I had given him one of these Books of the *Deists* and *Jews*, told me there was such a Manuscript concerning *Jesus* being so long in *Egypt*, but that they durst not produce it in a christian Country. I ask'd him if the Truth of that Manuscript could be vouched by the *Four Marks*, which their *Old* and our *New Testament* had? He said, no, it could not stand that Test, but it might be true for all that. But this Author can easily supply the Defect, and make it bear the *Four Marks*, full as well as these Stories to which he applies them. And I would advise him, That when his *Opus Palmare* comes out, which he has concerted with *Toland*, *Le Clerc*, &c. in Aid of the Book of the *Rights* (abridg'd and translated into *French* by the latter, with high Commendations, in his *Bibliothèque choisie*) to detect the *Apochryphal* Books of the *New Testament*, (that is, of them all) he would take Care to fortify his Vouchers with the *Four Marks*. Which will be no difficult Task in the Manner he has done it to his *Priestcraft in Perfection!*

(IV.) When the *Short Method with the Deists* came first out, I had Verses sent me of hideous Blasphemy, wherein our Lord *Christ* was banter'd with diabolical Malice.

1. But the first that appeared in Print against it was Monsieur *Le Clerc* beforementioned, in his *Bibliothèque choisie*, in the Year 1706. tom. viii. p. 394, 395. Where he treats me with a Haughtiness and Contempt, I did not think worth Notice. Had he been a Friend to Christianity, he would not have affronted any one for appearing on its Behalf, tho' his Performance had been weak; but rather have encouraged him, and kindly inform'd him wherein he had come short, and how to have improved. He would have told him what other Topick had been more proper for the Proof of Christianity. And would not have run down this, without shewing a better. Which he has not done, but referr'd it to another Time, like the Author of the *Detection*.

2. And, as others when they have Nothing left to say, he throws the Revolution at me--- *Can any good Thing come out of Nazareth?* He says I have wrote seditious and scandalous Discourses, but names none. So that he may father upon me what he pleases, as others have done. And remember that this was in 1706. So that nothing laid to my Charge since can be here meant.

3. But now as to his Arguments against the *Method with the Deists*, the fairest Way will be to give you them in his own Words, that
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I be not thought to misrepresent them, or abate any thing of their Force. Take them then thus, translated into *English*.

“ *Pour moi*———For my part, I am inclinable to be of Mr. *Hody's* Opinion, who thinks there were some anniversary Diversions in that Place, which being very much frequented by the *Jews* who inhabited that Part of *Alexandria* which lay on the Sea-Coast, some People tenaciously fond of the *Greek* Version made others believe it was in Memory of it that these Rejoicings were made in the Isle of *Pharos*. Those that have read the *Greek* Mythologists, or even *Ovid's Fasti*, have often observed, That there were among the Pagans several Festivals instituted in Memory of some Events which never happened, tho' these Festivals were said to bear date immediately from them. Such Fables having once obtained Credit in Mens Minds, these Holidays were established by Degrees, through the Artifice of the Priests, who made their own Advantage by them. And as their Beginnings were not committed to History, in a Generation or two after, the Original of them was derived from the very Time when the things that were thus commemorated were said to have happened. This is an useful Observation against some Persons full of blind Zeal, not to give it a worse Name, and little skill'd in History, who make use of these Institutions to prove the Truth of

“ Legends,

“ Legends, or even of the *Sacred History*,
 “ which stands in no need of such equivocal
 “ Proofs that are as applicable to Falshood as
 “ to Truth. There is I know not whom,
 “ who in Comparison of these despises the
 “ strongest Proofs of Christianity, I know
 “ not for what End, but I very much suspect
 “ it can only be to establish some deceitful
 “ Traditions, and put them upon the Level
 “ with the most authentick Doctrines of Chri-
 “ stianity, in order to make a Profit or Advan-
 “ tage by them. The seditious, scandalous,
 “ and violent Writings of this Man cannot
 “ allow me to have a better Opinion of him.
 “ I need not further characterise an Author
 “ who seeks to gain a Reputation by insult-
 “ ing those who would think a Blemish to
 “ their own, to lose their Time in answering
 “ him.”

I will not pretend to guess here whom he means that I have insulted. For I will not degress. But here is the Full of the Argument that is made use of in the *Detection*, which is nothing else but a Comment upon this Text. And now we see the Combination.

4. I am willing to have as mean an Opinion of myself as Mr. *Le Clerc*, or the *Detection* would have me. And I put not the Truth of Christianity upon the Issue of any Topick I can make use of to demonstrate it. No, God forbid. Let *God* be true, but every *Man* a *Liar*. But I may be allowed to stand by that Argument which has confirmed me and others in
 the

the Truth of Christianity, 'till I see it fairly confuted, and some better given.

5. And I desire Mr. *Le Clerc* to prove what he charges upon me, That I despise the strongest Proofs of Christianity, in comparison of those I have advanc'd. What other Proof have I despised? What other Proof has he named? And he should have named that stronger Proof at the same time that he endeavour'd to overthrow this Proof, lest having taken Men off from one Foundation, and giving them no other to stand upon, he might leave them no Foundation at all, and so disengage them quite from all Christianity, and make them errant *Deists*. And there is more Suspicion, by this Management, of this being the Design than of my endeavouring to introduce Popery or Paganism, by shewing such Proofs of Christianity, as none of their Legends, of the one sort or the other, can pretend to: Notwithstanding all the Zeal Mr. *Le Clerc*, or the *Detection* have shewed, to make the Facts of Christ as fabulous as the other.

6. Therefore, in Defence of Christianity I will shew the Failings of Mr. *Le Clerc's* Argument against it, and that by the *Four Marks* which he so much despises. First then, the Fact of some *Jews* making others believe that the Rejoicings at *Pharos* was in Memory of the *Greek* Version, wants all the *Marks*. Unless Mr. *Le Clerc* can shew, That the *Greek* Version was a Fact done publickly in the Face of the World; and can produce a Book wrote at the

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Time,

Time, by the Actors or Eye-Witneſſes, and containing the Inſtitution of theſe Rejoicings at *Pharos*, to be perpetually kept up in Memory of it.

7. Next, for the *Greek* Mythologiſts and the *Faſti* of *Ovid*, they are a plain Proof againſt the Facts, and ſhew, That they were related not as Truths in Fact, but only to expreſs ſome Mythology or Moral, by ſuch feigned Representations, like that of *Æſop's* Fables, or Romances wrote for the ſame End.

But he ſays, “ That theſe Fables having once
 “ obtained Credit in Mens Minds, theſe Ho-
 “ lidays were eſtabliſhed by Degrees, through
 “ the Artifice of the Prieſts; and as their Begin-
 “ nings were not committed to Hiſtory, in a
 “ Generation or two after, the Original of
 “ them was derived from the very Time when
 “ the Things that were thus commemorated
 “ were ſaid to have happened.”

But does he not ſee, That the *four Marks* obviate all theſe Deluſions? Their Holidays or commemorative Inſtitutions came on by Degrees. They did not commence from the Time the Facts were ſaid to have been done.

8. In the next Place, he wholly gives up the Cauſe, when he ſays, That their Beginnings were not committed to Hiſtory. For then there is no Book to be confronted with our *Holy Bible*, which was wrote at the Time when the Facts therein related were done, and the Inſtitutions in Memory of them were then made,
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by the very Actors of the Facts, that is, by *Moses* and by *Christ*. And these *four Marks* were thought upon, especially the *fourth*, on purpose to distinguish the Truth of our holy Scriptures, and of the Facts therein related, from the heathen or *Popish* Books of Legends. And though *Mr. Le Clerc* upbraids me with my little Skill in History (wherein I do not contend with him) yet he sees I have considered the Matter so much, That he (with all his historical Talents) can find no Instance of any fabulous Stories, which has all these *four Marks*. And besides I can tell him, that we have in History the Beginnings of the heathen Feasts, &c. in Memory of their Gods, and by whom instituted, in after Times, and not by these Gods themselves, nor related by Eye-Witnesses.

9. Yet he says, many believed these Fables. I doubt it not. It is no News to tell us, that false Stories may be imposed upon People, and believed by them. But to distinguish these from true Facts, and to lead People into a just Method of thinking, in this most material Point, was my humble Endeavour in finding out these *four Marks*. Which (blessed be *God*) have yet stood their Ground against all the Attacks made upon them.

10. I will take leave of *Mr. Le Clerc* at this time, with shewing the good Correspondence betwixt him and the Author of the Book of the *Rights*. No sooner was that Book made

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publick,

publick, but Mr. *Le Clerc* thought it worthy a Place in his *Bibliothèque choisie*, and that it might spread, he made an Epitome of it, and put it into *French*. With high Commendations of it. In Return to which, the Men of the *Rights* translated his *French* into *English*, and published it in *London*, with all due Respects, to Mr. *Le Clerc*, in a Preface.

And in the first *Defence of the Rights*, they forget not how much they owe to Mr. *Le Clerc*, and say,

“ If the Laws of Modesty allow one to say
 “ that in his own Defence, which at other
 “ Times would be unpardonable, the Author
 “ of the *Rights* considering how busy so ma-
 “ ny Pulpiteers, like the Crafts-men of *Ephes-*
 “ *sus*, are to stir up the People against him as
 “ an Enemy to their Temple and Religion,
 “ might be excused, if to take off the Edge of
 “ the Envy, and to allay the Force of that Pre-
 “ judice their utmost Clamours raise against
 “ him, he mentions the Character that is given
 “ of it by a Clergyman celebrated over all the
 “ learned World, for his deep Penetration, ex-
 “ act Judgment, and great Skill in Divinity:
 “ But the greater the Character is that is given
 “ and the greater the Person that gives it, the
 “ less he presumes to mention it; and there-
 “ fore shall only refer the Reader to Mr. *Le*
 “ *Clerc's Bibliothèque choisie*, tom. x. particu-
 “ larly p. 309. 341. 357.

Thus

Thus I leave these Gentlemen in one another's Company, commending each other! For their Endeavours were the same, to overthrow all *Revealed Religion*. In which Sense the Book of the *Rights* may well be reckoned among the Opposers of the *Short Method with the Deists*, though it proceeds not by Way of direct Answer to it.

(V.) And now, that I may not omit any of the Opponents I have had in this Cause of Christianity; I will lastly name the *Observer*, who has put himself into the Number, in his Paper of the 7th of last *June*, Vol. ix. Num. 41.

(1.) Where first he clears himself from being the Author of the *Detection*, which he says, was laid upon him. But he vouches for it, that it is no Atheistical Book. And brings this Argument, *That some Divines have spoke with as much Disregard of the Arguments brought from the Sybilline Oracles*. A decent Comparison indeed, when the Dispute was concerning the Truth of the holy Scriptures! In short, he condemns me, and says, *I have betrayed the Cause*, and must be a *Papist*, because in all the *Short Method* I have not said, That the Pope is *Anti-Christ*! And he concludes, " So that as Mr. *Leslie* has managed
" the Matter, I cannot help thinking that our
" holy Religion is little beholden to such an
" Advocate.

(2.) But he has attempted that which neither Mr. *Le Clerc*, nor the *Detection* have ventur'd upon, that is, to give his Proofs for Christianity, since he likes not that of the *four Marks*. And his Proofs are these :

1. Natural Conscience and Reason. And the Depravation of these, of which he says every Man is sensible. Then to ask a *Pagan* or a *Deist*, whence comes this Depravation? And they cannot tell. But the Scripture tells, by the Fall of *Adam*; therefore the Scriptures must be true, and a divine Revelation, because they tell us that which we could not have known without them.

2. The Agreeableness of the Doctrine to the Nature of *God*, and exalting Morality.

3. Its being contrary to the corrupt Nature of Man, against Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, &c.

4. That by this Way of Proof, it depends not on Philosophy or Learning, and stands not upon human Testimony, or Authority.

5. The clear Evidence that the Pope is *Anti-Christ*, from 2 *Thess.* ii. 4. &c.

As to the first, we find not Christians agreed about *Original Sin*, and its Effects upon us. And I doubt a *Deist* would first desire a Proof of the Authority of the Scriptures, before he believed that Relation of it which they give.

As to the second and third, the Moral Philosophers would contend for their Precepts of Virtue. And the *Brachmans* would out-do
you

you in Mortification of the Flesh, not to name the *Papists*, lest you should call me such.

And for the fourth, there is no Way to know the Truth of Facts, but what is human, or by Revelation. And you rejecting what is human, consequently must trust to Miracle for the Conversion of a *Deist*. Unless your fifth Proof of *Antichrist* will do it!

(3.) But, Sir, you go altogether upon the Doctrine, and neglect the Facts. Whereas *Christ* appealed to the *Facts* for a Proof of his Doctrine. *Believe me for the works sake. And if I had not done such works, you had had no sin, tho' you had not believed me.* Joh. x. 25, 37, 38. xiv. 11. xv. 24.

And as to the Doctrine, you go only upon that of *Morality*. Is Christianity then nothing but *Morality*? Sir, you have not been so taught, if you are a right *Presbyterian*.

The Christian Faith is, to believe in *Christ* as having made Satisfaction for our Sins, by his perfect Obedience, and the Sacrifice of himself upon the Cross. And how shall a *Deist* have this Faith, but by being convinced that *Christ* is this *Saviour* of the World? And how shall he know that, but by his Works testifying that he was sent of *God* for this End? And how shall he be satisfied of the Truth of the Facts, but by such human Evidence as I have given, and as all other Facts are proved? Unless (as I said) you would have a Miracle to convince him! I doubt this Method has made many *Deists*, at least has confirmed them.

(VI.) I remember soon after the *Short Method* came out, some Dissenting Preachers desired a Conference with me upon the Subject. And they treated me much more civilly than the *Observer*. They expressed a Liking of what I had done, but told me withal, that I had omitted the strongest Proof for Christianity. I took it very kindly, as I ought, and prayed them to tell it me, that I might add it in the next Edition. They said it was the Self-Evidence of the Scriptures, from the Dignity of the Matter, and Majesty of the Stile, beyond any other Writing. I told them I was fully convinc'd of it in my own Mind, and found that Comfort and Exultation in reading them, infinitely beyond any other Book or Writing in the World. And that I doubted not it would convince any who seriously attended to it. But that I had to do with *Deists* who were Scoffers, and trampled these Pearls under their Feet. And therefore that some other Topick must be found out for them, to perswade them by the plain Principles of Reason, to which only they appealed, and of which only indeed they were capable. For they had not yet experienced, that *That the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the Thoughts and Intentions of the heart.* Heb. iv. 12. And reading the Scriptures with Prejudice, and Minds unprepared, they felt not within themselves,
That

That the law of the Lord is an undefiled law, converting the soul; that the statutes of the Lord are right, and rejoice the heart; that the commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth light unto the Eyes. Psal. xix. 7, 8. This appears only to those who are religiously exercised in the Holy Scriptures.

Then that Text was urged to me 1 *Job. ii. 27.* *You need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things.* I answered, that this was spoke only to believers; as it is said, *ver. 20.* *Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.* After which immediately follows, *ver. 21.* *I have not written unto you, because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, &c.* Several other Texts of the like Nature were quoted, but they were all found to terminate only in Believers. I then shewed how differently *St. Paul* argued with the *Athenians*, *Act. xvii. 24, &c.* He took his Topicks from Providence and the Works of God, from Principles allowed by themselves. But he quoted no Scripture to them, but he quoted *Aratus*, one of their own Poets, who said, *We are the Offspring of God.* Whence the Apostle reasoned with them, That the Godhead could not be like the Images they made of Gold, Silver, &c. But he reasoned with the *Jews* out of the Scriptures. One said, he was satisfy'd every one was convinced of the Truth of the Scriptures who read them, tho' they would not confess it. I told him I was

was too well convinced there were *Deists* in the World. And I durst not venture upon that Argument with them, to tell them I was sure they did believe; in regard not only to what they would have thought of me; but of the Cause, for which I could produce no other Proof but what they knew to be utterly false! I will do that Justice to the Company I was in, That all, except this one old Man, did at last agree with me, that such Topicks were not to be used with *Deists*.

(VII.) I have now done with the *Detection*, and all the Adversaries I have heard of, who have appear'd in Print against the *Short Method with the Deists*. And I hope its Force is not abated by all these Objections made to it.

I have quite overlook'd all the Impertinence in the *Detection*, his Ribaldry and *Billinggate* against me, which has made my Answer to him so short; for by this I have cut off much the greatest Part of his Book. He spends to the 14th Page upon these Topicks, before he comes to the Argument. And interlards them often afterwards, which has swell'd his Performance to such a Bulk.

But to give the Reader a Taste what Stress is to be laid upon his most positive Assertions, I will name but one, with which he fills up Page 28. repeating it over and over again with the utmost Assurance, *viz.* That both Universities

versities of *Oxford* and *Cambridge* have made Collections for me. He says, he would prove it, “ if it had not been as flagrant and notorious as our Acts of Parliament, or publick Proclamations.” Now is it not strange, that what is so *flagrant* and *notorious* to all the Nation (if this Gentleman’s Word may be taken) should not be known to the Person concerned? For I am very positive that he never received any such Collections, from both or either of the Universities. And I doubt not if Collections had been made, a Method would have been taken to have had them conveyed to him for whom they were intended. After this, I suppose nobody will put me to disprove any Facts related by this Author.







T H E
L E T T E R
C O N C E R N I N G
S O M M O N O C O D O M .

S I R,

I Have, at your Desire, looked into some late Accounts of the Kingdom of *Siam*, and compared what they relate of the pretended God *Sommonocodom*, with his History, as delivered by that truly pious and learned Adversary of yours, who has so ingeniously proved you a *Popish* Missioner; tho' were his Logick orthodox, I think you ought as soon to be taken for one of the ancient *Flamins* or modern *Talapains*. 'Tis obvious to the most superficial Reader, That that Fable must be either the Foundation or Corruption of our Gospel; and which of these is the most probable, may, by the Application of your *Four Rules* to each of them, be quickly discovered. As far therefore as I can apprehend, the only Inference to be naturally

rally drawn from this System of modern Paganism, is to shew, That Christendom was once of a greater Extent than it is at present; That the Gospel was preached in the remotest Parts of the East, before the *French* or *Portuguese* Missions; and that so prodigious a Depravation of human Reason stands in great need of being once more set right. I am willing to believe, that all the Particulars mentioned in the *Detection*, are so many Articles of the *Siamese* Creed; tho' there are some of them, which I have not been able to meet with, either in *Pere Tachard*, or two other Authors, of as good or better Credit, and those are *L'Abbe Choisy*, who went as Assistant to *Monf. Chaumont*, the first Ambassador sent by the *French* King to *Siam*, and *Monf. La Loubere*, who went afterwards thither, with the Character of Envoy Extraordinary: Perhaps what is omitted in these may be found in *Monf. Gervaise*, whose Book I have formerly read, but could not now procure. I must however take notice, that our Historian has, as most Authors do, taken care to relate only what might serve to his own Purpose, which was visibly no other than to ground the Worship of *Jesus Christ*, and that of *Ben.monocodom* on the same Degree of Probability; and therefore he has prudently omitted such pretended Miracles of the latter, as could only serve to make the whole Story ridiculous to a superlative Degree. Among these I suppose, most People will

rank

rank the two that follow, and yet they seem better able to bear the Test of your *Rules* than any of the Rest. *Sommonocodom* once flying of a Paper Kite (an Exercise not altogether unknown in *England*) found the Height and Inequality of certain Trees to be a great Obstacle to his Pleasure, upon which he commanded the Tops of those Trees to fall even; they instantly obeyed. Flying of Kites has been ever since a solemn Diversion among the *Siamese*, I mean those of the greatest Authority and Distinction; and to favour them in it, the Trees continue still even. Another Time *Sommonocodom* being upon an Expedition that required Haste, took a Stride from the Isle of *Ceylon* to the Kingdom of *Siam*, which are not above 1200 Miles asunder, nor much less, if our Maps are not very defective. To prove the Truth of this, they shew us the Print of both his Feet; that which is to be seen in *Ceylon*, is still on the Top of an high Mountain; that of *Siam* is on a Rock now almost even with the Plain, the Mountain, once as high as the other, having sunk under the mighty Weight of the Deity. 'Tis indeed remarkable, that this Print of the Foot does not shew it to have been above four or five Times bigger than one of ours, which Disproportion to so large a Step, would be a sufficient ground to one of our Christian Philosophers to question the Truth of the Fact; and even in *Siam*, where the greatest Wits are less scrupulous, there were those

those alive in 1688, who affirm'd that Monument not to be of above ninety Years standing; yet the King and all his Subjects, Clergy and Laity, paid it an extraordinary Veneration. Such Instances as these may serve for a Taste of the *Indian* Penetration and Judgment in Matters of Religion; and they are much of the same Pitch in what relates to Arts and Sciences. Their Histories are all either barren, or fill'd up with Adventures too gross to find Place in our Romances; Truth, Reason, and Nature, are what they mind least, they think sticking close to any of them, to be a Mark of a fervile Genius, that wants Fertility and Invention. Their roving Imagination is continually employed in quest of Wonders, and when they've done, they'll assert, with the greatest Air of Conviction, the most extravagant Absurdities. Thus one of the chief Ministers of the King of *Siam*, being sent by his Master to congratulate *Monf. Chaumont*, the *French* Ambassador, upon his Arrival on their Coasts, he presently claim'd Acquaintance with him, putting him very seriously in mind, how, above a thousand Years before, he had been sent by the then King of *France* to conclude an Alliance with the Crown of *Siam*. The *Mandarin* did in this Complement allude to the Transmigration of Souls, the first Principle of their Religion, which being universally believ'd, gives every one that pleases an Opportunity of relating whatever comes uppermost of the various Accidents
which

which have befallen him in all the Bodies he has pass'd thro', and you may easily guess 'twou'd be very hard to disprove him, but indeed they are generally too-well bred to offer at it, and as ready to believe the wildest Chimeras of others, as they are to vent their own. The *Talapoins* never fail to make their own Advantage of this Disposition, and by the fabulous Notions with which they fill the People's Brains, preserve themselves in great Credit, both their Persons and Habitations being held so inviolable, that even the boldest Tyrants and Usurpers have scrupled openly to infringe their Rights; a remarkable Instance of which happen'd in the last Age. The chief Minister of State, or, as others say, a Prince of the Blood, having form'd a Conspiracy against his Sovereign, broke into the Palace with arm'd Force, and oblig'd the unfortunate Monarch to fly for Shelter to a Neighbouring Convent of *Talapoins*, where he remain'd in perfect Safety, till the Usurper had with much ado wheedled him out, and when he had done, got it declar'd in a great Convention of *Mandarins*, that he had forfeited his Right by flying, and that his abandoning the Seat of the Empire was quitting the Government; in Consequence of which Vote he stepped himself into the Throne.

These general Observations on the Genius and Temper of the People may not be improper; but to speak a little more particularly, to

Sommonocodom and his Worship shou'd any *Talapoin* go about to persuade me to adore him, I shou'd desire some more satisfactory Evidence of the Truth of that Doctrine than they usually give. The Language in which it is preserv'd is different from the vulgar Tongue, but they cannot inform us whether it ever was a living Language, nor where, nor when they learnt it; the few Books they have, bear neither Date nor Name: They are in the same Uncertainty as to their Civil Laws and Government; *Siam* and *Laos* a neighbouring Kingdom, derive their Origin mutually from one another. Neither do their most authentick Writings agree on the chief Circumstances of the Birth, Life, and Death of their Messiah. Sometimes they make him Son to a King of *Ceylon*, by his lawful Queen call'd *Mania* or *Maria*, and tell you that he had a thousand Brothers, not born after the usual Manner, but all sprung out of the Impurities which accompany'd his Birth. At another Time they will have him born of a Virgin, who living a retir'd Life in an impenetrable Forest, was during her Prayers impregnated by the Beams of the Sun, and afterwards deliver'd without Pain. They agree as little about the Place, which some say was on the Banks of a great Lake between *Siam* and *Camboya*, others in the Isle of *Ceylon*. After his Birth the Fortune-Tellers were consulted by his Father King *Tausout*, to know what the Fate of his Son
wou'd

would be; They told him that he would be Emperor of the whole Universe, or if he chose to abandon the World, and become a *Talapoin*, he should at last arrive to the *Nireupan* or sovereign Degree of Felicity. And here I must observe, contrary to what the Author of the Detection is pleased to assert, That *Sommonocodom* is not pretended to be the Founder of the *Siamese* Religion, or the Institutor of their Ascetic Orders. They hold the one and the other to be as ancient as the World, that is eternal. For they have not so much as the Notion of the first and supreme Being which we call God, and worship as the Creator and sovereign Lord of all Things. Their Scheme in short is this: There is a continual Transmigration of Souls from one Body into another, Beast, Fish, or Man indifferently. The Soul that behaves itself well in one Station, meets its Reward by being placed next Time in a better, and Sin is punished after the same Method; yet all this is not supposed to happen thro' the Will and Direction of any over-ruling Providence, but to proceed from a fatal Necessity, or rather from the Nature and Essence of Virtue and Vice, as the Flame ascends, and the Loadstone attracts Iron. But when a Soul after the Revolution of many Ages, has, in all its various Habitations, performed its Part so well, as to have acquir'd a fixed and unalterable Habit of Virtue, it becomes *Nireupan*, that is, 'tis freed from the

Troubles of this World, and discharged from all further Attendance upon Matter, and thenceforward enjoys an eternal Rest, without Care or Concern for what passes among Men. Of these perfect Souls they reckon in all but *Four*, of which *Sommonocodom* was the last, who notwithstanding his Incapacity of doing Good or Hurt, is still, say they, to be worshipped, till another, whom they daily expect, appears. Such were the Gods whom *Epicurus* allowed, that he might avoid the scandalous Name of Atheist, and whom he would have to be adored for no other Reason than the Excellency of their own Nature. And 'twas perhaps from these *Indians* that the *Stoicks* borrowed their Notion of Virtue being its own Reward, though by their Way of explaining it, they made it yet more absurd. To return to our Story; *Sommonocodom* resolved to become a *Talapoin*, in which pious Undertaking he had for Companions ten Thousand young Men, all Princes, all of his own Kindred. One of his first Acts of heroick Virtue, was to pluck out both his Eyes, and then to kill his Wife and two Children, to satisfy the Hunger of some of his Disciples: How to reconcile this Action with their own Law, (which not content to condemn Murder as the greatest of Crimes, looks upon all killing, even of a Beast, to be extremely sinful) may perhaps be somewhat difficult; but this was not the only Blood he shed, for being

ing transformed into a Monkey, he killed a strange Monster, that was coming to devour a whole City; but this cost him dear as we shall afterwards find. Seeing himself violently persecuted by his wicked Brother or Kinsman *Thevetar* (for Authors are not agreed how nearly they stood related) he began to examine his Conscience, that he might discover what he had done to deserve such ill Usage; for 'tis in *Siam* a fundamental Doctrine, that every Action, good or bad, must necessarily meet with a proportionable Reward; and he remembered that being once in his Cups, he had thrown a small Stone at a *Talapoin*, and given him a slight Wound, for which he had been punished during four hundred ninety nine Generations, and had besides lain a considerable Time in Hell. I believe you may by this Time be tired with such a Rhapsody of Nonsense, and therefore I shall come to a Conclusion of *Sommonocodom's* Life. His *Death* is related in two different Manners: Some tell you that having lived to his eighty second Year, he died of the Cholick, which he got by eating of Swine's Flesh, and this was a Judgment upon him, for his Monkey Trick in killing the Monster mentioned before, the Soul of that Monster having been since transferred into that very Swine; others say he killed himself, and charitably distributed his own Flesh amongst a Parcel of ravenous Beasts. It is not, I think, our Business

to examine which Tradition is the best grounded, and for the *Siameſe* they never quarrel about the Matter. Let the Manner be what it will, they place it five hundred and forty four Years before the Birth of our Saviour, and from thence pretend to number their Years. But Monsieur *La Loubere*, an Author of great Credit, who concludes upon very good Grounds there never was any ſuch Man in *rerum natura*, and Monsieur *Caffini* the famous Aſtronomer, are both of Opinion, that this can only be an arbitrary Epoch derived from ſome remarkable Conjunction of the *Planets* which happened at that Time, and might have been reckoned a proper Beginning for Aſtronomical Calculations. Whether this Opinion be true or no, till the *Siameſe* can produce ſome Monuments or Records, good or bad, civil or eccleſiaſtical, of what happened among them, or any where elſe, during the Space of 1300 Years from the pretended Death of their God, till the Foundation of their Monarchy, which was but about 900 Years ago, I ſhall by the Benefit of your Rules preſerve myſelf from embracing their Religion. Could a Chasm of half that Time be found in our Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, I am apt to believe we ſhould have but few Chriſtians, in ſo diſcerning an Age as ours, I cannot take my Leave without putting you in Mind, to deſire your Antagoniſt, that after having ſo compleatly demoliſh'd

lish'd the Arguments with which you undertake to support Christianity, he would at length produce his own, and at the same time be pleas'd to tell us what the Use of Miracles should be, for I have the Charity to believe him too much a Christian to deny there ever was any such thing, and too much a Philosopher, not to admit of that establish'd Axiom; *Deus & Natura nihil agunt frustra.* Had I the Honour of his Acquaintance, being myself a little inclin'd to Scepticism, I would advise him as a Friend not to betray the same Disingenuity in arguing against Revelation, that he and others so often complain of in those who contend for it. *I am, &c.*

September 21,
1710.





THE

Truth of *Christianity*

DEMONSTRATED,

IN A

DIALOGUE

Betwixt a

CHRISTIAN and a DEIST.

Wherein the Case of the *Jews* is like-
wise consider'd.

(I.) CHRISTIAN. **I**T is strange you shou'd stand it out so against your own Happiness, and employ your whole Wit and Skill to work in yourself a Disbelief of any future Rewards or Punishments; only that you may live easy (as you think) in this World, and enjoy your Pleasures. Which yet you cannot
enjoy

enjoy free and undisturb'd from the Fear of those Things that are to come, the Event of which you pretend not to be sure of: And therefore are sure of a Life full of Trouble that admits not of any Consolation, and of a miserable and wretched Death, according to the utmost that you yourself propose!

DEIST. How can you say that? When I propose to live without any Fear of those Things. I fear not Hell, and I have discarded the Expectation of Heaven, because I believe neither.

CHR. Are you sure there are no such Things?

DE. That is a Negative, and I pretend not to prove it.

CHR. Then you must remain in a Doubt of it. And what a condition is it to die in this Doubt, when the Issue is eternal Misery! And this is the utmost, by your own Confession, that you can propose to yourself. Therefore I call'd yours a Disbelief, rather than a Belief of any Thing. It is we *Christians* who believe, you *Deists* only disbelieve.

And if the Event should prove as you wou'd have it, and that we shou'd all be annihilated at our Death, we shou'd be in as good a Condition as you. But on the other Side, if the Event shou'd prove as we expect it, then you are eternally miserable, and we eternally happy. Therefore one wou'd think it the wisest Part to take our Side of the Question.
Especially

Especially considering, that those poor Pleasures, for the Sake of which you determine yourselves against us, are but mere Amusements, and no real Enjoyments. Nay, we had better be without them than have them, even as to this Life itself. Is not Temperance and a healthful Constitution more pleasant than those Pains and Aches, sick Head and Stomach, that are the inseperable Companions of Debauchery and Excess, besides the clouding our Reason, and turning sottish in our Understanding?

DE. We take pleasure in them for the Time. And mind not the Consequēces-----But however, a Man cannot believe as he pleases. And therefore notwithstanding all the glorious and all the terrible Things you speak of, it makes nothing to me, unless you can evidently prove them to be so. And you must still leave me to judge for myself, after you have done all you can.

CHR. What I have said, is only to dispose you to hear me impartially, and not to be prejudiced against your own Happiness, both here and hereafter.

(2.) DE. Well, without more prefacing, the Case is this; I believe a God as well as you. But for Revelation, and what you call the Holy Scriptures, I may think they were wrote by pious and good Men, who might take this Method of speaking as from
God,

God, and in his Name, as supposing that those good Thoughts came from Him, and that it would have a greater Effect upon the People. And might couch their Morals under Histories of Things supposed to be done, as several of the wise Heathens have taken this Course, in what they told of *Jupiter* and *Juno*, and the Rest of their Gods and Goddeses. But as to the Facts themselves, I believe the one no more than the other. Or that all the Facts in *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, or in *Æsop's Fables* were true.

CHR. You seem willing by this to preserve a respectful Esteem and Value for the holy Scriptures, as being wrote by pious and good Men, and with a good Design to reform the Manners of Men.

But your Argument proves directly against the Purpose for which you brought it. And makes the Pen-Men of the Scriptures to be far from good Men, to be not only Cheats and Impostors, but Blasphemers and an Abomination before God. For such these same Scriptures frequently call those who presume to speak as from God, and in his Name, when he had not sent them, and given them Authority so to do. And the Law in the Scriptures condemns such to be stoned to Death as Blasphemers.

It was not so with the Heathens, their Moralists did not use the Stile of *Thus saith the Lord*. And their Philosophers opposed and
wrote

wrote against one another without any Offence. For all the Matter was which of them could reason best, they pretended to no more.

And for the Facts of the Fables of their Gods, themselves did not believe them, and have wrote the Mythology or Moral that was intended by them.

DE. But many of the common People did believe the Facts themselves. As it is with the common People now in the Church of *Rome*, who believe the most senseless and ridiculous Stories in their Books of Legends to be as true as the Gospel. Tho' the more wise among them call them only pious Frauds to encrease the Devotion of the People. And so we think of your Gospel itself and all the other Books you say were wrote by Men divinely inspired. We will let you keep them to cajole the Mob, but when you would impose them upon Men of Sense, we must come to the Test with you.

CHR. That is what I desire. And to see whether there are no more Evidences to be given for the Truth of Christianity, that is, of the Holy Scriptures, than are given for the Legends, and all the fabulous Stories of the *Heathen Gods*. And if so, I will give up my Argument, and confess that it is not in my Power to convince you.

DE. I cannot refuse to join Issue with you upon this. To begin then, I desire to know
your

your Evidences for the Truth of your Scriptures and the Facts therein related.

(3.) CHR. If the Truth of the Book and the Facts therein related be proved, I suppose you will not deny the Doctrines to be true.

DE. No. For if I saw such Miracles with my Eyes as are said to have been done by *Moses* and *Christ*, I could not think of any greater Proof to be given, that such an one was sent of God. Therefore if your Bible be true as to the Facts, I must believe it in the Doctrine too. But there are other Books which pretend to give us Revelations from God, and we must know which of these is True.

CHR. To distinguish this Book from all others which pretend to give Revelations from God, these *four Marks* or *Rules* were set down.

I. That the Facts related be such of which Mens outward Senses, their Eyes and Ears, may judge.

[This cuts off Enthusiastical Pretences to Revelation and Opinions which may be propagated in the Dark, and like the Tares not known till they are grown up, and the first Beginning of them not discover'd.]

II. That these Facts be done openly in the Face of the World.

III. That not only publick Monuments, but outward Institutions and Actions should be appointed

pointed and perpetually kept up in Memory of them.

IV. That these Institutions to be observed should commence from the Time that the Facts were done. And consequently that the Book wherein these Facts and Institutions are recorded, should be written at the Time, and by those who did the Facts, or by Eye and Ear-Witnesses. For that is included in this Mark, and is the main Part of it; to prevent false Stories being coined in after Ages of Things done many hundred Years before, which none alive can disprove. Thus *Moses* wrote his five Books containing his Actions and Institutions. And those of *Christ* were wrote by his Disciples, who were Eye and Ear-Witnesses of what they related. And particular Care was taken of this, as you may see, *Act. i. 21, 22.* upon chusing one to supply the Place of *Judas*, *Wherefore of these Men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the Baptism of John, until that same Day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be Witness with us of his Resurrection.* And *St. John* begins his first *Epistle* thus, *That which was from the Beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled-----That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.*

I have explain'd this fourth Mark, because the Author of the Detection, either wilfully or ignorantly, seems not to understand it. And this alone overthrows all the Stories he has told, which he wou'd make parallel to the Facts of *Moses*, and of *Christ*; and therefore alledges that they have all these four Marks. But he must begin again, and own that these four Marks still stand an irrefragable Proof of the Truth of any Fact which has them all; till he can produce a Book which was wrote by the Actors or Eye-Witnesses of the Facts it relates; and shew that such Facts, having the other three Marks, have been detected to be false. Which when he can do, I will give him up these four Marks as an insufficient Proof, and own I was mistaken in them. But hitherto they have stood the Test. For he himself will not say, he has produced any such Book in all his Detection.

If he says, that Facts may be true, tho' no such Book can be produced for them, and tho' they have not all the aforesaid Marks. I will easily grant it. But all I contend for is, that whatever Fact has all these four Marks, cannot be false. For Example, cou'd *Moses* have perswaded Six Hundred Thousand Men that he had led them through the Sea in the manner related in *Exodus*, if it had not been true? If he cou'd, it wou'd have been a greater Miracle than the other. The like of their being fed forty Years in the Wilderness without Bread,

Bread, by *Manna* rained down to them from Heaven. The like of *Christ's* feeding five Thousand at a Time with five Loaves. And so of all the rest. The two first Marks secure from any Cheat or Imposture at the Time the Facts were done. And the two last Marks secure equally from any Imposition in after Ages, because this Book which relates these Facts, speaks of itself as written at that Time, by the Actors or Eye-Witnesses; and as commanded by God to be carefully kept and preserved to all Generations, and read publickly to all the People, at stated Times, as is commanded, *Deut.* xxxi. 10, 11, 12. And was practised, *Josh.* viii. 34, 35. *Neb.* viii. &c. And the Institutions appointed in this Book were to be perpetually observed from the Day of the Institution for ever among these People, in Memory of the Facts, as the Passover, *Exod.* xii. and so of the rest. Now suppose this Book to have been forged a Thousand Years after *Moses*, would not every one say when it first appeared, we never heard of this Book before, we know of no such Institutions, as of a Passover, or Circumcision, or Sabbaths, and the many Feasts and Fasts therein appointed, of a Tribe of *Levi*, and a Tabernacle wherein they were to serve in such an Order of Priesthood; &c. Therefore this Book must be an errant Forgery, for it wants all those Marks it gives of itself, as to its own Continuance, and of those Institutions
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it relates. No Instance can be shewn since the World began of any Book so circumstantiated, that was a Forgery, and passed as Truth upon any People. I think it impossible; and therefore that the *four Marks* are still an invincible Proof of the Truth of that Book and those Facts wherein all these *Marks* do meet.

But since I am come upon this Subject again, I will endeavour to improve it, and give *four* other *Marks*, some of which no Fact, however true, ever had, or can have, but the Fact of *Christ* alone. Thus while I support the Fact of *Moses*, I set that of *Christ* above him, as the Lord is above the Servant. And the *Jews* being herein principally concerned, I will consider their Case likewise as we go along. Therefore I add this fifth *Mark* as peculiar to our Bible, and to distinguish it from all other Histories which relate Facts formerly done.

(V.) That the Book which relates the Facts contain likewise the Law of that People to whom it belongs, and be their Statute-Book by which their Causes are determined. This will make it impossible for any to coin or forge such a Book, so as to make it pass upon any People. For Example, if I should forge a Statute-Book for *England*, and publish it next Term, could I make all the Judges, Lawyers, and People believe, that this was their true and only Statute Book by which their Causes had

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been determined these many hundred Years past? They must forget their old Statute-Book, and believe that this new Book, which they never saw or heard of before, was that same old Book which has been pleaded in *Westminster-Hall*, for so many Ages, which has been so often printed, and the Originals of which are now kept in the Tower, to be consulted as there is Occasion.

DE. I grant that to be impossible. But how do you apply it?

CHR. It is evident as to the Books of *Moses*, which are not only a History of the *Jews*, but their very Statute-Book, wherein their Municipal Law, as well Civil as Ecclesiastical, was contained.

DE. This is so indeed as to the Books of *Moses*, to which they always appealed; *To the Law and to the Testimony*. And they had no other Statute-Book. But this will not agree to your Gospel, which is no municipal Law, nor any Civil Law at all, and no Civil Causes were tried by it.

CHR. The Law was given to the *Jews*, as a distinct and separate People from all other Nations upon the Earth. And therefore was a Municipal Law particularly for that Nation only of the *Jews*. But Christianity was to extend to all the Nations of the Earth. And Christians were to be gathered out of all Nations, and therefore the Gospel could not be a Municipal Law as to Civil Rights to all Nations,

tions, who had each their own Municipal Laws. This could not be without destroying all the Municipal Laws in the World, of every Nation whatsoever. And then none could be a Christian, without at the same time becoming a Rebel to the Government where he lived. This would have been for *Christ* to have immediately set up for Universal and Temporal King of all the World, as the *Jews* expected of their *Messiah*, and therefore would have made *Christ* a King. But he instructed them in the spiritual Nature of his Kingdom, that it was not of *this World*, nor did respect their temporal or civil Matters. Which therefore he left in the same State he found them, and commanded their Obedience to their Civil Governours, tho' Heathen, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience Sake. And as to the Law of *Moses*, he left the *Jews* still under it, as to their civil Concerns, so far as the *Romans*, under whose Subjection they then were, would permit them. As *Pilate* said to them, *Ye have a Law; and judge ye him according to your Law.*

But the Gospel was given as the Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Law to the Church whithersoever dispersed through all Nations; for that did not interfere with their Temporal Laws, as to Civil Government. And in this the *fifth Mark* is made stronger to the Gospel, than even to the Law. For it is easier to suppose that any Forgery might creep into the Municipal

pa! Law of a particular Nation, than that all the Nations whither Christianity is spread should conspire in the Corruption of the Gospel, which to all Christians is of infinitely greater Concern than their temporal Laws. And without such a Concert of all Christian Nations and People supposed, no such Forgery could pass undiscover'd in the Gospel, which is spread as far as Christianity, and read daily in their publick Offices.

DE. But I say it is discover'd, as appears by the Multitude of your *Various Lections*.

CHR. That cannot be called a Forgery; it is nothing but such Mistakes as may very easily happen, and are almost unavoidable, in so many Copies as have been made of the Gospel, before Printing was known. And considering the many Translations of it into several Languages, where the Idioms are different, and Phrases may be mistaken, together with the natural Slips of *Amanuenses*, it is much more wonderful, that there are no more *Various Lections*, than that there are so many.

But in this appears the great Providence of God in the Care the *Christians* took of this, that they have marked every the least *Various Lektion*, even *Syllabical*: And that among all these there is not found one which makes any Alteration either in the Facts, or in the Doctrines. So that instead of an Objection, this becomes a strong Confirmation of the Truth and Certainty of the Gospel. Which stands thus

thus perfectly clear of so much as any doubt concerning the Facts or the Doctrines therein related.

But I will now proceed to a stronger Evidence than even this, and all that has been said before; which I have made the *sixth Mark*, and that is the Topick of Prophecy.

(VI.) The great Fact of *Christ's* Coming into the World was prophesy'd of in the *Old Testament* from the Beginning to the End, as it is said, *Luk. i. 70.* *By all the holy prophets which have been since the world began.*

This Evidence no other Fact ever had. For there was no Prophecy of *Moses*, but *Moses* himself did prophecy of *Christ*, *Deut. xviii. 15.* (apply'd *Act. iii. 22, 23, 24.*) and sets down the several Promises given of him. The first was to *Adam*, immediately after the Fall, *Gen. iii. 15.* Where he is call'd the Seed of the *Woman*, but not of the *Man*, because he was to have no Man for his Father, tho' he had a Woman to his Mother. And of none other can this be said, nor that he shou'd *bruise the serpent's head*, that is, overcome the Devil and all his Power.

He was again promis'd to *Abraham*, as you may see *Gen. xii. 3. xviii. 18.* See this apply'd *Gal. iii. 16.*

Jacob did expressly prophesy of him, with a Mark of the Time when he shou'd come, and calls him *Shiloh*, or *He that was to be sent.* *Gen. xlix. 10.*

Balaam prophesy'd of him by the Name of the *Star* of *Jacob*, and *Scepter* of *Israel*. Num xxiv. 17.

Daniel calls him the *Messiah* the *Prince*. And tells the Time of his Coming and of his Death, *Dan.* ix. 25, 26.

It was foretold that he shou'd be born of a *Virgin*, *Ifai.* vii. 14. In the City of *Bethlehem*, *Micah* v. 2. Of the Seed of *Jesse*, *Ifai.* xi. 1. 10. His low Estate and Sufferings are particularly describ'd, *Psal.* xxii. and *Ifai.* liii. And his Resurrection, *Psal.* xvi. 10. That he shou'd sit upon the Throne of *David* for ever, and be call'd, *Wonderful*, the *Mighty God*, the *Prince of Peace*, *Ifai.* ix. 6, 7. *The Lord our Righteousness*, *Jer.* xxxiii. 16. *Jehovah Tsidkenu*, (an incommunicable Name given to none but the Great God alone). And *Immanuel*, that is, *God with us*, *Ifai.* vii. 14. And *David* whose *Son* he was, according to the *Flesh*, called him his *Lord*, *Psal.* cx. 1.

The Cause of his Sufferings is said to be for the Sins of the People, and not for himself, *Ifai.* liii. 4, 5, 6. *Dan.* ix. 26.

And as to the Time of his Coming, it is expressly said, (to the Confusion of the *Jews* now) That it was to be before the *Scepter* shou'd depart from *Judah*, *Gen.* xlix. 10. In the *second Temple*, *Hag.* ii. 7, 9. Within seventy Weeks of the Building of it, *Dan.* ix. 24. that is, (according to the prophetical known Stile of a Day for a Year) within four hundred and ninety Years after.

(I.) From these and many more Prophecies of the *Messiah* or *Christ*, his Coming was the general Expectation of the *Jews* from the Beginning, but more especially about the Time in which it was foretold he shou'd come when several false *Messiahs* did appear among them. And this Expectation still remains with them, tho' they confess that the Time foretold by all the Prophets for his Coming, is past.

But what I have next to offer will be more strange to you. You may say it was natural for the *Jews* to expect their *Messiah*, who was prophes'y'd of in their Book of the Law, and was to be a *Jew*, and King of all the Earth. But what had the *Gentiles* to do with this? There were no Prophecies to them.

Therefore what I have to shew you is, That these Prophecies of the *Messiah* were likewise to the *Gentiles*. For it is said that he shou'd be the Expectation of the *Gentiles* as well as of the *Jews*. And *Gen. xlix. 10.* That the Gathering of the People (or Nations) should be to him. In the Vulgar it is render'd *Expectatio Gentium. The Expectation of the Gentiles.* He is call'd *the desire of all nations*, *Hag. ii. 7.* And I will shew you the general Expectation the *Gentiles* had of his Coming, about the Time that he did come.

They knew him by the Name of the *East*. Their Tradition was, That the *East* shou'd prevail, *Ut valesceret Oriens*, as I will shew you presently. But first let me tell you, That

the holy Scripture often alludes to him under this Denomination. The Blood of the great expiatory Sacrifice was to be sprinkled towards the *East*, Lev. xvi. 14. to shew whence the true expiatory Sacrifice shou'd come. And he is thus frequently stiled in the Prophets. *Zech.* iii. 8. it is said, according to the Vulgar, *I will bring forth my Servant the East.* And *chap.* vi. 12. *Behold the man whose name is the East.* Our *English* renders it in both Places the *Branch*, for the *Hebrew* Word bears both Senses, But the *Greek* renders it *Ἀνατολή*, which we translate the *Day-Spring*, Luk. i. 78. and put on the Margin *Sun-Rising* or *Branch*. The Vulgar has it *Oriens ex alto*, the *East* or *Sun-Rising from on high*. He is call'd the *Sun of Righteousness*, Mal. iv. 2. And it is said *Isai.* lx. 3. *The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.*

(2.) Now, Sir, how literally was this fulfilled in the *Magi* (generally supposed to be Kings) coming from the East, led by a Star which appeared to them in the East, to worship *Christ* when he was born, and to bring Presents unto him as unto a King? As it is told in the second of St. *Matthew*.

DE. Why do you quote St. *Matthew* to me? You know we make no more of him than of one of your Legend-Writers, and believe

lieve this Story no more than that these three Kings are now buried at *Cologne*.

(3.) CHR. You make great Use of the Legends, and answer every Thing by them. And I confess they are the greatest Affront to Christianity, and (if possible) a Disproof of it, as it must be to those who will place them upon the same Foot with the holy Bible, as too many do in the Church of *Rome*, and cry, we have the Authority of the Church for both. And they are taught to receive the holy Scriptures upon the Authority of the Church only. But my Business is not with them now. I shall only say, That when they can bring such Evidences for the Truth of their Legends, or for any particular Fact in them, as I do for the Truth of the holy Scriptures, and in particular for the Fact of Christ, then I will believe them.

DE. Will you believe nothing that has not all these Evidences you produce?

(4.) CHR. Far from it. For then I must believe Nothing but this single Fact of *Christ*. Because no other Fact in the World, no not of all those recorded in holy Scriptures, has all these Evidences which the Fact of *Christ* has. And so God has thought fitting, That this great Fact above all other Facts, of the greatest Glory to God, and Importance to Mankind, shou'd appear with greater and more undeniable

undeniable Evidence than any other Fact ever was in the World.

DE. We are now upon the particular Fact of the *Magi* or wise Men coming to *Christ*. Have you any more to say as to that?

(5) CHR. It has those same Evidences that the Truth of the Bible in general has, which are more than can be produc'd for any other Book in the World. But now as to this Fact in particular, St. *Matthew* was the first who wrote the *Gospel*, and it was in the same Age when this Fact was said to be done. And can you think it possible that such a Fact as this cou'd have pass'd without Contradiction and a publick Exposing of Christianity, then so desirable and so much endeavour'd by the unbelieving *Jews*, their High-Priests, Elders, &c. as the only Means for their own Preservation, if the Fact had not been notorious and fresh in the Memory of all the People then at *Jerusalem*, viz. That these wise Men came thither, and that *Herod* and the whole City were troubled at the News they brought of the Birth of the King of the *Jews*; That *Herod* thereupon gather'd all the chief Priests and Scribes of the People together, that they might search out of the Prophets and know the Place where *Christ* shou'd be born; And then the Slaughter of the Infants in and about *Bethlehem*, and in all the Coasts thereof, which follow'd-----I say cou'd such a Fact as this have

have pass'd at that very time, if it had not been true? Could St. *Matthew* have hoped to have palmed this upon all the People, and upon those very same chief Priests and Scribes who he said were so far concerned in it? Would none of them have contradicted it, if it had been a Forgery? Especially when the detecting it would have strangled Christianity in its Birth. Would not they have done it who suborn'd *false Witnesses* against *Christ*, and gave large Money to the Soldiers to conceal (if possible) his Resurrection? Would not they have done it, who persecuted Christianity with all Spite and Fury, and invented all imaginable false Stories and Calumnies against it? Whereas here was one at hand, this of the *Magi*, which, if false, could have been so easily detected, by appealing to every Man, Woman, and Child, I may say, in *Jerusalem*, *Bethlehem*, and even in all *Judea*, who no doubt had heard of the terrible Massacre of so many Infants, and the Cause of it.

DE. I can give no Account why the Writers against Christianity did not offer to contradict this Fact of the Star and the *Magi*, which is put in the very Front of this Gospel of St. *Matthew*. And there it is called his (*Christ's*) Star. *We have seen his Star in the East*-----As if God had created a new and extraordinary Star on Purpose, as the Signal of *Christ* hung out in the Heavens, to give the World notice of his Birth. But did none of
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the heathen Philosophers take Notice of this Star, or of this Relation given of it by your St. *Matthew*?

(6.) CHR. Yes. For *Chalcidius* in his Comment upon *Plato's Timæus*, speaking of the Prefages of Stars mentioned by *Plato*, adds as a further Proof, *Est quoque alia venerabilior & sanctorum historia-----There is likewise another more venerable and holy History-----* By which I doubt not he means this of St. *Matthew*, for what he tells seems to be taken out of it, *That by the rising of a certain unusual Star, not Plagues and Diseases, but the Descent of the venerable God, for the Salvation and Benefit of Mortals, was observed by the Chaldeans, who worshipped this God newly born, by offering Gifts unto him.*

DE. This makes those *Magi* or wise Men to have been *Chaldeans*, who I know were the most noted then in the World for the most curious Learning, particularly in *Astronomy*. And they were likewise East of *Jerusalem*, so that it might be well said they came from the East, and had seen his Star in the East. But I cannot imagine how they should read the Birth of a God in the Face of a new Star; and how that Star should send them particularly to *Jerusalem*, tho' I may suppose it pointed them westward.

(7.) CHR. This will be easier to you, when you know, That all over the East there was a Tradition, or fix'd Opinion, that about that Time a King of the *Jews* would be born who should rule the whole Earth. And the Appearance of this extraordinary Star in the East was taken by them as a Sign that he was then born. And whither should they go to look for the King of the *Jews* but to *Jerusalem*? And when they came thither they enquired, saying, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his Star in the East, and are come to worship him.* This made *Herod* gather the Priests and Scribes together. And they by searching the Prophets found that *Bethlehem* was the Place. Whereupon the wise Men went to *Bethlehem*. And to convince them that they were right, the Star which they had seen in the East appeared to them again, and *went before them till it came and stood over where the young Child was.* This made them *rejoice with such an exceeding great Joy.*

DE. This would go down in some Measure with me, if you could make good your first *Postulatum*, of such a current Tradition or Opinion in the East. But for this you have given no sort of Proof. And all the rest which you have inferr'd from thence must come to the Ground with it, if it be not supported. I confess it would seem as strange to me as the Star to the wise Men, if God had (we know not how, it is unaccountable to us) sent such a No-
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tion into the Minds of Men, and at that time only, of such a King to be born, and that he should be a *Jew*, (the then most contemptible People in the World, subdu'd and conquer'd by the *Romans*) and that he was to be King of the *Jews*, and thence to become King of all the Earth, and conquer his Conquerors. The *Romans* would have look'd with Disdain upon such a Notion or Prophecy as this; it would have made some Stir among them, if they had heard of it, or given any Credit to it.

(8.) CHR. You argue right. And I will shew you what Stir it made among them, and I hope you will take their Word, as well for this Eastern Tradition, as for the Effects it had among themselves. Nay they wanted not the same Tradition among themselves, and express Prophecies of it in their *Sibyls*, and otherwise. So that the same Expectation of the *Messiah* was then current over all the Earth, with the *Gentiles*, as well as with the *Jews*.

Tacitus in his *History*, l. v. c. 13. speaking of the great Prodigies that preceded the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, says, That many understood these as the Forerunners of that extraordinary Person, whom the ancient Books of the Priests did foretel should come *about that Time*, from *Judea*, and obtain the universal Dominion; his Words are, *Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique*

felique Judæa rerum potirentur. i. e. Many were persuaded that it was contained in the old Writings of the Priests, that at that very Time the East should prevail, and the Jews should have the Dominion. And Suetonius in the Life of Vespasian, c. 1. n. 4. says, Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus & constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore, Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. i. e. That it was an ancient and constant Opinion (or Tradition) throughout the whole East, that at that Time those who came from Judea should obtain the Dominion, that is, That some Jew should be universal King. Therefore Cicero, who was a Commonwealths-man, in his second Book of Divination, speaking of the Books of the Sibyls, who likewise foretold this great King to come, says, Cum antistibus agamus, & quidvis potius ex illis libris, quam regem proferant: quem Romæ post hæc nec Dii, nec homines esse patientur. i. e. Let us deal with these Priests, and let them bring any Thing out of their Books, rather than a King: Whom neither the Gods nor Men will suffer after this at Rome.

But he was mistaken, and had his Head cut off for writing against Kingly Government. And others more considerable than he laid greater Stress upon these Prophecies, even the whole Senate of Rome, as I come to shew you.

Whether these Sibyls, gathered their Prophecies out of the *Old Testament*, is needless here

here to examine. I am now only upon that general Expectation which was then in the World of this great and universal King to come about that Time.

(9.) The same Year that *Pompey* took *Jerusalem*, one of these Oracles of the *Sibyls* made a great Noise, which was, *That Nature was about to bring forth a King to the Romans.* Which, as *Suetonius* relates in the Life of *Augustus*, c. 94. did so terrify the Senate, that they made a Decree to expose, that is, destroy all the Children born that Year. *Senatum exterritum censuisse, ne quis illo anno genitus educaretur.* That none born that Year should be brought up, but exposed, that is, left in some Wood or desert Place to perish. But he tells how this dreadful Sentence was prevented. *Eos qui gravidas uxores haberent, quod ad se quisque spem traheret, curasse ne Senatus consultum ad ærarium deferretur.* That those Senators whose Wives were with Child, because each was in Hopes of having this great King, took Care that the Decree of the Senate should not be put into the *Ærarium* or Treasury, without which, by their Constitution, the Decree could not be put in Execution. And *Appian*, *Plutarch*, *Salust*, and *Cicero*, do all say, That it was this Prophecy of the *Sibyls* which raised the Ambition of *Corn. Lentulus* at that Time, hoping he should be this King of the *Romans*. *Virgil* a few Years before the Birth
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of *Christ*, in his 4th *Eclogue* quotes a Prophecy of one of these *Sibyls* speaking of an extraordinary Person, to be born about that Time, who shou'd introduce a Golden Age into the World, and restore all things, and shou'd blot out our Sins.

-----*Si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri.*

And calls him,

Chara Dcūm soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum.

Dear Offspring of the Gods, and great Son of Jove.

He describes a new State of things like the *New Heavens* and *New Earth*, *Isai.* lxxv. 17.

Magnus ab integro seclorum nascitur ordo.

A great Order of Ages does begin, wholly new.

And as *Isaiab* describes the happy State in the *New Earth*, that the Lion and the Lamb shou'd feed together, the Serpent eat Dust, and that they shou'd not hurt or destroy in all the *holy Mountain*. *Isai.* lxxv. 25. *Virgil* does almost repeat his Words.

-----*Nec magnos metuent armenta leones.*

*Occidet & serpens, & fallax herba veneni
Occidet.-----*

And as God introduces the *Messiah*, with saying, *I will shake the Heavens and the Earth and the Sea.* Hag. ii. 7. *Virgil* does in a manner translate it in this *Eclogue*, introducing the great Person then to be born, and the Joy which shou'd be in the whole Creation.

*Aspice convexo nutantem pondere mundum,
Terrasq; tractusq; maris, cælumq; profundum.
Aspice venturo latentur ut omnia seculo.*

*Lo! teeming Nature bending with its Load,
The Earth, the Ocean, and the Heavens high.
Behold how all rejoice to greet the coming Age.*

Here the Poet describes Nature as in labour to bring forth this great King, as the other Prophecy of the *Sibyls* beforemention'd speaks. And he says, *Adrit jam tempus.* That the Time was then at Hand.

Jam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.

Now a new Progeny from Heaven descends.

And he applies it to *Saloninus* the Son of *Pollio* the Consul, then newly born, as if it was to be fulfilled in him. But as there was
nothing

nothing like it in the Event ; So these Words are too great to be apply'd to any Mortal, or the Reign of any King ever was in the World. Or to any other but to the *Messiah* the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

(10.) DE. But you know the Authority of these *Sibyls* is disputed. Some say the Christians did interpolate them, and added to them in about a Hundred Years after *Christ*.

CHR. It is true, the Christians did often quote them against the Heathens, as *St. Paul* quoted the Heathen Poets to the *Athenians*. Act. xvii. 28. And *Clem. Alexandrinus* in his *Strom.* l. 6. says, that *St. Paul* quoted the *Sibyls* likewise in his Disputations with the Gentiles. And the Christians were called *Sibyllianists* from their quoting the *Sibyls* so often. But *Origen* in his Answer to *Celsus*, l. 7. challenges him to shew any Interpolation made by the Christians, and appeals to the Heathen Copies which were in their own Possession, and kept with great Care.

But what I have quoted to you out of *Virgil* was before *Christ* was born, and therefore clear of all these Objections.

DE. Then the *Jews* must have had some Hand in them. As likewise in that Eastern Tradition you have spoke of.

CHR. If so, you must suppose that the *Jews* had it from their own Prophets. And this will be a strong Confirmation that the time

of the *Messiah's* Coming was plainly told in the Prophets.

(11.) DE. What say the *Jews* to this? For I cannot imagine how they can get off of it.

CHR. Some of them say, That the *Messiah* put off his Coming at the appointed Time, because of their Sins. Others say, he did come at the Time, but has concealed himself ever since.

DE. These are meer Excuses. Do they pretend any Prophecy for this? But to what Purpose? For these Excuses shew, That Prophecies are no Proofs, because if they may be thus put off, they can never be known. And they may be put off and put off to the End of the World.

(12.) CHR. But now, Sir, as to your Point. If this general Expectation, both East and West, of the great King of the *Jews* to be born about that very Time that he did come, was occasioned by the *Jewish* Tradition of it, strengthens the Truth of the Holy Scriptures, whence the *Jews* had it. But otherwise; if *God* we know not how, did send such a Notion into the Minds of Men, all over the World, at that particular Time, and never the like, either before or since, then the Miracle will be greater, and the Attestation to the coming of *Christ* stronger, and as you said, it will be more wonderful and
more

more convincing to you, than the Star was to the wise Men in the East.

DE. I must take time to answer this. I made nothing at all of this of the *Magi*, and the Star, and of *Herod's* slaying the Infants upon it. I thought it a ridiculous Story, and to have no Foundation in the World. But when I see *Suetonius* telling us of the Decree of the Senate of *Rome* to destroy all the Children born that Year, and for the same Reason, for fear of this great King that was then to be born; I must think there was a strange chiming in of things here, one to answer the other. I know not how it happened. By chance, or how!

(13.) CHR. You cannot imagine there could be any Concert in this Matter. That the *Chaldeans*, and *Romans*, and *Jews*, should all agree upon the Point, and hit it so exactly, without any one of them discovering the Contrivance! Especially when it was so terrible to both the *Romans* and the *Jews*, that they took such desperate Methods to prevent it as to destroy their own Children!

DE. It is ridiculous to talk of a Concert. I will not put my Cause upon that. Would they concert what they thought their own Destruction? Besides, the *Jews* and *Romans* were then Enemies. And the *Chaldeans* were far off, and had little Correspondence with either of them. And such an universal No-

tion could not be concerted. Whole Nations could not be trusted with a Secret. And if they all kept it, and against their own Interest too, it would be as great a Miracle as any in your Bible.

(14.) CHR. How much more impossible is it to suppose, That there should be a Concert between different Ages, between all the Ages from *Adam* downwards, in all those Prophecies of the Coming of the *Messiah*? How should they know it but by Revelation? And would they have all agreed so exactly as to the Time, Place, Manner, and other Circumstances, if it had been a Forgery contrived by different Persons and in different Ages?

(15.) This is an Argument which *St. Peter* thought stronger than the Conviction even of our outward Senses, for having set down what he and the other two *Apostles* had both seen and heard upon the holy Mount, he adds, *We have yet a more sure word* (that is, a stronger Proof) *of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.* 2 Pet. i. 19. And he enforces it thus, *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

DE. I will grant his Argument so far, That it is easier to suppose the Senses of three Men or of all the Men in the World to be impos'd upon, than that *Adam, Abraham, and I,* had concerted together. But I will not give you my Answer yet. Have you any more to say upon this Head of Prophecy?

CHR. I need say no more till your Answer comes. For you have granted that this Proof is stronger than what we see with our Eyes.

(16.) But that your Answer may take in all together, I will give you something further. I have set down already some of the great Prophecies of the Coming of *Christ*, his Sufferings, Death, and Resurrection. But there are others which reach to several minute Circumstances, such as cannot be apply'd to any other Fact that ever yet happen'd, and which cou'd not have been foreseen by any but *God*; nor were known by the Actors who did them, else they had not done them. For they wou'd not have fulfill'd the Prophecies that went before of *Christ*, in applying them to him whom they crucify'd as a *false Christ*.

See then how literally several of these Prophecies were fulfill'd. As *Psal. lxxix. 21. They gave me gall to eat and vinegar to drink.* Then read *Matth. xxvii. 34. They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall.* It is said, *Psal. xxii. 16, 17, 18. They pierced my*
F 4 *Hands*

hands and my feet-----They stand staring and looking upon me. They part my Garments among them, and cast lots upon my Vesture. As if it had been wrote after Job. xix. 23, 24. It was meerly accidental in the Soldiers, they wou'd not tear his Coat, because it was woven and without Seam, therefore they cast Lots for it: Thus fulfilling this Scripture, without any Knowledge of theirs, for they were Roman Soldiers, and knew nothing of the Scripture. Again it is said, Psal. xxii. 7, 8. All they that see me, laugh me to scorn; they shoot out their Lips and shake their Heads, saying, He trusted in God that he would deliver him; let him deliver him if he will have him. Compare this with Matth. xxvii. 39, 41, 42, 43. And they that passed by, reviled him, wagging their Heads, and saying-----Come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the Scribes and Elders, said-----He trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him, for he said, I am the Son of God. It is said again, Zech. xi. 10. They shall look upon me whom they have pierced. His very Price was foretold, and how the Money shou'd be dispos'd of, Zech. xi. 13. fulfill'd Matth. xxvii. 6, 7. And his riding into Jerusalem upon an Ass, Zech. ix. 9. which the learned Rabbi Saadia expounds of the Messiah. That he shou'd suffer with Malefactors, Isai. liii. 12. That his Body shou'd not lie so long in the

Grave

Grave as to see Corruption. *Pfal.* xvi. 10.

Many other *Circumstances* are told which cannot be apply'd to any but to *Christ*. I have set down these Few, that you may take them into Consideration when you think fit to give your Answer as to this Head of Prophecies.

And you are to take Care to find some other Fact guarded with Prophecies like this. Or else you must confess that there is no other Fact that has such Evidence as this.

(17.) But before I leave this Head, I must mention the Prophecies in our Bible of things yet to come to the End of the World, and of the new Heavens and new Earth that shall succeed.

DE. These can be no Proofs here, because we cannot see the fulfilling of them.

CHR. You may believe what is to come, by the fulfilling you have seen of what is past. But I bring this now to shew you, That there is no other Law or History in the World that so much as pretends to this, or to know what is to come. This is peculiar to the Holy Bible, as being written from the Mouth of *God*.

You have seen how the Current of the Prophecies of the *Old Testament* did point at and center in that great Event the Coming of the *Messiah*.

When he was come, then he told us more plainly of what was to come after him, even
to

to the Consummation of all things. And by what we have seen exactly fulfill'd of all he told us to this Time, we must believe what remains yet to come.

(18.) How particularly did he foretel the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the Temple. *Matth.* xxiv. And that that Age should not pass till it shou'd be fulfill'd? And his very Expression was literally fulfill'd, That there shou'd not be left one Stone upon another in the Temple, for the ver, Foundations of it were plough'd up by *sumus Rufus*. See *Scaliger's Canon. Isagog.* p 304.

When *Jerusalem* was first besieg'd it was full of Christians. But the Siege was rais'd unaccountably and for no Reason that History gives. In which time the Christians seeing those Signs come to pass which *Christ* had foretold wou'd precede its Destruction, and particularly laying hold of that Caution he gave, *Then let them that are in Judea flee to the mountains*, and that in such Haste, as that he that was in the *Field* was not to return (to *Jerusalem*) to fetch his *Garment*, or he on the *House top* there, to stay to take his *Goods* with him, accordingly all the Christians left *Jerusalem*, and fled to *Pella* a City in the Mountains. And as soon as they were all gone, the *Romans* return'd and renew'd the Siege. And so it came to pass, That when *Titus* sack'd the City there was not one Christian found

found there, and the Destruction fell only upon the *unbelieving Jews*. The others escap'd, as *Lot* out of *Sodom*, by believing the Prediction of that Ruin.

(19.) Another very remarkable Prediction of our Blessed Lord in that same Chapter was of the many *false Christs* that should come after him. And he warn'd the *Jews* not to follow them, for that it would be to their Destruction. *Behold*, (says he, *ver. 25.*) *I have told you before*. But they would not believe him. And accordingly it came to pass. *Josephus* in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, l. xviii. c. 12. l. xx. c. 6. And *de Bell. Jud.* l. vii. c. 31. tells of Abundance of these *false Messiahs* who appeared before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and led the People into the Wilderness, where they were miserably destroyed. The very thing of which our Saviour caution'd them, *ver. 26.* If they say unto you, behold, *He*, (that is, *Christ*) *is in the desert, go not forth*. And *de Bell. Jud.* l. vii. c. 12. *Josephus* says, That the chief Cause of their Obstinacy in that War with the *Romans*, was their Expectation of a *Messiah* to come and deliver them, which brought on their Ruin, and made them deaf to the Offers of *Titus* who courted them to Peace.

And since the Destruction of *Jerusalem* there have been so many *false Messiahs*, that *Johannes à Lent* has wrote a History of them,
 printed

printed *Herbonæ*, 1697. Which brings them down as far as the Year 1682. And tells the lamentable Destruction of the *Jews* in following them.

(20.) But the next Prophecy of our Blessed *Lord* which I produce is more remarkable than these. And of which you see the Fulfilling in a great Measure, *viz.* That his Gospel should prevail over all the World, and that the *Gates of Hell* should not prevail against it. And this told when he was low and despised, and had but 12 poor Fishermen for his Followers. And that his Religion should conquer, not by the Sword, like *Mahomet's*, but by patient Suffering, as Lambs among Wolves. And in this State the Church endur'd most terrible Persecutions, when all the Rage of Hell was let loose against her, for the first Three Hundred Years, without any Help but from Heaven only; till at last, by the Divine Providence, the great Emperor of *Rome*, and other mighty Kings and Princes, without any Force or Compulsion, did voluntarily and freely submit their Scepters to *Christ*.

No Religion that ever was in the World, was so begun, so propagated, and did so prevail. And hence we assuredly trust that what remains will be fulfilled of the Promise of *Christ* to his Church in the latter Days.

But I speak now only of this Prophecy so long beforehand, and when there was so little Appearance

Appearance of its Coming to pass so far as we have seen already.

Let me here remember one particular Passage foretold by *Christ* concerning the Woman, who *anointed his Body to the Burying*, That *Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her.* And we see how it is spoken of to this Day.

DE. If this Book had been lost, we had not heard of this Prophecy.

CHR. So you may say of all the Bible. Or of any other Book. But Providence has fulfilled this Prophecy by preserving the Book. And it is a Prophecy that this Book, at least this Fact of the Woman, shou'd be preserved for ever, and it may be preserved tho' that Book were lost.

(21.) DE. When Prophecies are fulfilled, and the Events come to pass, they are plain to every Body. But why might they not have been as plain from the Beginning? And then there cou'd have been no Dispute about them, as if it had been said, That such a one by *Name*, at such a *Time*, and in such a *Place*, should do such things, &c.

CHR. Because *God* having given Man *free Will*, he does not force Men to do any wicked thing. And it would be in the Power of wicked Men to defeat a Prophecy against them-

themselves, as to the Circumstance of Time, Place, or the Manner of doing the thing.

For Example, if the *Jews* had known that *Christ* had told his Apostles he was to be *crucify'd*, they would not have done it. They would have stoned him as they did *St. Stephen*. For that was the Death appointed by the Law for Blasphemy. And they several times attempted to have stoned *Christ* for this, because he said I am the Son of God. *Joh. viii. 59. x. 31, 32, 33.* But Crucifixion was a *Death* by the *Roman Law*. Therefore the *Jews*, to fulfill this Prophecy (but not knowing it) deliver'd *Christ* to the *Romans* to be put to Death. Yet he told them so much of it, that after he was *crucify'd* they might know it, as he said to them, *Job. viii. 28. When ye have lift up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he. And Chap. x. 32, 33. And I, if I be lifted up from the Earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.* But they understood it not till they had done it. Then they knew what the *lifting up* meant. And *Chap. xviii. 31, 32.* When *Pilate* would have had them judge him according to their Law, which was *stoning*, they were *cautious* at this time only, and said, *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.* Because they were then under the Government of the *Romans*. But the next Words shew the Design of Providence in it, *That*
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the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what Death he should die. They had no such Caution upon them when they stoned St. Stephen after this, nor the many times before when they took up Stones to have stoned the same *Jesus*.

Then again, the piercing his Side with the Spear was no Part of the *Roman* Sentence of Execution, but happen'd seemingly by meer Accident. For the Sentence of the Law was to hang upon the Cross till they were dead. But that being the Day of Preparation for the Sabbath, which began that Evening soon after *Christ* and the Thieves were fasten'd to the Cross, before it could be suppos'd they were dead, therefore, *That the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, the Jews besought Pilate that their Legs might be broken (which was no Part of the Sentence neither, but done) lest they shou'd escape when taken down.* Accordingly the Legs of the Thieves were broken, for they were yet alive, and the Reason why they brake not the Legs of *Christ* was, because *they saw that he was dead already.* But to make sure, one of the Soldiers pierc'd his Side with a Spear. Little knowing that they were then fulfilling Prophecies, as that *a bone of him shou'd not be broken.* And again, *They shall look on him whom they pierced.* As little did the Soldiers think of it when they were casting Lots upon his Vesture. And the chief Priests (if they had

had known it or reflected upon it) wou'd not have upbraided him in the very Words that were foretold in xxii. *Psalm*, which I have before quoted. And they wou'd have contriv'd the Money they gave to *Judas* to have been one Piece more or less than just thirty. They wou'd not have come so punctually in the Way of that Prophecy, *Zeck. xi. 12, 13. They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.* And they wou'd have bought any other Field with it, but especially not that of the *Potter*, which *Zechariah* there likewise mentions.

And as the Enemies of *Christ* did not know they were fulfilling these Prophecies of him, so neither did his Disciples at the Time when they were so doing. As it is said, *Job. xii. 16. These things understood not his Disciples at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.* This makes the fulfilling these Prophecies yet more remarkable.

Where Providence sees that Prophecies will not be minded, they are more express and plain. As likewise where the Passions and Interests of Men will hurry them on towards fulfilling them. Thus *Alexander* the great is describ'd as plainly almost as if he had been nam'd. *Dan. viii. 20, 21, 22.* And it is said, That this Prophecy which was shew'd him by the High-Priest at *Jerusalem* did encourage him

him in his Expedition against the *Persians*. But it is not so when a Man is to do foolish and wicked things, and things hurtful to himself; for if these were told plainly and literally, it would be in his Power to do otherwise; unless God should force his Will, and then he wou'd not be a free Agent.

(22.) DE. I must have recourse to the *Jews* in answer to these Prophecies of the *Messiah* which you have brought. For they owning these Scriptures as Revelations given them by God, must have some Solution or other for them, or else give themselves up as self-condemned.

CHR. The Answers the *Jews* give will convince you the more, and render them indeed self-condemned.

Before the Coming of *Christ* the *Jews* understood these Texts as we do, to be certainly meant of the *Messiah*, and of none other.

But since that Time they have forced themselves to put the most strained and contradictory Meanings upon them; For they agree not in their Expositions, and the one does manifestly destroy the other.

Thus that Text I before quoted, *Gen. xlix. 10.* was understood by the *Chaldee* and ancient *Jewish* Interpreters to be meant of the *Messiah*.

Yet of their modern Rabbies some say, That it was meant of *Moses*. But others reject that, *First*, Because it is plain that the gathering of the Nations or *Gentiles* was not to *Moses*.

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Secondly,

Secondly, Because the Scepter was not given to *Judab* till long after *Moses*. The first of it that appears was *Judg. xx. 18.* when *Judab* was commanded by *God* to *Go up first*, and lead the rest of the *Tribes*. And *David* was the first King of the Tribe of *Judab*. *Thirdly*, Because *Moses* did prophecy of a greater than himself to come, to whom the People should hearken. *Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19.*

For these Reasons, other Rabbies say it could not be meant of *Moses*, but they apply it to the Tabernacle at *Shilob*. This was only for the sake of the Word *Shilob*, for otherwise it bears no Resemblance either to the gathering of the Gentiles, or the Scepter of *Judab*. And tho' the House of *God* was first set up at *Shilob*, yet it was removed from thence and established at *Jerusalem*. Which was the Place of which *Moses* spoke that *God* would place his Name there, as I shall shew you presently.

This Interpretation therefore being rejected, other Rabbies say, That this Prophecy must be meant of the *Messiah*, but that by the Word Scepter is not to be understood a Scepter of Rule or Government, but of Correction and Punishment, and that this should not depart from *Judab* till *Shilob* came. But the Text explaining Scepter by the Word Lawgiver, that the Scepter should not depart from *Judab*, nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet until *Shilob* came, overthrows this Interpretation, and shews the Scepter here mentioned to be meant of a Scepter of Rule and Govern-

Government. Again, *Joshua* gave them Rest from their Enemies round about. And the Land had Rest many Years under their *Judges*. And *David* delivered them out of the Hands of their Enemies. And under *Solomon* they were the richest and happiest People upon Earth. And frequently after they were in good Condition and at Ease. So that the Scepter of Correction did often depart from them before *Shiloh* came.

This is so evident, that others of them allow this Scepter to be a *Scepter of Government*, but they say the Meaning is, That the Scepter shall not finally or for ever depart from *Judab*, because the *Messiah* will come and restore it to *Judab* again. But this is adding to the *Text*, and making a new Text of it, and quite different from the former, nay directly opposite to it. For the Text speaks only of the departing of the Scepter, but nothing of the restoring it. And it cannot be restored till once it is departed. Therefore this Exposition saying it *shall depart*: And the Text saying it *shall not depart*: are directly contrary.

Lastly, there are others who throw aside all their Excuses, and say, That the Scepter or Dominion is not yet departed from *Judab*, for that some *Jew* or other may have some Sort of Rule or Government, in some Part or other of the World, tho' we know it not.

DE. As if the *Jews* (who hold the best Correspondence with one another of any
G 2 People)

People) could not tell this Place, if there were any such where they were governed by their own Laws, and by Governments of their own Nation, tho' in Subjection to the Government of the Country where they lived.

These Salvo's of the *Jews* are contradictory to each other, they are poor Excuses, and shew their Cause to be perfectly destitute.

But I have an Objection against this Prophecy, which affects both *Jews* and Christians. That the Regal Scepter did depart from the Tribe of *Judab* long before your *Shiloh* came.

CHR. *First*, This Prophecy does not call the Scepter a Regal Scepter, and therefore denotes only Government in the general.

Secondly, The whole Land and the Nation took their Name from *Judab*. It was called the Land of *Judab*, and the Nation took the Name of *Jews* from *Judab*, as before that of *Hebrews* from *Heber* their Progenitor, *Gen.* x. 25. And this Prophecy spoke of those Times when *Judab* should be the Father of his Country, and the whole Nation should be comprehended under the Name of *Judab*. And therefore *Judab* holds the Scepter wherever a *Jew* governs. Besides, the Words *Scepter* and *Throne* are used in Relation to inferior Governors, to tributary Kings, and Kings in Captivity; thus it is said that Thirty seven Years after the Captivity of *Judab*, the King of *Babylon* set the Throne of *Jehoiachin* King of *Judab* above the Thrones of the

the *Kings* that were with him in *Babylon*, 2 *Kings* xxv. 27, 28. This was more than half the Time of the Captivity. And this was continued to *Jehoiackin* all the *Days of his Life* (*ver.* 29, 30.) Which might last till the End or near the End of the Captivity. But besides the King, the *Jews* had Governors of their own Nation allowed them, who were their *Archontes* or Rulers; and they enjoyed their own Laws, tho' in Subjection to the King of *Babylon*. The *Elders of Judah* (which was a Name of Government) are mentioned in the Captivity, *Ezek.* viii. 1. And the Chief of the Fathers of *Judah*, and the Priests and the Levites, *Ezra* i. 5. And after the Captivity, they had a *Trisbatha* or Governor of their own Nation, *Ezra* ii. 63. *Neb.* viii. 9. And the Throne or the Governor is named, *Neb.* iii. 7. So that here was still the Throne or Scepter of *Judah*.

And from the Time of the *Maccabees* to their Conquest by the *Romans*, the supreme Authority was in their High Priests. As it was afterwards, but in Subjection to the *Romans*; and they enjoyed their own Laws. *Pilate* said unto them, *Take ye him, and judge him according to your law.* *Job.* xviii. 31. And tho' they answered, *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death*; the Reason is given in the next Verse, *That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which he spake, signifying what death he should die.* For Crucifixion

was a *Roman* Death, but stoning by the Law of *Moses* was the Death for Blasphemy, of which they accused him. And they afterwards stoned *St. Stephen*, for the same (alledged) Crime according to their own Law. Their High-Priests and Council had full Liberty to meet when they pleased, and to act according to their Law. And *Christ* himself owns they sat in *Moses's* seat. *Matth. xxiii. 2.* The High Priest sat to judge *St. Paul*, who applied to him that Text, *Exod. xxii. 28. Thou shalt not revile the Gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people, or speak evil of him,* as the Apostle renders it, *Act. xxiii. 5.* So that here the Government was still in the *Jews*, tho' in Subjection to the *Romans*, And thus it continu'd till the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the Temple by the *Romans*. But since that time, they are dispersed in all Countries, and have no Governor or Ruler of their own in any. The Scepter is intirely departed from them.

DE. It is impossible but the *Jews* must see the Difference of their State before the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and since, and of their Condition as to *Government* in their several Captivities, and now in their Dispersion. In the former, they had still a Face of Government left among themselves: But now, none at all. And their Excuses which you have mentioned, render them indeed self-condemned.

What

What do they say to that Text you have quoted, *Jer.* xxxiii. 17, &c. That *David* should never want a Son to sit upon his Throne, &c. You Christians apply it to *Christ*, who was called the Son of *David*. But to whom do the *Jews* apply it?

CHR. Some of them, say, That *David* will be raised from the dead and made immortal, to fulfil this Prophecy. Others say, That after the *Messiah*, who is to be of the Seed of *David*, he shall thence forward no more want a Son, &c.

DE. Both these Interpretations are in flat Contradiction to the Text. The Text says, shall never want. These say, shall want for a long time, they must confess now for near Seventeen hundred Years together, and how much longer they cannot tell. They have had none to sit in *Moses's* Seat, or on the Throne of *David*, tho' in Subjection to their Enemies, as they had in the worst of their Captivities, but have not now in their Dispersion.

But is there any Difference betwixt what you call the *Cathedra* or Seat of *Moses*, and the Throne of *David*?

CHR. None as to Government. For *Moses* was King in *Jeshurun*, *Deut.* xxxiii. 5. But *David* was the first King of the Tribe of *Judah*. Which was to be the Name of the whole Nation. And *Christ* was called the King of the *Jews*. It was the Title set upon

his Cross. But after him none ever had that Title to this Day.

DE. This is not to be answered by the *Jews*. But pray what Person is it, do they say, was meant in the liii of *Isaiab* which you have quoted?

CHR. They will not have it to be any Person at all. For they can find none, except our *Christ*, to whom these Prophecies can any way be apply'd. Therefore they say, it must be meant of the Nation of the *Jews*, whose Sufferings, &c. are there described in the Name of a Person, by which the People are to be understood.

DE. But the People and the Person there described as *suffering*, &c. are plainly contradistinguished. It is said *ver. 8. For the transgression of my people was he stricken. And ver. 3, 4, &c. We (the People) like sheep have gone astray—— And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, that is, of the People: Who are here called wicked. But he is called My righteous servant, who did no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Therefore this People and the Person here spoke of could not be the same. They are oppos'd to each other. The one called righteous, the other wicked. The one to die for the other, and to justify the other. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, &c.*

CHR. The *Jews* before *Christ* came understood this Prophecy of the *Messiah* as indeed
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it can be apply'd to none other. But the *Jews* since *Christ*, to avoid the Force of this and other Prophecies which speak of the Sufferings and Death of the *Messiah*, have invented two *Messiahs*, one *Ben-Joseph* of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, who is to be the *Suffering Messiah*; the other *Ben-David* of the Tribe of *Judah*, who is to *triumph* gloriously; and shall raise from the Dead all the *Israelites*, and among them the first *Messiah*, *Ben-Joseph*.

DE. Does the Scripture speak of two *Messiahs*, and the one raising the other?

CHR. No. Not a Word. But only of *The Messiah*; which shews, it spoke only of one. But it mentions the twofold State of this *Messiah*, the first suffering, the second triumphing. Whence the modern *Jews* have framed to themselves these two *Messiahs*.

DE. This is shameful! And plainly to avoid the Prophecies against them.

CHR. This of *Isaiab* is fully explained, *Dan. ix. 24, &c.* Where it is said, That the *Messiah the Prince* should be cut off, but *not for himself*, but for the Transgressions of the People, *To make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity.* And that this was to be within Four hundred and ninety Years after the building of the second Temple, which I have mentioned before.

DE. I cannot imagine how the *Jews* get clear of this.

CHR.

CHR. They cannot. But in Spite to it, they seek now to undervalue the whole Book of *Daniel*, tho' they dare not totally reject it, because it was received by their Fore-Fathers who preceded *Christ*. But about a Hundred Years after *Christ*, they made a New Distribution of the Books of the *Old Testament*, different from their Fathers, and took the Book of *Daniel* out of the middle of the Prophets where it was placed before, and put it last of all. But more than this, to lessen the Credit of this Book, they adventured to shake the Authority of their whole Scriptures. For they took upon them to make a Distinction of the Books of the Scripture, and made them not all inspired or canonical, but some of them they called *Ἁγίαγραφα*, that is, *holy* or *pious* Books, tho' in a lower Class than those called inspired or canonical Scriptures. And they put the Book of *Daniel* into the inferior Class. But in that Book *Daniel* speaks of himself as having received these Prophecies immediately from an Angel of *God*. Wherein if he told us the Truth, it must be put in the highest Class of canonical Scripture. But if he told us false, then this Book is quite through all a Lie, and blasphemous too, in fathering it all upon *God*! So that the Distinction of our modern *Jews* confounds themselves. And since they allow this Book of *Daniel* a Place among the *Ἁγίαγραφα*, or Holy Writings, they cannot deny

deny it to be truly canonical, as all their Fathers owned it before the coming of *Christ*. And if they throw off *Daniel*, they must discard *Ezekiel* too. For he gives the highest Attestation to *Daniel* that can be given to mortal Man; he makes him

one of the *three* most *Righteous* *Ezek. xiv. 14,*
20. xxviii. 3.
Men to be found in all Ages.

And the very Standard of *Wisdom* to the World.

DE. What do they say to *Heg. ii. 7, 9* Where it is said, that *Christ* was to come in to the second Temple?

- CHR. Some of them say, That this must be meant of a Temple yet to be built.

DE. This is denying the Prophecy. For it is said, *ver. 7. I will fill this house with glory, &c. And ver. 9. The glory of this latter house-----And in this Place will I give peace, &c.* But I am not to defend the Cause of the *Jews*. It seems to me very desperate. I own you Christians have the Advantage of them in this.

- CHR. And I hope it will have so much Effect with you, as to make you consider seriously of the Weight of this Argument of Prophecy we have discoursed.

DE. Let us at present leave this Head of Prophecy. Have you any further Evidence to produce for your *Christ*?

(VII.) CHR. I have one more, which is yet more peculiar to him than even that of Prophecy. For whatever weak pretence may be made of some Prophecies among the Heathen, as to some particular Events, of little Consequence to the World, yet they never offer'd at that sort of Evidence I am next to produce. Which is, not only Prophecies of the Fact, and that from the Beginning of the World; But also Types, Resemblances, and Exhibitions of the Fact, in outward sensible Institutions, ordain'd as Law, from the Beginning, and to continue till the Fact they prefigur'd should come to pass.

(I.) Such were the Sacrifices instituted by *God* immediately upon the Fall (and upon his Promise of the Life-giving *Seed*, Gen. iii. 15.) as Types of that great and only propitiatory Sacrifice for Sin which was to come. Whose Blood they saw continually shed (in Type) in their daily Sacrifices.

These were continu'd in the Heathen Posterities of *Adam*, by immemorial Tradition from the Beginning; tho' they had forgot the Beginning of them, as they had of the World or of Mankind. Yet they retain'd so much of the Reason of them, as that they had universally the Notion of a *Vicarious* Atonement, and that our Sins were to be purg'd by the Blood of *Others* suffering in
our

our stead. As likewise, That the Blood of Bulls and Goats cou'd not take away Sin, but that a more noble Blood was necessary. Hence they came to human Sacrifices. And at last to sacrifice the greatest, most noble and most virtuous; and such offered themselves to be sacrific'd for the Safety of the People. As *Codrus* King of the *Athenians* who sacrific'd himself on this Account. The like did *Cur-tius* for the *Romans*, as supposing himself the bravest and most valuable of them all. So the *Decii*, the *Fabii*, &c. *Agamemnon* sacrific'd his Daughter *Iphigenia* for the *Greek* Army. And the King of *Moab* sacrific'd his eldest Son that shou'd have reign'd in his stead, 2 *Kings* iii. 27. Thus the sacrificing (not their Servants or Slaves, but) their Children to *Moloch* is frequently mention'd of the *Jews*, which they did in Imitation of the Heathen, as it is said, *Psal.* cvi. 35, 36, 37, 38. *They were mingled among the Heathen, and learned their works; and they served their Idols-----Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto the idols of Canaan, &c.* Pursuant to which Notion, the Prophet introduceth them arguing thus, *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleas-ed with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born*

born for my Transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul! Micah vi. 6, 7. They were plainly searching after a compleat and adequate Satisfaction for Sin. And they thought it necessary.

DE. No doubt they thought so. But that did not make it necessary.

CHR. The Doctrine of Satisfaction is a Subject by itself. Which I have treated elsewhere, in my Answer to the Examination of my last Dialogue against the *Socinians*. But I am not come so far with you yet. I am now only speaking of Sacrifices as Types of the Sacrifice of *Christ*.

(2.) And besides Sacrifice in general, there were afterwards some particular Sacrifices appointed more nearly expressive of our Redemption by *Christ*. As the Passover, which was instituted in Memory of the Redemption of the Children of *Israel* (that is, the Church) out of *Egypt* (the House of Bondage of this World, where we are in Servitude to Sin and Misery) in the Night when *God* slew all the first-born of the *Egyptians*: But the Destroyer was to pass over those Houses where he saw the Blood of the *Paschal Lamb* upon the Door-Posts. And it was to be eaten with unleavened Bread, expressing the Sincerity of the Heart, without any Mixture or Taint of Wickedness. And thus it is apply'd, 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. *Purge out therefore*

fore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of Malice and Wickedness, but with the unleaven Bread of Sincerity and Truth.

(3.) There was a double exhibition of Christ on the great Day of Expiation, which was but once a Year. On which Day only the High Priest entered into the Holy of Holies (which represented Heaven, *Exod. xxv. 40. Wisd. ix. 8. Heb. ix. 24.*) with the Blood of the Sacrifice, whose Body was burnt without the Camp; to shew God's Detestation of Sin, and that it was to be removed far from us. And that we must go out of the Camp, that is, out of this World, bearing our Reproach for Sin, before we can be quite freed from it. See how exactly this was fulfilled in Christ, *Heb. xiii. 11, 12, 13, 14.* *For the Bodies of those Beasts whose Blood is brought into the Sanctuary by the High-Priest for Sin, are burnt without the Camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the People with his own Blood, suffered without the Gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the Camp, bearing his Reproach; for here we have no continuing City, but we seek one to come.*

The other lively Representation of Christ's bearing our Sins, and taking them away from

us, which was made on the same Day of Expiation, was the *Scape Goat*, Lev. xvi. 21, 22. *And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And the goat shall bear upon him all their Iniquities, into a land not inhabited: And he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.* This is so plain that it needs no Application.

(4.) Another express Representation of *Christ* was the *Brazen Serpent* in the Wilderness, by looking upon which the People were cur'd of the Stings of the fiery Serpents. So in looking upon *Christ* by Faith, the Sting of the old Serpent the Devil is taken away. And the lifting up the Serpent did represent *Christ's* being lifted up upon the Cross. *Christ* himself makes the Allusion, Job. iii. 14. *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

(5.) He was likewise represented by the *Manna*. For he was the true *Bread* that came down from Heaven to nourish us unto eternal Life. Job. 31, to 36.

(6.) As

(6.) As also by the *Rock* whence the Waters flowed out to give them Drink in the Wilderness. *And that rock was Christ.* 1 Cor. x. 4.

(7.) And he was not only their Meat and Drink, but he was also their constant Guide, and led them in a Pillar of Fire by Night, and of a Cloud by Day. And the Cloud of Glory in the Temple, in which *God* appear'd, was by the *Jews* understood as a Type of the *Messiah*, who is the true *Sheckina* or Habitation of God.

(8.) The *Sabbath* is call'd a Shadow of *Christ*, Col. ii. 17. It was a Figure of that eternal Rest procur'd to us by *Christ*. Therefore it is call'd a Sign of the Perpetual Covenant, *Exod.* xxxi. 16, 17. *Ezek.* xx. 12.

(9.) And such a Sign was the Temple at *Jerusalem*. At which Place, and none other, the Sacrifices of the *Jews* were to be offer'd, *Deut.* xii. 11, 13, 14. Because *Christ* was to be sacrific'd there, and as a token of it, those Sacrifices which were Types of him were to be offer'd only there.

And so great Strefs was laid upon this, That no Sin of the *Jews* is oftner remember'd than their Breach of this Command. It was a Blot set upon their several Reformatations, otherwise good and commendable in the Sight of *God*, That the High-Places (where they us'd

to sacrifice) were not taken away. This is mark'd as the great Defect in the Reformation of *Aſa*, 1 *Kings* xv. 14. of *Jehoſaphat*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 43. of *Jehoaſh*, 2 *Kings* xii. 3. of *Amaziab*, 2 *Kings* xv. 4. of *Jotham*, ver. 35. But they were taken away by *Hezekiab*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 4. And the People instructed to ſacrifice and burn Incenſe at *Jeruſalem* only. 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 12. *Iſai.* xxxvi. 7.

There was likewise a further Deſign of Providence in limiting their Sacrifices to *Jeruſalem*, which was, That after the great Propitiatory Sacrifice of *Chriſt* had been once offer'd there, *God* was to remove the *Jews* from *Jeruſalem*, that they might have no Sacrifice at all (as, for that Reason, they have not had in any Part of the World near theſe Seventeen hundred Years paſt) to instruct them. That (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks to them, *Heb:* x. 26.) *there remaineth no more* (or other) *ſacrifice for ſins*. And ſince by the Law their Sins were to be purged by Sacrifice, they have now no way to purge their Sins; to force them (as it were) to look back upon that only Sacrifice which can purge their Sins. And till they return to that, they muſt have no Sacrifice at all, but die in their Sins. As *Jeſus* ſaid unto them, *I go my way, and ye ſhall die in your ſins.*—*For if ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins.* *John* viii. 21, 24.

And.

And *Daniel* prophesy'd expressly, That soon after the Death of the *Messiah*, the City of *Jerusalem* and the Sanctuary shou'd be destroy'd, and that the Sacrifice should cease, *Even until the confirmation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.* Dan. ix. 26, 27.

And this *Desolation* of theirs, and what was determin'd upon them, was told them likewise by *Hesai*, Chap. iii. 4. *For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a sacrifice.* But he says in the next Verse, That in the latter days they shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and *David* their king. That is, the Son of *David* their Prince and *Messiah*. As he is called *Messiah* the Prince. Dan. ix. 25.

Thus as Salvation was of the *Jews*, because *Christ* was to come of them; so this Salvation was only to be had at *Jerusalem*, where he was to suffer, and by which only Salvation was to be had.

(10.) DE. This Argument is to the *Jews*. And if I were a *Jew* it would move me, because they never were so long without King, Temple, or Sacrifice.

CHR. But the Prophecies of it, and these fulfilled as you have seen; and *Christ* being so plainly pointed at, and the Place of his Passion, by limiting the Sacrifices to *Jerusalem* only;

only; And by that causing the legal Sacrifices to cease throughout the World, to shew that they were fulfill'd: All this is a strong Evidence to you of the Truth of these Things, and of our *Jesus* being the *Messiah*, or *Christ*, who was prophesy'd of.

DE. I cannot deny but there is something remarkable in this, which I will take Time to consider. But I do not see how the *Jews* can stand out against this. Because this Mark given by *Daniel* of the *Messiah*, that soon after his Death the Sacrifice shou'd cease, cannot agree to any after-*Messiah*, who should now come so many Ages after the Sacrifice has ceas'd.

CHR. Since we have fallen into the Subject of the *Jews*, I will give you another Prophecy which cannot be fulfilled in any after-*Messiah* whom the *Jews* expect. And it will be also a Confirmation to you of the Truth of the Prophecies of the Holy Scriptures.

Thus God speaks, *Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21, 22.* Thus saith the Lord, if you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there shou'd not be day and night in their season: Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shou'd not have a son to reign upon his throne; And with the Levites, the Priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured:

ured: So will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.

Now let the *Jews* tell in which *Son* of *David* this is fulfill'd, except only in our *Christ*.

And how this is made good to the *Priests* and *Levites*, otherwise than as *Isaiab* prophesy'd, *Chap. lxvi. 21.* *And I will also take of them (the Gentiles) for Priests and for Levites, saith the Lord.* And as it is thus apply'd, *1 Pet. ii. 5, 9.* and *Rev. i. 6.* And this evangelical Priesthood is multiply'd as the Stars of Heaven, which they are frequently call'd) not like the Tribe of *Levi*, which cou'd not afford Priests to all the Earth.

And as I said before of *Jerusalem* and the Sacrifices there, that they are *ceas'd*, to shew they are fulfill'd: So here, after this *Son* of *David* was come, all his other *Sons* *ceas'd*, and the very Genealogy of their Tribes, and so of *Judah*, is lost, as also of the Tribe of *Levi*; so that the *Jews* can never tell, if any after-*Messiah* shou'd appear, whether he were of the Tribe of *Judah*, far less, whether he were of the Lineage of *David*; Nor can they shew the Genealogy of any they call *Levites* now among them.

This is occasion'd by their being dispers'd among all Nations, and yet preserv'd a distinct People from all the Earth, tho' without any Country of their own, or King, or Priest,

of Tribulation or Sacrifice. And they are thus preserved by the Providence of *God*, (so as no other Nation was since the Foundation of this World) to shew the fulfilling of the Prophecies concerning them, and the Judgment pronounced against them for their crucifying their *Messiah*; And that their Conversion may be more apparent to the World, and their being gather'd out of all Nations, and restor'd to *Jerusalem* (as is promis'd them) when they shall come to acknowledge their *Messiah*.

And *God* not permitting them to have any King or Governor upon Earth, ever since their last Dispersion by the *Romans*, (lest they might say, That the Scepter was not departed from *Judab*) is to convince them (when *God* shall take the Veil off their Heart) That no other *Messiah* who can come hereafter can answer this Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, or that of *Jacob*, that the Scepter should not depart from *Judab* till *Shiloh* came.

(II.) And it is wonderful to consider, how expressly their present State is prophesied of, that it could not be more *literal*, if it were to be worded now by us who see it. As that they shou'd be scattered into all Countries, sifted as with a Sieve among all Nations, yet preserv'd a People; And that *God* wou'd make an utter End of those Nations who had oppress'd them, and blot out their Names from under Heaven. (As we have
seen

seen it fulfill'd upon the great Empires of the *Assyrians*, *Chaldeans*, and *Romans*, who one after the other had miserably wasted the *Jews* (the fewest and poorest of all Nations) shou'd remain for ever, and they a People distinct from all the Nations in the World, tho' scatter'd among them all. Read the Prophecies express upon this Point. *Jer.* xxx. 11. xxxi. 36, 37. xxxiii. 24, 25, 26. xlvi. 28. *Isai.* xxvii. 7. xxix. 7, 8, liv. 9, 10. lxxv. 8. *Ezek.* vi. 8. xi. 16, 17. xii. 15, 16. *Amos* ix. 8, 9. *Zech.* x. 9. And it was foretold them long before, That thus it wou'd be, *Lev.* xxvi. 44. and this *in the latter days.* *Deut.* iv. 27, 30, 31. Thus *Moses* told them of it so long before, as the after-Prophets frequently. And you see all these Prophecies literally fulfill'd and fulfilling. The like cannot be said of any other Nation ever was upon the Earth! So destroy'd, and so preserv'd! And for so long a Time! Having worn out all the great Empires of the World, and still surviving them! To fulfil what was further prophesy'd of them to the End of the World.

DE. I cannot say but there is something very surprizing in this. I never thought of it before. It is a living Prophecy, which we see fulfilled and still fulfilling at this Day before our Eyes. For we are sure these Prophecies were not coin'd yesterday. And they are as express and particular, as if they were to be wrote now, after the Events are so far come to pass.

(12.) CHR. As the Door was kept open to *Christ* before he came, by the many and flagrant Prophecies of him ; and by the Types representing him : So was the Door for ever shut after him, by those Prophecies being all fulfill'd and compleated in him, and applicable to none who shou'd come after him ; And by all the Types ceasing, the Shadows vanishing when the Substance was come. No *Messiah* can come now, before the Scepter depart from *Judah*, and the Sacrifice from *Jerusalem*. Before the Sons of *David* (all except *Christ*) shall cease to sit upon his Throne. None can come now, within Four hundred and ninety Years of the Building of the second Temple ; nor come into that very Temple, as I have before shew'd was expressly prophesy'd by *Daniel* and *Haggai*.

DE. I know not what the *Jews* can say, who own these Prophecies.

CHR. They say, That the Coming of the *Messiah* at the Time spoke of in the Prophets, has been delay'd because of their Sins.

DE. Then it may be delay'd for ever, unless they can tell us when they will grow better. But however these Prophecies have failed which spoke of the Time of the *Messiah's* coming. And they can never be a Proof hereafter, because the Time is past. So that, according to this, they were made for no Purpose ;

pose; unless to shew that they were *false*, that is, no Prophecies at all!

But were these Prophecies upon Condition? Or was it said that the Coming of the *Messiah* should be delay'd if the *Jews* were sinful?

CHR. No. So far from it, That it was expressly prophesy'd that the Coming of the *Messiah* shou'd be in the most sinful State of the *Jews*, and to purge their Sins. *Dan. ix. 24. Zech. xiii. 1.* And the ancient Tradition of the *Jews* was pursuant to this, That at the Coming of the *Messiah* the Temple should be a Den of Thieves. Rabbi *Juda* in *Masoreta*. And a Time of great Corruption. *Talmud. tit. de Synedrion, and de Ponderibus, &c.*

But more than this, the very Case is put of their being most sinful, and it is expressly said, That this should not hinder the fulfilling of the Prophecies concerning the Coming of the *Messiah*, spoke of as the Son of *David*, *2 Sam. vii. 14, 15, 16. Psal. lxxxix. 30. 33,---37.*

But it was prophesy'd that they should not know their *Messiah*, and should reject him when he came; that he should be a *Stone of stumbling*, and a *Rock of offence* to them. *Isai. viii. 14, 15.* And that *their Eyes should be closed*, that they should not understand their own Prophets, *chap. xxix. 9, 10, 11.* That their Builders should reject the Head Stone of the Corner, *Psal. cxviii. 22.* And the like
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in several other Places of their own Prophets. And thus they mistook the Prophecy concerning the coming of *Elias*, whom it is said they *knew not, but did to him what they listed*, and so the same of *Christ*. Matth. xvii. 12. And it is said, 1 Cor. ii. 8. That *had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory*.

D L. This indeed solves the Prophecies, both those of the Coming of the *Messiah*, and of the *Jews* not knowing him, and therefore rejecting him. And likewise obviates this Excuse of theirs, for if they were very sinful at that Time, it was a greater Punishment of their Sin not to know, and to reject their *Messiah*, that his not coming at that Time would have been.

CHR. The great Sin mentioned for which they were punished by several Captivities, was their Idolatry, the last and longest of which Captivities was that of seventy Years in *Babylon*. Since which time they have forsaken their Idolatry, and have never been nationally guilty of it since, but always had it in the utmost Abhorrence. But since their rejecting their *Messiah*, they have been now near Seventeen hundred Years not in a Captivity, where they might be all together, and enjoying their own Law, Government, and Worship, in some Manner; but dispersed over all the World, without Country of their own, or King, or Priest, or Temple, or Sacrifice, or any Prophet

phet to comfort them, or give them Hopes of a Restoration. And all this come upon them, not for their old Sin of Idolatry, but from that curse they imprecated upon themselves, when they crucified their *Messiah*, saying, *His blood be on us, and on our children.* Which cleaves unto them from that Day to this, and is visible to all the World but to themselves! And what other Sin can they think greater than Idolatry, for which they have been punished so much more terribly than for all their Idolatries; what other Sin can this be, but their crucifying the *Messiah*! And here they may see their sinful State, which they alledge as an Excuse for their *Messiah's* not coming at the Time foretold by the Prophets, rendered ten fold more sinful, by their rejecting him when he came.

DE. This is a full Answer, and convincing as to the *Jews*. But have you any more to say to me?

(13.) CHR. I have one thing more to offer, which may come under this Head of Types, and that is, Persons who represented *Christ* in several Particulars, and so might be call'd Personal Types.

And I will not apply these out of my own Head, but as they are apply'd in the *New Testament*, which having all the Marks of the *Old Testament*, and stronger Evidence than
than

than these, in those Marks we are now upon, their Authority is indisputable.

(1.) I begin with *Adam*, who gave us Life and Death too. And *Christ* came by his Death to restore us to Life again, even Life eternal. Hence *Christ* is call'd the second *Adam*, and *Adam* is call'd the Figure of *Christ*. The Parallel betwixt them is insisted on, *Rom. v. 12.* to the End, and *1 Cor. xv. 45,* to 50. *Eve* receiv'd her Life from *Adam*, as the Church from *Christ*. She was taken out of the Side of *Adam* when he was in a dead *Sleep*; and after *Christ* was dead, the Sacraments of *Water* and *Blood* flow'd out of His *Side*, that is, *Baptism* wheremy we are *born* into *Christ*, and the *Sacrament* of his *Blood*, wheremy we are *nourish'd* into eternal *Life*.

(2.) *Enoch* was carry'd up bodily into Heaven: As *Elijah*. One under the Patriarchal, the other under the Legal Dispensation. In both, the Ascension of *Christ* was prefigured.

(3.) *Noah*, a Preacher of Righteousness to the old World, and Father of the new. Who sav'd the Church by Water, the like Figure whereunto even *Baptism* doth also now save us, *1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.*

(4.) *Melchisedec*, that is, *King of Righteousness*, and *King of Peace*, and *Priest of the most High God*; who was made like unto the Son of God, a Priest continually. *Heb. vii. 1, 2, 3.*

(5.) *Abra-*

(5.) *Abraham*, the Friend of God and Father of the Faithful, the Heir of the World, *Rom. iv. 13.* In whom all the Nations of the Earth are blessed, *Gen. xviii. 18.*

(6.) *Isaac*, the Heir of this Promise, was born after his Father and Mother were both past the Age of Generation in the Course of Nature, *Gen. xvii. 17. xviii. 11. Rom. iv. 19. Heb. xi. 11, 12.* The nearest Type that cou'd be to the Generation of *Christ* wholly without a Man.

And his Sacrifice had a very near Resemblance to the Sacrifice and Death of *Christ*, who lay three Days in the Grave, and *Isaac* was three Days a dead Man (as we say in the Law) under the Sentence of Death, *Gen. xxii. 4.* whence *Abraham* received him in a Figure, *Heb. xi. 19.* that is, of the Resurrection of *Christ*. And *Abraham* was commanded to go three Days Journey to sacrifice *Isaac* upon the same Mountain (according to the Ancients) where *Christ* was crucify'd, and where *Adam* was buried. Again the common Epithet of *Christ*, i. e. *The only begotten of the Father*, and his *beloved Son*, were both given to *Isaac*, *Gen. xxii. 2. Heb. xi. 17.* For he was the only Son that was begotten in that miraculous Manner, after both his Parents were decay'd by Nature. And he was the only Son of the Promise, which was not made to the Seed of *Abraham* in general, but *in Isaac shall thy seed be called,*
Gen.

Gen. xxi. 12. *He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one. And to thy seed, which is Christ, Gal. iii. 16.*

And as *Isaac*, which signifies *rejoicing*, or *laughing for joy*, was thus the only begotten of his Parents, so *Abram* signifies the *glorious Father*, and *Abraham* (into which his Name was chang'd on the Promise of *Isaac*, Gen. xvii. 5, 10.) signifies the *Father* of a *Multi-tude*, to express the coming in of the *Gentiles* to *Christ*, and the Encrease of the Gospel; whence it is there said to *Abraham*, a *Father of many nations have I made thee. And in thy seed all the nations of the earth sh. all be blessed.*

Isaac who was born by Promise of a free-Woman, represented the Christian Church, in Opposition to *Ishmael* who was born after the Flesh, of a bond-Maid, and signify'd the Jewish Church under the Law. See this Allegory carry'd on, *Gal. iv. 21. to the End.*

(7.) *Jacob* his Vision of the Ladder (*Gen. xxviii. 12.*) shews the Intercourse which was open'd by *Christ* betwixt Heaven and Earth, by his making Peace. And to this he alludes when he says, *Hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of Man. Joh. i. 15.*

And *Jacob's* wrestling with the Angel, (*Gen. xxxii. 24. &c. Hos. xii. 4.*) And as it were prevailing over him by Force to bless him, shews the strong and powerful Intercession
of

of *Christ*. Whereby (as he words it, *Matth. xi. 12.*) *Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* Whence the Name of *Jacob* was then turn'd to *Israel*, that is, one who prevails upon *God*, or has Power over him. *God* representing himself here as overcome by us. And the Name of *Israel* was ever after given to the *Church*. But much more so when *Christ* came, as he said, *Matth. xi. 12.* *From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, &c.* that is, from the first Promulgation of *Christ* being come. Thenceforward the *Gentiles* began to press into the Gospel, and as by Force to take it from the *Jews*. This was signify'd in the Name *Jacob*, that is, a Supplanter, for the *Gentiles* here supplanted their elder Brother the *Jews*, and stole the Blessing and Heirship from them.

(8.) *Joseph* was sold by his Brethren out of Envy. But it prov'd the Preservation of them and all their Families. And *Christ* was sold by his Brethren out of Envy, *Mark xv. 10.* which prov'd the Means of their Redemption. And *Christ*, as *Joseph*, became Lord over his Brethren.

(9.) *Moses* calls *Christ* a Prophet like unto himself. *Deut. xviii. 18.* He represented *Christ* the great Law-giver. And his delivering *Israel* out of *Egypt*, was a Type of
Christ's

Christ's delivering his Church from the Bondage of Sin and Hell.

(10.) *Joskua* call'd also *Jesus*, Heb. iv. 8. overcame all the Enemies of *Israel*, and gave them Possession of the *Holy Land*, which was a Type of Heaven. And *Christ* appear'd to *Joskua*, as Captain of the Host of the Lord. *Jos. v. 14.* So that *Joskua* was his Lieutenant representing him.

(11.) *Sampson*, who by his single Valour and his own Strength overcame the *Philistines*, and slew more at his Death than in all his Life, was a Representation of *Christ*, who *Trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him, but his own arm brought him salvation.* *Isai. lxxiii. 3, 5.* But his Death completed his Victory, whereby he overcame all the Power of the Enemy, *And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross.* *Col. ii. 15.*

(12.) *David*, whose Son *Christ* is call'd, speaks frequently of him in his own Person, and in Events which cannot be apply'd to *David*, as *Psal. xvi. 10. Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine holy one to see corruption.* For *David* has seen Corruption. *Christ* is said to sit upon the Throne of *David.* *Isai. ix. 7.* And *Christ* is call'd by the Name of *David,* *Hos. iii. 5.* and frequently in the Prophets.

David

David from a Shepherd became a King and a Prophet, denoting the threefold Office of *Christ*, *Pastoral*, *Regal*, and *Prophetical*.

(13.) *Solomon*, the wisest of Men, his peaceable and magnificent Reign, represented the triumphal State of *Christ's* Kingdom, which is describ'd, *Psal.* lxxii. inscrib'd for *Solomon*, there call'd *the king's son*) but far exceeding the Glory of his Reign, or what can possibly be apply'd to him, as *ver.* 5, 8, 11, 17. But his Reign came the nearest of any to that universal and glorious Reign there describ'd, particularly in his being chosen to build the Temple, because he was a Man of Peace, and had shed no Blood like *David* his Father, who conquer'd the Enemies of *Israel*, but *Solomon* built the Church in full Peace; and as it is particularly set down *1 Kings* vi. 7. and no doubt he was ordered by *God* so to do, *That the house when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: So that there was neither hammer nor ax, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building.* Which did denote that the Church of *Christ* was to be built, not only in Peace, but without Noise or Confusion, as *Isaiab* prophesy'd of him, *chap.* xlii. 2. *He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street: a bruised reed shall he not break, &c.* He was not to conquer with the Sword, as the *Israelites* subdued *Canaan*, but to overcome by Meekness,

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and

and doing Good to his Enemies, and patiently suffering all Injuries from them. And so he taught his followers, as *St. Paul* says, *2 Tim.* ii. 24. *The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men.-----In meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves, &c.*

And I cannot think but there was some Imitation of this peaceable Temple of *Solomon*, in the Temple of *Janus* among the *Romans*; for that was never to be shut but in Time of Peace. Which happen'd rarely among them, but three Times in all their History. The last was in the Reign of *Augustus*, in which time *Christ* came into the World, when there was a profound and universal Peace. And so it became the Prince of Peace, whose Birth was thus proclaim'd by the Angels, *Luk.* ii. 14. *Glory to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men.* But to go on :

(14.) *Jonah's* being three Days and Nights in the Belly of the Whale, was a Sign of *Christ's* being so long in the Heart of the Earth. *Christ* himself makes the Allusion. *Matth.* xii. 40.

(15.) But as there were several Persons, at several Times, representing and prefiguring several Particulars of the Life and Death of *Christ*: So there was one standing and continual Representation of him appointed in the Person of the High-Priest under the Law. Who

Who entering into the Holy of Holies once in a Year, with the Blood of the great Expiatory Sacrifice, and he only, to make Atonement for Sin, did lively represent our great High Priest entering into Heaven, once for all, with his own Blood, to expiate the Sins of the whole World. This is largely insisted upon in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, chap. vii. viii. ix. x.

And our Deliverance by the Death of *Christ* is represented, as in a *Piecture*, in that Ordinance of the Law, That the Man-slayer who fled to one of the Cities of Refuge (which were all of the Cities of the *Levites*) shou'd not come out thence till the Death of the High-Priest, and no Satisfaction be taken till then, and then he shou'd be acquitted and *Return into the land of his possession*. Num. xxxv. 6, 25, 26, 27, 28.

And I doubt not but the *Gentiles* had from hence their *Asyla* or Temples of Refuge for Criminals.

(1.) DE. There is a *Resemblance* in these things. But I wou'd not have admitted them as a Proof, if you had not supported them, at least most of them, with the Authority of the *New Testament*. And it was not necessary that every one should be named in it; for those that are named are only occasionally. And I must take time to consider of the Evidences you have brought for the Authority of the *New Testament*, which you have made

full as great, if not greater than the Evidences for the *Old Testament*.

CHR. I may say greater upon this Head of Prophecies and Types, because these are no Proofs till they are fulfilled. Tho' then they prove the Truth of these Prophecies and Types. And so the one confirms the other. But the whole Evidence of the Law is not made apparent till we see it fulfilled in the Gospel. For which Reason I call the Gospel the strongest Proof, not only as to itself, but likewise as to the Law. And the *Jews*, as much as in them lies, have invalidated this strongest Proof for the *Old-Testament*, which is the fulfilling of it in the *New*. Nay, they have rendered these Prophecies false, which they say were not fulfilled at the Time they spake of, and never now can be fulfilled. And as no Fact but that of our *Christ* alone ever had this Evidence of Prophecies and Types from the Beginning, so never can any other Fact have it now while the World lasts.

(2.) DE. Why do you say, *Never can have it*? For may not *God* make what Fact he pleases, and give it what Evidence he pleases?

CHR. But it cannot have the Evidence that the Fact of *Christ* has, unless at that Distance of Time hereafter, as from the Beginning of the World to this Day. Because *God* took Care that the Evidence of *Christ* should commence from the very Beginning, in the Promise of him made to *Adam*, and to be renewed

newed by the Prophets in all the after-Ages till he should come. And the Evidence of him after his Coming (in which I have instanc'd) and which continues to this Day, before it can belong to any other, must have the same Compass of Time that has gone to confirm this Evidence, else it has not the same Evidence.

(3.) DE. By this Argument the Evidence grows stronger the longer it continues, since you say, That the Prophecies of the Scriptures reach to the End of the World, And so will be further and further fulfilling every Day.

This is contrary to what one of your Doctors has lately advanced, who pretends to calculate the Age of Evidences, That in such a Time they decay, and in such a Time must die. And that the Evidence of Christianity having lasted so long, is upon the Decay, and must wear out soon, if not supply'd by some fresh and new Evidence.

*Craig. Theologiæ
Christianæ Princi-
pia Mathematica.
1699.*

CHR. This may be true as to Fables which have no Foundation. But is that Prophecy I mention'd to you of the Dispersion and yet wonderful Preservation of the *Jews*, less evident to you, because it was made so long ago?

DE. No. It is much more evident for that. If I had liv'd at the Time when those Prophecies were made, I fancy I shou'd not have

believed one Word of them ; but wonder'd at the Assurance of those who ventur'd to foretel such improbable and almost impossible things.

And I should have thought the same of what you have told me of your *Christ*, foretelling the Progress of his Gospel, at the first so very slender Appearance of it, and by such weak and improbable Means, as only suffering and dying for it, which to me would have seem'd perfect Despair, and a giving up the Cause.

I should have thought of them (as of others) who prophecy of Things after their Time, that they might not be contradicted while they lived.

But my seeing so much of these Prophecies concerning the *Jews*, and the Progress of the Gospel, come to pass so long Time after, is the only thing that makes me lay Stress upon them, and which makes them seem wonderful to me.

CHR. When the Prophecies shall all be fully compleated at the End of the World, they will then seem strongest of all. They will then be undeniable, when *Christ* shall visibly descend from Heaven (in the same Manner as he ascended) to execute both what he has promis'd and threaten'd. And in the mean time, the Prophecies lose none of their Force, but their Evidence encreases, as *the Light shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

(VIII.)

(VIII.) DE. I observe you have made no use of that common Topick of the Truth and Sincerity of the Pen-Men of the Scriptures, and what Interest they cou'd have in setting up these things if they had been false. For this can amount at most but to a Probability. And you having produc'd those Evidences which you think infallible, it might seem a Lessening of your Proof to insist upon bare Probabilities. So that I suppose you give that up.

(I.) NO, SIR, I give it not up, tho' I have not made it the chief Foundation of my Argument. And if it were but a Probability, it wants not its Force, for it is thought unreasonable to deny a flagrant Probability, where there is not as strong a Probability on the other Side, for then that makes a Doubt. But otherwise, Men generally are satisfied with Probabilities, for that is the greatest part of our Knowledge. If we will believe nothing but what carries an infallible Demonstration along with it, we must be *Scepticks* in most things in the World. And such were never thought the wisest Men.

But besides, a Probability may be sooner discern'd by some than the Infallibility of a Demonstration. Therefore we must not lay aside Probabilities.

But in this Case, I think there is an infallible Assurance, as infallible as the Senses of all Mankind. And I suppose you will not ask a greater.

(2.) DE. How can you say that? When the Suffering of Afflictions, and Death itself, is

but a Probability of the Truth of what is told us. Because some have suffer'd Death for Errors.

CHR. But then they thought them true. And Men may be deceiv'd in their Judgments, we see many Examples of it. But if the Facts related be such, as that it is impossible for those who tell them to be impos'd upon themselves, or for those to whom they are told to believe them, if not true, without supposing an universal Deception of the Senses of Mankind, then I hope I have brought the Case up to that infallible Demonstration I promis'd. And this is the Case of the Facts related in Holy Scripture. They were told by those who saw them, and did them, and they were told to those who saw them likewise themselves; and the Relators appeal'd to this. So that here cou'd be no Deceit.

DE. I grant there is a great Difference betwixt Errors in Opinion, and in Fact. And that such Facts, as are told of *Moses* and of *Christ*, cou'd not have pass'd upon the People then alive, and who were said to have seen them. And I find that both *Moses*, *Christ*, and the Apostles, did appeal to what the People they spoke to had seen themselves.

CUR. With this Consideration, their patient Suffering even unto Death for the Truth of what they taught, will be a full Demonstration of the Truth of it.

(3.) Add to this, That their Enemies who persecuted them, the *Romans*, as well as *Jews*, to whom they appeal'd as Witnessees of the Facts, did not offer to deny them.

That none of the Apostates from Christianity did attempt to detect any Falshood in the Facts; tho' they might have had great Rewards if they cou'd have done it. The *Roman* Emperors being then Persecutors of Christianity, and for Three hundred Years after *Christ*. And *Julian* the Emperor, afterwards turn'd Apostate, who had been initiated in the *Sacra* of Christianity, yet cou'd not he detect any of the Facts.

(4.) And it was a particular Providence for the further Evidence of Christianity. That all the Civil Governments in the World were against it for the first Three hundred Years, lest it might be said, (as it is ridiculouly in your *Amintor*) That the Awe of the Civil Government might hinder those who cou'd make the Detection.

Now, SIR, to apply all that we have said, I desire you wou'd compare these Evidences I have brought for Christianity, with those that are pleaded for any other Religion.

There are but Four in the World, *viz.* Christianity, Judaism, Heathenism, and Mahometanism.

(1.) Christianity was the first. For from the first Promise of *Christ* made to *Adam* during the
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the Patriarchal and Legal Dispensations, all was Christianity in Type, as I have shew'd.

And as to *Moses* and the Law, the *Jews* can give no Evidence for that, which will not equally establish the Truth of *Christ* and the Gospel. Nor can they disprove the Facts of *Christ* by any Topick, which will not likewise disprove all those of *Moses* and the Prophets. So that they are hedg'd in on every Side. They must either renounce *Moses*, or acknowledge *Christ*.

Moses and the Law have the first five Evidences, but they have not the sixth and the seventh, which are the strongest.

This is as to *Judaism* before *Christ* came. But since, as it now stands in Opposition to *Christianity*, in favour of any future *Messiah*, it has none of the Evidences at all. On the contrary, their own Prophecies and Types make against them, for their Prophecies are fulfilled, and their Types are ceas'd, and cannot belong to any other *Messiah* who should come hereafter. They stand now more naked than the Heathens or the *Mohometans*.

(2.) Next for Heathenism, some of the Facts recorded of their Gods have the first and second Evidences, and some the third, but not one of them the fourth, or any of the other Evidences.

But truly and properly speaking, and if we will take the Opinion of the Heathens themselves, they were no Facts at all, but
 Mythological

Mythological Fables, invented to express some moral Virtues or Vices, or the History of Nature, and Power of the Elements, &c. As likewise to turn great Part of the History of the Old Testament into Fable, and make it their own, for they disdain'd to borrow from the *Jews*. They made Gods of Men, and the most vicious too. Inſomuch that ſome of their wiſe Men thought it a Corruption of Youth, to read the History of their Gods, whom they represented as notorious Liars, Thieves, Adulterers, &c. Tho' they had ſome Mythology hid under all that.

And as Men were their Gods, ſo they made the firſt Man to be Father of the Gods, and call'd him *Saturn*, not begot by any Man, but the Son of *Cælus* and *Veſta*, that is, of *Heaven* and *Earth*. And his maiming his Father with a Steel Scythe, was to ſhew how Heaven itſelf is impair'd by Time, whom they painted with Wings and a Scythe mowing down all Things. And *Saturn* eating up his own Children, was only to expreſs how Time devours all its own Productions. And his being depoſ'd by *Jupiter* his Son, ſhews, That Time which wears away all other Things, is worn away itſelf at laſt.

Several of the Heathen Authors have given us the Mythology of their Gods, with which I will not detain you.

They expreſs'd every thing, and worſhipp'd every thing under the Name of a God, as
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the God of Sleep, of Musick, of Eloquence, of Hunting, Drinking, Love, War, &c. They had above Thirty thousand of them. And in what they told of them, and as they describ'd them, they often trac'd the sacred Story.

Ovid begins his *Metamorphoses* with a perfect Poetical Version of the Beginning of *Genesis*. *Ante Mare & Tellus*-----Then goes on with the History of the Creation; the Formation of Man out of the Dust of the Earth, and his being made after the Image of God, and to have Dominion over the inferior Creatures. Then he tells of the general Corruption, and the Giants before the Flood, when the Earth was filled with Violence; for which all Mankind with the Beasts and the Fowl were destroy'd by the universal Deluge, except only *Deucalion* and *Pyrrah* his Wife, who were saved in a Boat, which landed them on the Top of Mount *Parnassus*. And that from these two the whole Earth was re-peopled. I think it will be needless to detain the Reader with an Application of this to the History of the Creation set down by *Moses*, of the Flood, and the Ark wherein *Noah* was saved, and the Earth re-peopled by him, &c.

And *Noah* was plainly intended likewise in their God *Janus*, with his two Faces, one old looking backward to the old World that was destroy'd; the other young, looking forward
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to the new World that was to spring from him.

So that even their turning the sacred History into Fable, is a Confirmation of it. And there can be no Comparifon betwixt the Truths of the Facts, fo attested as I have fhew'd, and the Fables that were made from them.

(3.) Laftly, as to the *Mabometan* Religion, it wants all the Evidences we have mention'd, for there was no Miracle faid to be done by *Mabomet*, publickly and in the Face of the World, but that only of conquering with the Sword. Who faw his *Mefra*, or Journey from *Mecca* to *Jerufalem*, and thence to Heaven in one Night, and back in Bed with his Wife in the Morning? Who was prefent and heard the Converfation the Moon had with him in his Cave? It is not faid there was any Witnefs. And the *Alcoran*, c. vi. excufes his not working any Miracles to prove his Miffion. They fay that *Mofes* and *Chrift* came to fhew the Clemency and Goodnefs of God, to which Miracles were neceffary. But that *Mabomet* came to fhew the Power of God, to which no Miracle was needful but that of the Sword.

(1.) And his *Alcoran* is a *Rhapsody* of Stuff without Head or Tail, one wou'd think wrote by a *mad Man*, with ridiculous Titles, as the Chapter of the Cow, of the Spider, &c.

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And their Legends are much more senseless than those of the Papists; as of an Angel, the Distance betwixt whose two Hands is Seventy thousand Days Journey. Of a Cow's Head with Horns which have Forty thousand Knots, and Forty Days Journey betwixt each Knot. And others which have seventy Mouths, and every Mouth seventy Tongues, and each Tongue praises *God* seventy Times a Day, in seventy different Idioms. And of Wax Candles before the Throne of God which are fifty Years Journey from one End to the other. 'The Alcoran says, the Earth was created in two Days, and is supported by an Ox which stands under it, upon a white Stone, with his Head to the East, and his Tail to the West, having forty Horns, and as great a Distance betwixt every Horn as a man cou'd walk in a thousand Years Time.

Then their Description of Heaven, in a full Enjoyment of Wine, Women, and other like gross sensual Pleasures.

(2.) When you compare this with our holy Scriptures, you will need no Argument to make you see the Difference. The Heathen Orators have admir'd the sublime of the Style of our Scriptures. No Writing in the World comes near it, even with all the Disadvantage of our Translation, which, being oblig'd to be literal, must lose much of the Beauty of it. The Plainness and Succinctness of the Historical Part, the Melody of the Psalms,
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the Instruction of the Proverbs, the Majesty of the Prophets, and, above all, that easy Sweetness in the New Testament, where the Glory of Heaven is set forth in a grave and moving Expression, which yet reaches not the Height of the Subject; not like the Flights of Rhetorick, which set out small Matters in great Words. But the Holy Scriptures touch the Heart, raise Expectation, confirm our Hope, strengthen our Faith, give Peace of Conscience, and Joy in the *Holy Ghost*, which is inexpressible. All which you will experience when you once come to believe, you will then bring forth these Fruits of the Spirit, when you receive the Word with pure Affection, as we pray in our Litany.

(3.) But, SIR, if there is Truth in the Alcoran, then the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, for the Alcoran says so, and that it was sent to confirm them, even the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testament. And it expressly owns our *Jesus* to be the *Messiah*. At the End of the fourth Chapter it has these Words. *The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, is a prophet, and an angel of God, his Word and his Spirit, which he sent to Mary.* But it gives him not the Name of *Son of God*, for this wise Reason, *Chap. vi. How shall God have a son, who hath no wives?* Yet it owns *Jesus* to be born of a pure Virgin, without a Man, by the Operation of the Spirit of God. And in the same Chapter this *Mabomet* acknowledges

knowledges his own *Ignorance*, and says, *I told you not that I had in my power all the Treasures of God, neither that I had knowledge of the future and past, nor do affirm that I am an angel, I only act what hath been inspir'd into me; Is the blind like him that seeth clearly?* And after says, *I am not your tutor, every thing hath its time, you shall hereafter understand the truth.*

This is putting off, and bidding them expect some other after *Mahomet*. But our *Jesus* said, He was our Tutor and Teacher, and that there was none to come after him. *Mahomet* said he was no Angel, but that *Jesus* was an Angel of God. But when God bringeth *Jesus* into the World, he saith, *Let all the angels of God worship him.* Heb. i. 6. And he made him Lord of all the Angels. *Mahomet* knew not what was past or to come. But our *Jesus* knew all things, and what was in the Heart of every Man, *Job*. ii. 24, 25. which none can do, but God only, 1 *King*. viii. 39. And foretold things to come to the End of the World. *Mahomet* had not all the Treasures of God; but in *Jesus* are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Col. ii. 3, 9.

Again, *Mahomet* never call'd himself the *Messiah*, or the *Word*, or *Spirit* of God, yet all these Appellations he gives to our *Jesus*.
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There were Prophecies of *Jesus* which we have seen. Were there any of *Mahomet*? None; except of the *false Christs and false Prophets*, which *Jesus* told should come after him, and bid us beware of them, for that they should deceive many.

(4.) DE. But if *Mahomet* gave thus the Preference to *Christ* in every thing, and said that his Alcoran was only a Confirmation of the Gospel; how came he to set it up against the Gospel, and to reckon the Christians among the Unbelievers?

CHR. No otherwise than as other Hereticks did, who call'd themselves the only true Christians, and invented new Interpretations of the Scriptures. The *Socinians* now charge whole Christianity with Apostacy, Idolatry, and Polytheism. And the Alcoran is but a System of the old Arianism, ill digested and worse put together, with a Mixture of some Heathenism and Judaism. For *Mahomet's* Father was a Heathen, his Mother a Jewess, and his Tutor was *Sergius* the Monk, a *Nestorian*; which Sect was a Branch of Arianism. These crudely mix'd made up the Farago of the Alcoran. But the prevailing Part was Arianism. And where that spread itself in the East, there *Mahometism* succeeded, and sprung out of it. To let all Christians see the Horror of that Heresy! And our Socinians now among us, who call themselves Unitarians, are much more Mahometans than Christians. For except some personal things as to

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Mahomet,

Mahomet, they agree almost wholly in his Doctrine; And as such address'd themselves to the *Morocco* Ambassador here in the Reign of King *Charles II.* As you may see in the Preface to my Dialogues against the Socinians, Printed in the Year 1708. Nor do they speak more honourably of *Christ* and the Holy Scriptures, than the Alcoran does. And there is no Error concerning *Christ* in the Alcoran but what was broach'd before by the Hereticks of Christianity; as that *Christ* did not suffer really but in Appearance only, or that some other was crucify'd in his stead, but he taken up into Heaven, as the Alcoran speaks.

So that in Strictness, I should not have reckon'd Mahometanism as one of the Four Religions in the World, but as one of the Heresies of Christianity. But because of its great Name, and its having spread so far in the World, by the Conquests of *Mahomet* and his Followers, and that it is vulgarly understood to be a distinct Religion by itself, therefore I have consider'd it as such.

And as to your Concern in the Matter, you see plainly, That the Alcoran comes in Attestation and Confirmation of the Facts of *Christ*, and of the Holy Scriptures.

DE. I am not come yet so far as to enter into the Disputes of the several Sects of Christianity, but as to the Fact of *Christ* and of the Scriptures in general, *Mahometanism* I see does rather confirm than oppose it.

CHR. What then do you think of *Judaism*, as it now stands in Opposition to Christianity.

DE. Not only as without any Evidence, the Time prophesy'd of for the Coming of the *Messiah* being long since past : But all their former Evidences turn directly against them, and against any *Messiah* who ever hereafter should come. As that the Scepter should not depart from *Judab* ; That he should come into the Second Temple ; That the Sacrifices should cease soon after his Death ; That *David* should never want a Son to sit upon his Throne ; That they should be many Days without a King, and without a Prince, and without a Sacrifice, &c. Which they do not suppose ever will be the Case after their *Messiah* is come. So that they are Witnesses against themselves.

CHR. And what do you think of the Stories of the Heathen Gods ?

DE. I believe them no more than all the Stories in *Ovid's Metamorphoses*. Nor did the wiser Heathens believe them, only such silly People as suck in all the *Papish* Legends without examining.

And to tell you the Truth, I thought the same of all your Stories in the Bible. But I will take time to examine those *Proofs* you have given me.

For we *Deists* do not dispute against Christianity, in behalf of any other Religion, of the *Jews*, or *Heathens*, or *Mahometans*, all which

pretend to Revelation. But we are against all Revelation. And go only upon bare Nature, and what our own Reason dictates to us.

(1.) CHR. What Nature dictates, it dictates to all, at least to the most and the Generality of Mankind. And if we measure by this, then it will appear a natural Notion, that there is Necessity of Revelation in Religion. And herein you have all the World against you from the very Beginning. And will you plead Nature against all these?

DE. The Notion came down from one to another, from the Beginning, we know not how.

CHR. Then it was either Nature from the Beginning, or else, it was from Revelation at the Beginning. Whence the Notion has descended through all Posterities to this Day.

(2.) And there wants not Reason for this. For when Man had fallen and his Reason was corrupted (as we feel it upon us to this Day, as sensibly as the Diseases and Infirmities of the Body) was it not highly reasonable that *God* should give us a Law and Directions how to serve and worship him? Sacrifices do not seem to be any natural Invention. For why should taking away the Life of my Fellow-Creature be acceptable to *God*, or a worship of him? It would rather seem an Offence against him. But as Types of the great and only propitiatory Sacrifice of *Christ* to come, and to keep up our Faith in that, the Institution given with the Revelation of it appears most rational. And that it was necessary, the
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great Defection shews, not only of the Heathens, but of the *Jews* themselves, who tho' they retain'd the Institution, yet in a great Measure lost the true Meaning and Signification of it. And are now to be brought back to it, by reminding them of the Institution and the Reason of it.

Plato in his *Alcibiad. ii. de Precat.* has the same Reasoning, and concludes, that we cannot know of ourselves what Petitions will be pleasing to *God*, or what Worship to give him: But that it is necessary a Law-giver should be sent from Heaven to instruct us. And such a one he did expect, and *O how greatly do I desire to see that Man?* Says he, and *who he is?* The primitive Tradition of the expected *Messiah* had no doubt come to him, as to many others of the Heathens, from the *Jews*, and likely from the Perusal of their Scriptures.

For *Plato* goes further, and says, (*de Leg. l. 4.*) That this Law-giver must be more than Man; for he observes that every Nature is govern'd by another Nature that is superior to it, as Birds and Beasts by Man, who is of a distinct and superior Nature. So he infers, that this Law-giver who was to teach Man what Man cou'd not know by his own Nature, must be of a Nature that is superior to Man, that is, of a Divine Nature.

Nay, he gives as lively a Description of the Person, Qualifications, Life, and Death of this *divine Man*, as if he had copy'd the liii. of *Isaiab.* For he says, (*de Repub. i. 2.*) That

this just Person must be poor and void of all Recommendations but that of Virtue alone. That a wicked World would not bear his Instructions and Reproof, and therefore within three or four Years after he began to preach, he should be persecuted, imprison'd, scourg'd, and at last put to Death; his Word is *Ἀναχινδύλει* *ῥήπεται*, that is, cut in Pieces, as they cut their Sacrifices.

DE. These are remarkable Passages as you apply them. And *Plato* was three hundred Years before *Christ*.

But I incline to think that these Notions came rather from such Traditions as you speak of, than from Nature. And I can see nothing of Nature in Sacrifices, they look more like Institution, come that how it will.

(3.) CHR. It is strange that all the Nations in the World should be carry'd away from what you call Nature. Unless you will take refuge among the *Hottentots* at the Cape of *Good Hope*, hardly distinguishable from Beasts, to shew us what Nature left to it self wou'd do! And leave us all the wise and polite World on the Side of Revelation, either real or pretended: And of Opinion that Mankind cou'd not be without it. And my Business now with you has been to distinguish the real from the pretended.

(4.) DE. By the Account you have given, there is but one Religion in the World, nor ever was. For the *Jewish* was but Christianity in Type, tho' in Time greatly corrupted.
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And the *Heathen* was a greater Corruption, and founded the Fables of their *Gods* upon the Facts of Scripture. And the *Mahometan* you say is but a Heresy of Christianity. So that all is Christianity still.

CHR. It is true *God* gave but one Revelation to the World; which was that of *Christ*. And as that was corrupted, new Revelations were pretended. But *God* has guarded his Revelations with such Evidences, as it was not in the Power of Men or Devils to counterfeit or contrive any thing like them. Some bear Resemblance in one or two Features, in the first two or three Evidences that I have produc'd. But as none reach the fourth, so they are all quite destitute of the least Pretence to the remaining four. So that when you look upon the Face of Divine Revelation, and take it altogether, it is impossible to mistake it for any of those Delusions which the Devil has set up in Imitation of it. And they are made to confirm it, because all the Resemblance they have to Truth, is that wherein they are any ways like it, but when compar'd with it, they shew as an ill drawn Picture, half Man half Beast, in Presence of the beautiful Original.

(5.) DE. It is strange, That if the Case be thus plain as you have made it, the whole World is not immediately convinc'd.

CHR. If the Seed be never so good, yet if it be sown upon Stones or among Thorns, it will bring forth nothing. There are Hearts

of Stone, and others so fill'd with the Love of Riches, with the Cares and Pleasures of this Life, that they will not see, they have not a mind to know any thing which they think wou'd disturb them in their Enjoyments, or lessen their Opinion of them, for that wou'd be taking away so much of their Pleasure. Therefore it is no easy matter to persuade Men to place their Happiness in future Expectations, which is the Import of the Gospel. And in pressing this, and bidding the worldly minded abandon their beloved Vices, and telling the fatal Consequences of them, we must expect to meet not only with their Scorn and Contempt, but their utmost Rage and Impatience, to get rid of us, as so many Enemies of their Lusts and Pleasures. This is the Cross which our Saviour prepar'd all his Disciples to bear, who were to fight against Flesh and Blood, and all the Allurements of the World. And it is a greater miracle that they have had so many Followers in this, than that they have gain'd to themselves so many Enemies. The World is a strong Man, and till a stronger than he come (that is, the full Perfection of the future State) he will keep Possession. And this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith. But we are told also, that this Faith is the Gift of God. For all the Evidence in the World will not reach the Heart, unless it be prepar'd (like the good Ground) to receive the Doctrine that is taught. Till then Prejudice will create
Obstinacy,

Obstinacy, which will harden the Heart like a Rock, and cry, *Non persuadebis, etiamsi persuaseris!* I will not be persuaded, tho' I should be persuaded!

You must consider under this Head too, the many that have not yet heard of the Gospel. And of those that have, the far greater Number who have not the Capacity or Opportunity to examine all the Evidences of Christianity, but take things upon Trust, just as they are taught. And how many others are careless, and will not be at the Pains, tho' they want not Capacity to enquire into the Truth? All these Classes will include the greatest Part of Mankind. The ignorant, the careless, the vitious, and so the obstinate, the ambitious, and the covetous, whose Minds the *God* of this World hath blinded.

But yet in the Midst of all this Darknes, *God* hath not left himself without Witness, which will be apparent to every diligent and sober Enquirer, that is willing and prepar'd to receive the Truth.

(6.) Good SIR, let me ask you, tho' you are of no Religion, as you say, but what you call natural; yet wou'd you not think me very brutal, if I should deny that ever there was such a Man as *Alexander*, or *Cæsar*, or that they did such things? If I should deny all History, or that *Homer*, or *Virgil*, *Demosthenes*, or *Cicero*, ever wrote such Books? Wou'd you not think me perfectly obstinate, seized with
with

with a Spirit of Contradiction, and not fit for human Conversation?

And yet these things are of no Consequence to me, it is not a Farthing as to my Interest, whether they are true or false.

Will you then think yourself a reasonable Man, if in Matters of the greatest Importance, even your Eternal State, you will not believe those Facts which have a thousand times more certain and indisputable Evidence? Were there any Prophecies of *Cæsar* or *Pompey*? Were there any Types of them, or publick Institutions appointed by a Law, to prefigure the great Things that they should do? Any Persons who went before them, to bear a Resemblance of these Things, and bid us expect that great Event? Was there a general Expectation in the World of their coming, before or at the Time when they came? And of what Consequence was their coming, to the World. or to after Ages? No more than a Robbery committed a thousand Years ago!

Were the *Greek* and *Roman* Histories wrote by the Persons who did the Facts, or by Eye-Witnesses? And for the greater Certainty were those Histories made the standing Law of the Country? Or were they any more than our *Holinshead* and *Stow*, &c?

Must we believe these, on Pain of not being thought reasonable Men? And are we then unreasonable and credulous, if we believe the Facts of the Holy Bible? which was the standing Law of the People to whom it was given,
and

and wrote or dictated by those who did the Facts, with publick Institutions appointed by them as a perpetual Law to all their generations; And which, if the Facts had been false, cou'd never have pass'd at the Time when the Facts were said to be done; Nor for the same Reason, if that Book had been wrote afterwards; because these Institutions (as Circumcision, the Passover, Baptism, &c.) were as notorious Facts as any, and that Book saying they commenc'd from the Time that the Facts were done, must be found to be false, whenever it was trump't up in after Ages, by no such Institutions being then known. Not like the Feasts, Games, &c. in Memory of the Heathen Gods, which were appointed long after those Facts were said to be done; And the like Institutions may be appointed to-morrow in Memory of any Falshood, said to be done a thousand Years ago; And so is no Proof at all. And tho' a Legend, or Book of Stories of things said to be done many Years past, may be palm'd upon People, yet a Book of Statutes cannot, by which their Causes are try'd every Day.

Are there such Prophecies extant in any prophane History so long before the Facts there recorded, as there are in the Holy Scriptures of the Coming of the *Messiah*?

Were there any Types or Forerunners of the Heathen Gods, or *Mahomet*?

Is there the like Evidence of the Truth and Sincerity of the *Greek* and *Roman* Historians, as of the Penmen of the Holy Scriptures?

Wou'd these Historians have given their Lives for the Truth of all they wrote?

Did they tell such Facts only, wherein it was impossible for themselves to be impos'd upon, or that they should impose upon others? Nothing but what themselves had seen and heard, and they also to whom they spoke?

Did they expect nothing but Persecution and Death for what they related? And were they bidden to bear it patiently without Resistance? Was this the Case of the Disciples of *Mahomet*, who were requir'd to fight and conquer with the Sword?

Did any Religion ever overcome by Suffering, but the Christian only?

And did any exhibit the future State, and preach the Contempt of this World like the Christian?

DE. That's the Reason it has prevail'd so little. And yet, considering this, it is strange it has prevail'd so much.

(7.) But there is one thing yet behind, wherein I wou'd be glad to have your Opinion, because I find your *Divines* differ about it. And that is, how we shall know to distinguish betwixt true and false Miracles.

And this is necessary to the Subject we are upon. For the Force of the Facts you alledge ends all in this, That such miraculous Facts are a sufficient Attestation of such Persons being sent

sent of *God*; and consequently, that we are to believe the Doctrine which they taught.

You know we Deists deny any such thing as Miracles, but reduce all to Nature. Yet I confess, If I had seen such Miracles as are recorded of *Moses* and of *Christ*, it wou'd have convinc'd me. And for the Truth of them we must refer to the Evidences you have given. But in the mean time, if there is no Rule whereby to distinguish betwixt true and false Miracles, there is an End of all the Pains you have taken. For if the Devil can work such Things, as appear Miracles to me, I am as much persuaded as if they were true Miracles, and wrought by *God*. And so Men may be deceiv'd in trusting to Miracles.

The common Notion of a Miracle is what exceeds the Power of Nature. To which we say, That we know not the utmost of the Power of Nature, and consequently cannot tell what exceeds it. Nor do you pretend to know the utmost of the Power of Spirits, whether good or evil, and how then can you tell what exceeds their Power?

I doubt not but you wou'd have thought those to be true Miracles which the Magicians are said to have wrought in *Egypt*, but that *Moses* is said to have wrought Miracles that were superior to them.

CHR. Therefore if two Powers contend for the Superiority, as here *God* and the *Devil* did, the best Issue can be is to see them wrestle together, and then we shall soon know which is strongest. This was the Case of *Moses* and the Magicians,

Magicians of *Christ* and the *Devil*. There was a Struggle, and *Satan* was plainly overcome.

I confess I know not the Power of Spirits, nor how they work upon Bodies. And by the same Reason that a Spirit can lift a Straw, he may a Mountain, and the whole Earth, for ought I know. And may do many things which wou'd appear true Miracles to me. And so might deceive me. And all I have to trust to, in this Case, is, the restraining Power of *God*, that he will not permit the Devil so to do. And were it not for this, I doubt not but the Devil cou'd take away my Life in an Instant, or inflict terrible Diseases upon me, as upon *Job*.

And I think this Consideration is the strongest Motive in the World to keep us in a constant Dependance upon *God*, that we live in the midst of such powerful Enemies, as we can by no Means resist of ourselves, and are in their Power every Minute, when *God* shall withdraw his Protection from us.

And it is in their Power likewise to work Signs and Wonders to deceive us, if *God* permit. And herein the great Power and Goodness of *God* is manifest, That he has never yet permitted the Devil to work Miracles in Opposition to any whom he sent, except where the Remedy was at Hand, and to shew his Power the more, as in the Case of *Moses* and the Magicians, &c.

And this is further evident, because *God* has, at other Times, and upon other Occasions, suffer'd the Devil to exert his Power, as to make

make Fire descend upon *Job's Cattle, &c.* But here was no Cause of Religion concern'd, nor any Truth of *God* in Debate.

DE. But your *Christ* has foretold, *Matth. xxiv. 24.* That *false Christs* and *false Prophets* shall arise, who shall shew great Signs and Wonders, to deceive, if possible, the very Elect. And it is said, *2 Thess. ii. 9.* That there shall be a Wicked one, whose Coming is after the Working of Satan, with all Power, and Signs, and lying Wonders, And it is suppos'd, *Deut. xiii. 1. &c.* That a false Prophet may give a Sign or a Wonder, to draw Men after false *Gods*. Here then is Sign against Sign, and Wonder against Wonder, and which of these shall we believe?

CHR. The first no doubt. For *God* cannot contradict himself, nor will shew Signs and Wonders in Opposition to that Law which he has establish'd by so many Signs and Wonders. Therefore in such a Case we must conclude, that *God* has permitted the Devil to exert his Power, as against *Moses* and *Christ*, for the Tryal of our Faith, and to shew the superior Power of *God* more eminently, in overcoming all the Power of the Enemy.

But, as I said before, we have a more sure Word, that is, Proof, than even these Miracles exhibited to our outward Senses, which is the Word of Prophecy. Let then any *false Christ* who shall pretend to come hereafter, shew such a Book as our Bible, which has been so long in the World (the most ancient

cient Book now extant) testifying of him, foretelling the Time and all other Circumstances of his Coming, with his Sufferings and Death, and all these Prophecies exactly fulfill'd in him. And till he can do this, he cannot have that Evidence which our Christ has, and he must be a *false Christ* to me, and all the Signs that he can shew, will be but lying Wonders to any that is truly establish'd in the Christian Faith.

But it may be a Tryal too strong for those careless ones, who will not be at the Pains to enquire into the Grounds of their Religion, but take it upon Trust, as they do the Fashions, and mind not to frame their Lives according to it, but are immersed in the World, and the Pleasures of it.

(8.) And it will be a just Judgment upon these, that they who shut their Eyes against all the clear Evidences of the Gospel, should be given up to believe a Lye. And the Reason is given *2 Thess. ii. 12.* Because they *had Pleasure in Unrighteousness.* They loved Darknes rather than Light, because their Deeds were evil.

So that I must repeat what I said before, That there is a Preparation of the Heart (as of the Ground) to receive the Truth. And where the Doctrine does not please, no Evidence, how clear soever, will be receiv'd. *God* cannot enter till Mammon be disposse'd. We cannot serve these two Masters. He, who has a clear Sight of Heaven, cannot value the dull Pleasures

Pleasures of this Life. And it is impossible that he who is drowned in Sense can relish spiritual Things. The Love of this World is Enmity against *God*. The first Sin was a Temptation of Sense. And the Reparation is to open our Eyes to the Enjoyment of *God*. Vice clouds this Eye, and makes it blind to the only true and eternal Pleasure. It is Foolishness to such a one.

This, This, SIR, is the *Remora* that keeps Men from Christianity. It is not want of Evidence, but it is want of Consideration. I would not say this to you, till I had first gone through all the Topicks of Reason with you, that you might not call it Cant. But this is the Truth. As *David* says, *To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God*. And our Saviour says, *If any man do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself*. And *No man can come unto me except the Father draw him*.

This was the Reason why *St. John the Baptist* was sent as a Forerunner to prepare the Way for *Christ*, by preaching of Repentance, to fit Men for receiving the *Gospel*.

And they who repented of their Sins upon his Preaching, did gladly embrace the Doctrine of *Christ*. But they who would not forsake their Sins remained *obdurate*, though otherwise Men of Sense and Learning. As our Saviour told the Priests and Elders, *Mat. xxi. 31. John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and*

ye believed him not; but the Publicans and the Harlots believed him. And ye when ye had seen it, repented not afterwards, that ye might believe him.

And when *Christ* sought to prepare them for his Doctrine, by telling them, That they could not serve *God* and *Mammon*, it is said, *Luke* xvi. 14. *That when the Pharisees, who were covetous, heard these things, they derided him.* But he instructed them in the next Verse (if they would have received it) *That what is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.* And enforced this with the Example of the *rich man* and *Lazarus*. And said, *chap.* xviii. 25. *That it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.* And *chap.* xiv. 33. *That whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.* Now take this in the largest Sense, That he who is not ready and willing to *for-sake all*, as if he hated them, as *Christ* said *ver.* 26 *If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, &c.* (that is, when they come in Competition with any Command of *Chri.*) and *take not his cross and follow me, he cannot be my disciple.* How few Disciples wou'd he have had in this Age! Wou'd all his Miracles persuade some to this! The World is too hard for Heaven with most Men!

Here is the Cause of Infidelity. The Love of the World, the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust
of

of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, darken the Heart, and like Shutters keep out the Light of Heaven; till they are removed, the Light cannot enter. The Spirit of Purity and Holiness will not descend into an Heart full of all Uncleanness. If we would invite this Guest, we must sweep the House and make it clean.

But this too is of *God*. For he only can make a clean Heart and renew a right Spirit within us. But he has promised to give this Wisdom to those who ask it, and lead a *godly* Life. Therefore *ask* and you shall *have*, *seek* and you shall *find*, *knock* and it shall be *opened* unto you. But do it *ardently* and *incessantly*, as he that striveth for his Soul. For *God* is gracious and merciful, long-suffering and of great Goodness; and those who come to him in Sincerity he will in no ways cast out. Therefore *pray* in *Faith* nothing *doubting*. And what you pray for (according to his Will) *believe* that you *receive* it, and you shall *receive* it.

To his Grace I commend you.

(9.) And with the Fulness of the *Gentiles*, O! that it would please *God* to take the Veil off the Heart of the *Jews*, and let them see that they have been deceived by many false *Messiahs* since *Christ* came; so none whom they expect hereafter can answer the Prophecies of the *Messiah*, (some of which I have named) and therefore no such can be the *Messiah* who is prophesy'd of in their own *Scriptures*.

And

And let them see and consider how that fatal Curse they imprecated upon themselves, *His blood be upon us and on our children*, has cleaved unto them, beyond all their former Sins, and even repeated Idolatry, from which (to shew that this is not the Cause of their present Dispersion) they have kept themselves free ever since; and for which their longest Captivity was but seventy Years, and then Prophets were sent to them, to comfort them and assure them of a Restoration: but now they have been about seventeen hundred Years, dispersed over all the Earth, without any Prophet or Prospect of their Deliverance; That the whole World might take Notice, of this before unparallel'd Judgment, not known to any Nation that ever yet was upon the Face of the Earth! So punished, and so preserved for Judgment, and I hope, at last, for a more wonderful Mercy! *For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the World, what shall the receiving of them be, but Life from the Dead? For God hath concluded all in Unbelief, that he might have Mercy upon all. O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out! For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. To whom be Glory for ever. Amen.*

F I N I S.

A
DISSERTATION
CONCERNING
PRIVATE JUDGMENT
AND
AUTHORITY.

By the AUTHOR *of the* Short Method with the Deists.

The THIRD EDITION Corrected.



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M DCC,XXVI.





OF
PRIVATE JUDGMENT
AND
AUTHORITY
In MATTERS of
FAITH.

(I.)  ALL the Religions and all the Sects in the World are built upon the Dispute betwixt these two; whether Men are to govern themselves by their own *Private Judgment*, or to be determined by the Authority of others, in their Faith or Religion.

(II.) The Effects of private Judgment are these, Multiplicity of Sects and Opinions; perpetual Wrangling, without any Umpire or Judge of Controversy; whence come inveterate Prejudices against each other, Animosities, Strifes, Envyings, and all the War of Religion; which the most of any one Thing embroils the Peace of the World, and is always the chief Pretence in the Civil Wars of Nations within themselves, and most commonly in the Wars of Kingdoms against Kingdoms. To remedy all which Evils, some think there is no other Method, but to have some settled Judge of Controversy; to whom Appeals may be made, and whose Determination should end all Disputes concerning Religion: And this not only as to the outward Peace of the Church, and consequently of the World; but even as to Mens inward Persuasion and Belief, especially in Matters of Faith; for how otherwise, say they, shall every private Person determine himself as to the Articles of Faith? The greatest Part of Mankind are ignorant, and must depend upon the Judgment of others; and what wild Work would it make, to leave every Man, Woman, and Child, to pick out their own Faith, either from the Strength of their own Reason, or from the Scriptures (suppose) amongst us? We should have as many Religions almost as Men, and as many different Faiths. And suppose the Scriptures to be an infallible and compleat
Rule

Rule of Faith, yet how shall we agree about the true Meaning and Interpretation of them? We see every Sect quote Scripture, and every one has his own Interpretation of it. This is endless, and utter Confusion. These are the Inconveniencies which attend leaving every Man to follow his own private Judgment.

(III.) But then, on the other Hand, there are likewise Difficulties in our submitting our private Judgment to Authority. First, because it is left to our private Judgment to chuse that Authority to which we ought to submit. How otherwise shall a Man determine himself, whether he should be a Christian, a Jew, a Mahometan, or an Heathen? For there is no Judge over all these. And this is the first, and the most material Step he can and must make in the Choice of his Religion. And if there is nothing to guide him herein (under God) but his own private Judgment; Why should not that (say others be likewise sufficient to guide him in the Disputes there are amongst the Sub-Divisions of each of these Religions? For if I must trust to my own private Judgement in the most material Point, why not in the lesser. Nay, the Belief of a God, which is the first and highest Point in all Religions, depends upon private Judgment, and not upon Authority. It would be Blasphemy to put it upon any human Authority, for that would set such Authority above God! If I believe *James* upon the Word of *John*, I must have a greater Confidence in *John* than

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than in *James*, in the Recommender than in the Person who is recommended by him. So it is if I should believe a God upon the Authority of any Church, it would certainly follow, that my Faith was more in that Church, than in God! And I have no more for the Authority of that Church, than the Judgment I pass upon the Arguments offered to convince me of it. So that all rests upon my own private Judgment still. And it is impossible I can be more sure of any Thing, than of the Certainty of my own Judgment. I cannot be surer of the Being of a God, than of the Truth of those Reasons which persuade me to believe it. And all the Reasons before given for submitting my private Judgment to Authority, suppose the Truth of my Judgment, and appeal to it; Why else does any persuade another? And private Judgment can never be so fatally mistaken, as in submitting to Authority, if it should judge wrong; because in all other Errors it may be set right again, by stronger Reasons being offered on the other Side; but if a Man once resigns his Reason, and give it up absolutely to Authority, there are no Means left to retrieve him, if he has judged amiss in the Choice of such a Guide, whom he thinks to be infalible; he must then follow his Guide, though in all the wild Delusions that are possible; for he must examine no more; his Principle is, to go on blind-fold: He has plucked out his Eyes, that he may see the better!

And

And the Question will now remain, whether greater Mischiefs and Inconveniencies have befallen Mankind in the one Way or in the other; in following their private Judgment, or in submitting implicitly to Authority? And we may argue this Case; for let any Man talk what he will, and think never so much that he has abandoned his private Judgment, yet it is not in his Power, while he remains a Man; it is inseparable from human Nature, and cannot be utterly extinguished; though some have so defaced it, that it is hardly visible.

But if in this Enquiry it should be found that greater Mischiefs have attended private Judgment and Authority, yet would that be no greater Argument against private Judgment, than it would be against Free-Will, or any other Composition of our Nature, if the Mischiefs it occasions were more than the Good. We cannot alter our Nature, it must be as it is. Perhaps Men make use of their Hands to more Destruction in Wars, Murders, Robberies, Thefts, &c. than any Good they do with them: Yet this would be an ill Argument for cutting off the Hands of our Children as soon as they were born. And it would be worse to divest Men of their Understanding, because their private Judgment might mislead them.

1. But however let us go on to the Comparison. The Christians will easily allow all the Heathens as misled by Authority, for they

8 *Of Private Judgment*

go on in the Track of their Fathers, without Examination of the Grounds or Reasons of their Religion. But they have no Notion of an infallible Judge, and therefore were more easily converted, and now make the great Body of Christians.

2. But the *Jews* stood out at first, and still continue in their Infidelity, upon the single Point of Authority, because *Christ* was rejected by their Church. And it is the same Point of the Authority of the Church which rivets the Church of *Rome* in all her Errors, and makes any Reformation impossible. And indeed I see not how a *Jew* can be converted upon this Principle, which is common to them and the Church of *Rome*. But this will appear more plainly by hearing each of them defend himself. And in this Conversation which I now introduce, I will bring in a *Church of England-Man*, to shew what that true Authority is, which God has delegated to his Church; for, no Doubt, She has an Authority, and a great one; and then a Dissenter shall argue for private Judgment against that Authority; and this will put the Matter in as clear a Light as any Way I can contrive. To begin then:

(IV.) *JEW*. Do not you of the Church of *Rome* lay down this as a Foundation-Principle, that it is inconsistent with the Goodness of God to leave Men without a sufficient Guide
in

in Matters of Faith ; and not to preserve that Guide from misleading us, to the Ruin of our Souls ?

ROM. CA. Yes, this is our Principle, as I suppose it is yours.

JEW. It is ours too. And that this Guide is the Church. And therefore we reject your *Messiah*, because the Church did reject him. And ours was indisputably the only Church of God then in the World ; whereas other Christian Churches dispute this Point with the Church of *Rome*.

ROM. CA. There was but one *Christian Church* from the Beginning of the World, under divers Dispensations. Yours was one of these ; which ended when the *Messiah* came, the Church was then in him, and removed from the Synagogue.

JEW. Did God then forsake his Church, and chuse another ? But you say, That *Christ* is not the Church, but came to redeem the Church ; he did not come to redeem himself. You call the Church his Body. Then he had no such Body when he came at first, unless it were our Church. And he owned ours to be the Church all his Life-time. And commanded his Disciples to be obedient to her, as * *Sitting in Moses Seat*. And she was owned as such by his † *Apostles*. But how did he prove himself to be the *Messiah*.

ROM.

* Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.

† Acts iv. 8. xxiii. 5.

ROM. CA. He proved it evidently by his Miracles, by his heavenly Doctrine, and by the Prophecies of him in your own Scriptures.

JEW. But the Church determined against him in all these, and said, That he wrought his Miracles by *Beelzebub*: That he was a Deceiver in his Doctrine: And that he was not the *Messiah* of whom the Scriptures spoke. Now, SIR, pray tell me, who is the proper Interpreter of Scripture? Is it the Church, or is it left to every Man's private Judgment? And take this along with you, That no *Jew* turned Christian, but he who preferred his own private Judgment to the Authority of the Church: But all who adhered to the Church as their infallible Guide, and left the Interpretation of Scripture to her, did reject your *Christ*, as we all do to this Day.

And we build upon the Promises of God made to his Church, to our Church; That the *Lips of the priests should preserve knowledge, and that we should seek the law at his mouth, for that he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts* *.

† *And as for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth*

* Mal. ii. 7.

† Isa. lix. 21.

mouth of thy seeds seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

And this Method of hearkening to the Church, is called *the way of Holiness*, and a *High-Way for Plainness*, that * *the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein*. And we have many other Texts to the same Purpose.

ROM. CA. These were meant of the Christian Church which was to come.

JEW. But they were made to our Church. And if they did not belong to our Church, then we have been misled all this while, and we have had no Guide of Controversy; and so the Goodness of God has failed, which you as well as we own is obliged not to leave Men without such a Guide.

ROM. CA. If you had hearkened to your own Prophets, they would infallibly have led you to our *Christ*, for they spoke of him.

JEW. This is still the Question, whether your *Christ* was the *Messiah* or not? And let me ask you. Are we not obliged to take the Judgment of the present Church in every Age? Or may any Man in his private Judgment depart from the Decision of the Church under which he lives, and appeal to the Church in primitive Times? Has not the Church in one Age as much Authority as in former Ages? Is not her Commission perpetual? Therefore the Church in Being, at that Time, when your
Christ

* If. xxxv. 8.

Christ came, was the only Judge then to which all ought to have Recourse, and by whose Judgment they ought to abide; and she was then the only authentick Interpreter of Scriptures.

The Promises of Perpetuity, Infallibility, &c. were made to us *Jews*; you *Gentiles* were not then concerned. And will you not give us leave to understand our own Law best, wherein we were born and bred, and which we received from our Fathers, who were perpetually conversant in it, and made it their Study Day and Night? Yet you now would exclude us, and tell us you understand our Law better than ourselves; and that it meant You all that while, and you quote it on your Side. But if it did ultimately refer to You, yet surely that was not so literally and primarily as to us who were named, and were first in Possession of it. If it did descend from us to you, yet we must not be overlooked. And if these Promises were not made good to us, you can have no Title to them, who only inherit them after us. Can the Child inherit more than what his Father left him? And if the elder Brother was dispossessed, to make room for the younger, as you love to speak, yet the younger does but succeed to what the elder had before. Therefore these Promises which were made to us the elder Brother, cannot belong to you the younger, unless they did first belong to us. Otherwise they

they did belong to none at all when they were made, not for many Ages after.

(V.) CHURCH of ENGLAND-MAN. You are both upon one Bottom, the Authority of the Church; and both cannot be right. But the *Jew* has the Advantage in this, That you both allow his Church to have been the only true Church in the World, for many Ages together; whereas the *Jew* does not allow the Church of *Rome* ever to have been any true Church, or that Salvation is to be had in her.

ROM. CA. This is to retort the Argument we use against you of the Church of *England*, That you own yours to have been a true and orthodox Church; and then we ask, When did she fail? But we say, the Church can never fail; and that Salvation is only to be had with us.

CH. ENG. I did indeed bring it in for this Purpose, to shew you the Fallacy of that popular Argument by which you gain Profelytes among the vulgar Sort, *viz.* The Church of *England* allows Salvation may be had in the Church of *Rome*; but the Church of *Rome* denies Salvation may be had in the Church of *England*; therefore it is safer by Confession on both Sides, to be of the Church of *Rome* than of the Church of *England*. This I have heard often urged, and it seems to carry a great deal in it, at first Sight, with the unthinking People. But when they see that all
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the Force in it strikes equally against Christianity in Favour of Judaism, I hope it will make them consider and examine into the Bottom of this Pretence, which is grounded upon the same Error that misled the *Jews*, viz. The *Absolute and Indefeasible Authority of the Church*, in Opposition to *private Judgment*.

DISSENTER. I have now a fair Field opened to me, against you of the Church of *England*; for we set up our own private Judgment against the Authority of your Church.

CH. ENG. You shall be heard in your Place. But the *Roman Catholick* has not yet done with what I know he has to alledge.

(VI.) ROM. CA. No, I have not. For since my Argument is now with you, I have more to urge than I could against the *Jew*, which is, the Proofs out of the New-Testament for the Infallibility and Perpetuity of our Church, such as * *Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it— Tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an beaten man and a publican.* And, † *When the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you unto all truth.* And there are other Texts which you know we urge to this Purpose.

CH. ENG. But not one of them that names the Church of *Rome*. And here you know is our Dispute. You call yourselves the **Catholick**

* Matth. xvi. 18. xviii. 17.

† John xvi. 13.

tholick Church, and confine whole Christianity within the Communion of the Pope of *Rome*, as the Principal of Unity, and Head of all. And yet there is not one Word in the Scripture of either the Pope or Church of *Rome*. So that this must be determined purely by private Judgment. And this is your whole Foundation, as you stand distinguished from us and other Christian Churches. And if private Judgment is to be determined by Vote, there are ten to one against the Church of *Rome* upon this Point. And that not only of those who have broke off from her since the Reformation; but the *Greek* Church, and other numerous Churches in *Asia*, and *Africa*, did never own the Supremacy of *Rome*, nor do to this Day. And these, without the Reformation, will far out-number not only what can be properly called the Church of *Rome* now at this Time, but in the largest Extent that ever she was, even before the Reformation.

(VII.) ROM. CA. But the Church of *Rome* is the *Mother-Church*.

CH. ENG. How can she be the Mother of those Churches which never descended from her? There were Churches of the *Gentiles* before there was any at *Rome*. * *The disciples were called christians first in Antioch*. But it is certain that the *Jewish Christian Church* was the Mother of all other Christian Churches. And so *Christ* † did ordain, That the *Gospel should*

* Acts xi. 26.

† Luke xxiv. 47.

should be preached among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And the Apostles* went about, Preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And thus it continued till the Vision of the Sheet to St Peter, *Acts* x. for they did not know before, that the Gentiles were to be made Partakers of the Gospel. Therefore all the Promises of *Christ* which you have named were made to this First and Mother-Christian-Church of the Jews; and she was in Possession of them, before there was one Christian in Rome, or any where among the Gentiles.

ROM. CA. But Rome is become the Mother-Church since.

CH. ENG. Not to half, as I have shewed above. But if the Mother-Church, and the Promises made to it can be transferred from one Church to another, then it may be transferred from Rome, as it was from Jerusalem, and so without End. And to what particular Church will you then fix these Promises of Perpetuity, &c? You must come to us, who believe that *Christ* will always have a Church upon Earth; and that the Gates of Hell shall not finally prevail against his Church in general; but that there is no Promise to secure any particular Church, that her Candlestick may not be removed, as others have been.

ROM. CA. But what Church was that of which *Christ* spoke when he said, *Tell it unto the Church, &c.*

CH. ENG.

* *Acts* xi. 19.

CH. ENG. It was every particular Church. For the Case there put is of private Difference betwixt Man and Man, *If thy Brother trespass against thee* — There *Christ* directs first private Admonition, then the Intervention of Friends, but if that would not do, then *Tell it to the Church*, that is, to the Church or Congregation of which you are both Members. It is impossible to bring every private Quarrel before the Catholick Church. There was nothing at all of the Faith concerned in this Case. Nor in the xvii. of *Deut.* (often quoted by you for the infallible Judgment of the Church) the Case there put is only about Civil Causes, as you may see *ver. 8.* And the Civil Judge is joined with the Priests in this. But neither *God* nor *Christ* does any where send us to a Judge of Faith. There cannot be any Judge of Faith but *God* alone.

(VIII.) ROM. CA. Why do you say there cannot? No doubt there may be such a Judge, whether there is or not.

CH. ENG. The best Way is to put it to a Tryal. Let us begin then with the Creed, the first Article is, *I believe in God the Father Almighty.* Now I ask, who is the Judge of this Article? Who is Judge whether there is a *God* or not; And so of the Rest. Whether there is a *Christ*? Whether he *died, rose, &c.*? Whether there is a *Holy Ghost*? Whether there will be a *Resurrection* of the *Dead*, and a *Life Eternal*?

ROM. CA. This is an odd Way of turning the Question. There is no such Judge of these Things, as that we were not to believe there is a *God*, or *Christ*, &c. if such Judge should so determine.

CH. ENG. Then there is no Judge of Faith. And now I will give you the Reason why there cannot be such a Judge among Men. Because where any Thing is determined by Authority, such Authority must be Superior to what it determines. As in Civil Causes, the Authority of the King by whose Commission they are determined, is superior to the Right or Property of the Subject. And for the same Reason, if I should believe a *God*, or a *Christ*, &c. upon any Authority whatsoever, that Authority with me must be prior and superior to what I believe upon that Authority. And thus the Church (supposing it such a Judge of Faith) would have an Authority above *God*, or *Christ*, or any Thing contained in the Creed. And therefore I think it is plain, that we receive not the Creed upon the Authority of the Church.

(IX.) ROM. CA. You had never had the Creed but by the Church.

CH. ENG. That may be. The Church taught it me, propos'd it to me, and convinced me of the Truth of it. But not by Way of Authority; for I could not believe the Authority of the Church, till I was first convinced by the Scriptures that *Christ* had established

established such a Church, and vested her with such Authority. So that I receive the Scriptures upon the Testimony, not Authority of the Church; and I examine that Testimony, as I do other Facts, till I have satisfy'd my private Judgment there is no other Way. As suppose an Atheist to be convinced by me of the Being of a *God*, he then believes it, and I may be said to be an Instrument in this. But how foolish would it be in me, nay blasphemous, to assume Authority over him for this, and say, That it was by my Authority he believed a *God*, and therefore that he was obliged to believe every Thing else I told him, without examining; because if my Authority was taken for the Being of *God*, then nothing surely of lesser Consequence could be excepted from it. This is the Manner of Argumentation for receiving the Faith from the Authority of the Church. This is that Circle from which you can never rid yourselves, of believing the Scriptures upon the Authority of the Church; and then back again, of believing the Church upon the Authority of the Scriptures. This makes each of them of greater Authority than the other, and each of them of lesser!

And now tell me, if I have nothing but my private Judgment for the Being of a *God*, shall the Church pretend to an Authority over private Judgment; and that I shall not be allowed to make use of it in any Thing she proposes to me!

(X.) ROM. CA. In smaller Things you may, which we call Matters of Opinion, but not in Matters of Faith, for then, *who shall be Judge?*

CH. ENG. I think the Reverse of this to be the Truth, *viz.* That this Question, *who shall be Judge?* And the submitting of our private Judgment, is only in smaller Matters, and of little Consequence. As in temporal Affairs, and Disputes of *meum* and *tuum*; and in determining Rites and Ceremonies in the Church, which are not of the Essentials of Religion, and in Matters of Discipline for the better Government of the Church; in these Things we ought to submit our private Judgement, and if there be a Dispute about them, it is very proper to ask, *who shall be Judge?* Because the Contest and Breach of Unity in the Church is of far more Importance than any of these Things, let them be determined which Way it will. But in Matters of Faith it is quite otherwise, and there to ask, *who shall be Judge?* Is most abhorrent, as *who shall be Judge*, whether there is a *God* or not, or a *Christ?* And so of other Articles of the Creed, as I have shewed you before.

God has subjected our Lives and Fortunes to the absolute Disposal of Civil Government, because these are no great Things, and we must give them up however. And in these there is a Necessity of determining the Question, *who shall be Judge?* Without this, there
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can be no End of Civil Disputes, and Government would be impracticable; there must be a last Resort from which there is no Appeal; otherwise there would be an eternal running round, or a *Progressus in infinitum*, and no Contest about Civil Affairs could ever be determined. And there is no Security in this, that an unjust Judgment will not be given at last; nor is that of great Moment, for, as I said, we are not much hurt by it.

But *God* has taken more Care of our Souls, and not put our Faith under the absolute Dominion of any. The Apostles disclaimed it, and when they exhorted and instructed, they said, * *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy.* And again, † *If we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be anathema, that is, accursed.* And this was to be known only by private Judgement; and is a very positive Decision for it, against Authority, of the highest Sort possible next under *God* himself.

It is this mistaken Notion of Authority which detains you of the Church of *Rome*, and shuts your Ears from hearkening to Reason. You stop us every Turn with the Authority of the Church! Nay, you bid us deny our Reason, and our Senses too, in Obedience to the Church!

And it is this very same Mistake which hardened the Jews against *Christ*, as they said to

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* 2 Cor. i. 24.

† Gal. i. 8.

those who were charmed with his Doctrine, and had seen his Miracles, and told them, * *Never man spake like this man*, but the chief priests, &c. answered, *Have any of the rulers or of the pharisees believed on him, but this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.* Here was a full Stop to all further Enquiries concerning him, whether he were the true *Messiah* or not? They must learn this from the Church, and not trust to their private Judgment, let the Case be never so plain!

(XI.) And I cannot here but observe a wonderful Providence in the Oeconomy of God. He might, no doubt, have so dispos'd Things if he pleas'd, as that *Christ* shoul have been received by his own, and acknowledged by the Church. But he chose the Way, wherein the Husbandmen should kill the Heir, and the Builders reject the Corner-Stone, that the Pride of Man might be humbled, and our Faith stand in God alone. *Christ* was denied and persecuted by all the Powers on Earth, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil. And of his own Apostles, one betrayed him, another forswore him, and forsook him. † *He trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him.* And this was prophesied of before, That he should be a ‡ *Stone of stumbling* and a *Rock of Offence* to both the Houses of *Israel*; and that their Eyes should be blinded,

* Joh. vii. 48, 49. † Isa. lxiii. 3. ‡ Isa. viii. 14.

ded, that they should not know him when he came. As I have shewed before in the *Truth of Christianity demonstrated*, p. 105, 106. And what was it blinded them against this full and clear Evidence, but their Notion of the Authority of the Church! And was it not to beat down and for ever silence this Pretence, that *Christ* would not suffer the Church to give Attestation to him, nor come by their Recommendation? Should the Sun borrow Light from the Moon? Yet this Pretence is taken up again by the Church of *Rome*. It never was maintained by any but by the Church of the *Jews*, and of *Rome*! And we have seen strange Effects of both!

(XII.) ROM. CA. After all you have said, How do you know the canonical Book of Scriptures, but by the Authority of the Church?

CH. ENG. Not at all by her Authority, but by her Evidence. There is a great Difference, I pray you to consider it. There were false Gospels and false Epistles inscribed to several of the Apostles, set up by the Hereticks in the first Age; and they were detected in that same Age, while the Originals of what the Apostles wrote were still in Being. But the Hereticks could not produce the Originals of theirs, nor did their Copies agree with one another, as * *Eusebius* tells us. And this was not deciding the Matter by Authority, but

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* *Euseb. Hist.* l. v. c. 28.

by plain Evidence of a Fact, as of any other Forgery, or supposititious Writing.

But you state the Matter so, as if there were a Heap of Papers, of many hundred Years past; some genuine and some spurious, all confusedly thrown together, and that it were left to the Church to distinguish these, by her Authority; and that we were obliged so to receive them, without knowing any more of the Matter; and had nothing but her Authority to trust to. But this, SIR, is far from being the Case. The Canon of the Scripture was settled at the Time when it could be done by full Evidence, and the Notoriety of the Thing was known to all. And we have received it down from that Time, in Copies so universally spread through the Christian World, that it is impossible to add or detract from it, without a general Detection of the Forgery by all Churches. And this has preserved the Canon of the New Testament so intire, that there is no Difference about it between you and us, or any other Christian Church.

It is true indeed we differ with you as to the Canon of the Old Testament. But we have the *Jews* on our Side for this, who never received those Books we call Apocryphal into their Canon. They were not wrote in their Language, at least most of them. And I might bring in the *Jew* again to reason the Case with you, how you came to understand their Canon better than themselves, who were
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in Possession of it many hundred Years before Christianity, and were so careful as to number the very Letters? But I will not prolong this, nor enter into the particular Disputes betwixt your Church and ours; my Business now being only to consider the Foundation-principle of the Authority of the Church, upon which all the rest depend. I will only say this further as to these Apocryphal Books, That St. *Jerom*, in his *Prologus Galeatus*, printed before all your *Vulgar Latin Bibles* that I have seen, excludes all these by Name out of the Canon, and says the Church did so too. And we may suppose that so learned a Father, who had himself translated the Scriptures, knew what the Church received in his Time. And it seems strange to me, that such a flagrant Testimony against you should stand in the Front of your own Bibles. But if you would have further Satisfaction as to this Point, I refer you to Bishop *Cosin's* elaborate *History of the Canon of the Scriptures*, which has not been answered by any of your Church, that I hear of; for it seems to carry Demonstration along with it, proceeding wholly upon Fact, and giving Vouchers in abundance. And as to the Books themselves, let any one read the Conclusion of the Book of *Maccabees*, 2 *Mac.* xv. 39, 40; and see if he can persuade himself that such Words should come out of the Mouth of *God!*

(XIII.) But to return. The great Cause I conceive of the Church of the *Jews*, and the Church of *Rome*, having fallen into this Mistake of their own *Absolute and Unlimited Authority, and indefeasible Perpetuity*, is their not rightly apprehending the Nature of the Promises which *God* makes to Man. For, though they may be full and unconditional, as expressed in the Words, yet they are to be understood with an implied Condition of our Obedience. And we are not to think that he is bound by his Promise, though we are never so wicked! No. *God* will not thus be mock'd! If he has spoken * concerning a *Land* to *pluck up* and to *destroy*, if they *repent*, he will also *repent* of the *Evil*. And if he has *promised* to *build* and to *plant*, if they do *Evil*, he will *repent* of the *Good*. See what he said to *Eli* the High-priest † for his not restraining his Sons, who were wicked in their Ministry, *Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed, that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever; but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.*

God had promised to the Children of *Israel*, whom he brought out of *Egypt*, to carry them into the Land of *Canaan* to possess it. But, upon their murmuring, he condemned them all (except two) to die in the *Wilderness*, and
said,

* Jer. xviii. 7, &c.

† 1 Sam. ii. 30.

said, * *Ye shall know my breach of promise*; in the Margin it is, *the altering of my purpose*.

Obey my voice (says God †) that I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers.

It would be tedious to go through the Multitude of Texts to this Purpose. Many Promises were made to the People of *Israel* and to the Temple, of Perpetuity for ever. Yet both it and they were destroyed for their Wickedness. All which will not yet persuade them that these Promises were conditional. This was the hardest Point to gain upon them. *John the Baptist* began with this, to shew them the Vanity of their Hopes, in saying, *We have Abrakam to our Father*. And this was what our blessed *Saviour* set forth to them in the Parable of the Vineyard and the wicked Husbandmen. But they would not understand. They still stuck to their own, being the only *Peculium* of God. They could bear nothing against this. When our Lord told them || of God's shewing to some of the *Gentiles* more Favour than the *Israelites*, in the Instances of *Naaman* the Syrian, and the Widow of *Sarepta*, they were filled with *Wrath*, and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill, that they might cast him down headlong. They heard St. Paul with Attention ‡ unto this Word, of his being sent to the *Gentiles*, and then they *Lift up their voices*,

* Numb. xiv. 34.

|| Luke iv, 25, &c.

† Jer. x. 4, 5.

‡ Acts xxii. 21, &c.

voices, and said, *Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live; and they cried out, and cast off their cloaths, and threw dust into the air.* Such Transports have I seen among some of your Communion, when their Title to be the only *Peculium* was questioned! And yet you have less Pretence than the Church of the *Jews*; for there were many Promises made to them by Name, but not one to the Church of *Rome* by Name, nor by any Implication which does not depend upon great Uncertainties at best, and must be resolved wholly by private Judgment at last.

(XIV.) **DISSENTER.** It is now Time for me to come in. I stand upon private Judgment. And if you condemn me, you condemn that too.

CH. ENG. No doubt, private Judgment is often mistaken. Therefore you must take Pains to have your Judgment rightly informed.

DISS. Do you inform me then. You have run down the Authority of the Church. I see no Authority you have left her.

CH. ENG. Because I do not allow her an *Absolute, Unconditional, and Infallible Authority*, and that in Matters of Faith; you think she has no Authority at all.

DISS. Your 20th Article (of late so much contested) says, she has *Authority in Controversies of Faith*.

CH. ENG. Yes, but far from infallible. You see how it is there limited, not to be repugnant to Holy Scripture, &c. She has Authority as a Witness and Keeper of Holy Writ, as the Article words it.

DISS. What Authority is that?

CH. ENG. The same that is acknowledged in your *Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chap. xxxi. *Ministerially to determine Controversies of Faith*, as you there word it. But in regulating the Worship of God, and in Discipline for the better Government of the Church, there to determine authoritatively. And this is perfectly agreeable to our 20th Article, against which you have wrangled perpetually, and, of late, have called in the Deists to your Aid, at least accepted of their Assistance, in their *Priest-Craft in Perfection* against this 20th Article. For their Information therefore, and by your own Confession, the Authority of the Church stands thus; to determine *Controversies of Faith* only *Ministerially*, as the ordinary Dispensers of the Word, as *Servants of Christ*, and *Ministers of the Gospel*; not *Absolutely* and *Authoritatively*, as *Lords of our Faith*, and *infallible Interpreters of Scripture*. And it is most reasonable to submit and acquiesce in such Determination of the Church, except where the Case is notorious, and out of Doubt, and of the last Consequence, as of the Case of the *Messiah* when he came. For *unconditional Obedience*, in Matters of Faith, is due to none
but

but God, nor has he delegated any such Power to Men. Will it therefore follow, That he has given no Power at all to his Church?

It was a great Power given when he said, * *Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c.* And he left Power with them to invest others with the same Authority, without which none can preach the Faith; for † *How shall they preach, except they be sent?* And this is an Authority relating to Faith. As likewise the Power of the Keys, which implies all Authority of Government, as being the *Pillar and Ground of the Faith* ‡. And Christ has promised to ratify in Heaven the Censures of the Church, when justly inflicted upon Earth.

ROM. CA. Why do you limit the Text? The Words are general, || *Whosoever ye shall bind, &c.* And, § *Whosoever sins ye remit, &c.*

CH. ENG. This is what I just now told you of, That you will take the Words of God without any implied Condition. Yet you yourselves cannot deny but that there are Conditions here implied, as of Contrition in the Penitent, &c. And if the Censures of the Church are inflicted *clave errante*, as you term it; that is, not justly, you say not that such Sentence will be ratified in Heaven.

(XV.)

* Matth. xxviii. 19.

† 1 Tim. iii. 15.

§ John xx. 23.

† Rom x. 15.

|| Matth. xviii. 18.

(XV.) ROM. CA. *Christ* said, * *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat, all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do.* What Exception do you here find from this *Absolute Authority* recognized by *Christ* to be in the Church?

CH. ENG. By this you own the Church then to have been in the Synagogue of the *Scribes and Pharisees*. And, Were they infallible? Were all the *Jews* who had believed in *Christ* obliged to renounce him, because so commanded by these *Scribes and Pharisees*? But, SIR, there is not a Word of believing in all this Text. They were only to observe and do what the Synagogue should bid them. And no doubt the Condition was implied, of such Commands being lawful, and agreeable to the Word of *God*. And this is the Full of what is meant in our Obedience to any Church or Authority upon Earth. And being worded here to the utmost Extent, shews how the like Expressions are to be understood when applied to others. This is beyond, *Feed my sheep*, or *Tell it to the Church*; how then shall so much be inferred from *these*, when far less is meant in the more positive and comprehensive Word? It is said, *Children obey your parents in all things*. And if this had been said of our Obedience to the Church, it could have meant no more than as it stands in Relation to Parents,

* Matth. xxiii. 2, 3.

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rents, *viz.* in all their lawful Commands. And private Judgment must determine that, in the one Case as well as in the other.

But since you bring this Text to shew the Authority of your Church, you shall have it; and take it all together, in what *Christ* says of these same *Scribes* and *Pharisees*. In the same Discourse, where he commands this Obedience to be payed them, he calls them *blind Guides*, leading the *Blind* into the *Ditch*. He bids his Disciples * *beware* of their *Doctrine*; and charges them † with having made the Commandments of *God* of none Effect through their Traditions, and *many such like things which they did*, before his coming into the World.

Now if your Plea should hold, of the Church being transferred to the *Messiah* at his coming; yet you will be obliged to maintain the Infallibility of the *Jewish* Church before that Time. Else your Principle falls of the Goodness of God being engaged to afford Men always an infallible Guide: And likewise your Argument, from the Promises made to the Church of the *Jews* in the Old Testament, of Infallibility, Perpetuity, &c. which you quote now for your own Church. You have brought a very hard Task upon yourselves, either to maintain the Infallibility of the *Jewish* Church all along before *Christ* came, or else to lose your own. You must
answer

* *Math.* xvi. 12.

† *Mark* vii. 13.

answer what I have quoted, of the *Jews* having *Rejected the Commandments of God, that they might keep their own Tradition.* And consider that it takes a long Time to make a Tradition. Therefore these false Doctrines with which *Christ* here charges them, were of old standing among them before he came. And they called it * the Tradition of their Elders, that is, of those before them, and of the Governors of their Church, called generally by the Name of their Elders.

But let us look into their former Times. We find them all involved in the Idolatry of the Golden Calf, even *Aaron* the High-Priest, and whatever can be called their Church, when they thought they had lost *Moses* †, upon his tarrying so long on the Mount. There is not one Exception made of any of the People, who did not come in fully to this Idolatry. And how frequently afterwards did they relapse into this Sin? *Daniel* charges it ‡ upon *all Israel*, as well as upon their *Kings, Princes, &c.* *All the chief of the priests* *.

They persecuted their own Prophets ||, at the Instigation of their Priests. Who likewise persuaded them to ask *Barabbas*, and destroy *Jesus* §? It was their whole Sanhedrim, † the *chief priests and all the council.* And it was upon the same Principle, and their Assurance

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* Mark vii. 5. † Exod. xxxii. 1, &c. ‡ Dan. ix. 11. § 2 Chr. xxxvi. 14. || Jer. xxvi. 8, 11. † Matt. xxvii. 26. ‡ Mark xiv. 53, 55.

rance of the Infallibility of their Church, for, said they, * *the law shall not perish from the priest*. Therefore, *Let us smite Jeremiab, and let us not give heed to any of his words*. Which of the prophets, says St. Stephen †, *have not your Fathers persecuted?* Our Saviour told them ‡, *Your fathers killed the prophets and ye build their sepulchres; and say, if we had been in the days of our fathers we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them who killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers*. Yet they could not see the Fallibility of their Fathers; nor their own, when they were filling up their Measure, in Persecuting the *Messiah*, as their Fathers had the Prophets. But they still stick to their Infallibility, That the Law could not perish from the Priest. And which is more wonderful, you still stick to their Infallibility, because you cannot otherwise support your own. And you quote the Promises made to them, as securing you from Fallibility! Thus they are your Fathers as well as of the *Jews*, and we may say to you, as *Christ* said to the *Jews*, *Your fathers killed the prophets*, &c. Nay, we may say more to you, That *your Fathers* killed the *Messiah*, and yet you still maintain their Infallibility!

But while *Christ* exposed the Fallibility of the Church, he still supported her Authority, by

* Jer. xviii. 18. † Acts viii. 50. ‡ Matt. xxiii. 29, &c.

by owning that the *Scribes* and *Pbarisees* sat in *Moses's* Seat.

And this determines the Limits of our Submission to any Authority, *viz.* To observe and do whatsoever they command us (that is lawful) let them be never so wicked, as wicked as these *Scribes* and *Pbarisees*, whom in the same Chapter *Christ* calls *Serpents*, a *Generation of Vipers*, and *Children of Hell*. But to beware of their Doctrine, not to think ourselves obliged to give the inward Assent of our Minds, and to believe all that they shall require of us as of Faith. For this is the most desperate Condition any mortal Man can be in. And if our *private Judgment* lead us to this, there is no other Instance in the World wherein it can so fatally deceive us!

The next to this, is the Condition of you *Dissenters*, who instead of observing and doing whatsoever is commanded you, though it be lawful; will do nothing you are bidden; and for that very Reason, because you are bidden; insomuch that what you yourselves own to be lawful, and indifferent, and that you might do it of your own Head; you think it becomes sinful, meerly because enjoined by your lawful Superiors! For then it is an Encroachment upon your Christian Liberty! This is the Spirit of Contradiction, it is Crossness for Crossness Sake! Of which you would soon be sensible if it were in your own Children. If one of them should say to you, I would have done

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what you bid me, but now will not, because you bid me.

Upon the Whole ; I allow the Church to be the Judge of Faith, the only and supreme Judge of it upon Earth. As in all Civil Government there is a last Resort which is supreme and unaccountable to *Man* ; but there is an Appeal to *God*, from whom both derive their Authority. But the Church of *Rome* will not suffer me to appeal from her to *God*, no, not in my own Mind. *St. Peter* owned the Authority of the Church of the *Jews*, and called their *Sankedrim* *, the *Rulers of the People*, the *Elders of Israel*, and the *Builders of the Church* ; but yet he said to them, † *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye* : He spoke of the *Messiah*, the Corner-stone, whom they had rejected, and therefore he appealed from the Church to *God*, in this Supreme and most Fundamental Point of Faith.

Christ came with an Evidence and Authority then superior to that of the Church. He said, || *I receive not testimony from Man — The Father himself hath borne witness of me*. And indeed to shew *Christ* by the Church, would be lighting a Candle to see the Sun.

The Church is the Interpreter of the Scripture, as the Judges are of the Law. And they have Authority so to interpret, and they judge authoritatively. Yet they are but the ordinary

* Acts iv. 8, 11. † Ibid. ver. 19. † John v. 34, 37.

nary Dispensers of the Law, to which an ordinary Interpretation of the Law is necessary. But the ultimate Interpretation of the Law is only in the Legislative Authority, according to the Maxim, *Cujus est condere, ejus & interpretari*, that is, *It belongs to the same Power which enacts to interpret.* For the Makers of the Law best know their own Meaning. Thus the Church is the ordinary Dispenser, and so far the Interpreter of Scripture: But the ultimate Decision is in *God*, and we may still appeal to him. And must make use of our own *private Judgment* for our understanding it, and governing our Practice accordingly, in the great Points of Faith and Worship.

(XVI.) Let us come to a Test in this Matter. And it is very short. *Christ* says to the People, * *Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of me—And how is it, that ye do not discern this time?* (that is, of the Coming of the *Messiah*) † *Yea, and why even of your own selves judge ye not what is right?* The Vulgat has it, *Hoc autem tempus quomodo non probatis?* Why do you not examine and prove whether this be the *Time* or not, by the Signs which the Scriptures have testified of it? As you discern the *Wea* her by the natural Signs which precede; the Comparison our *Saviour* there uses. || *Ye can discern*
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* John v. 30. † Luke xii. 56, 57. ‡ Matt. xvi. 3.

38 *Of Private Judgment*

the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times? that is, when the Messiah should come; which are as plain as the other, that ye need not go to anybody to know it. Quid autem & à vobis ipsis non judicatis? You may judge it of your own selves.

In answer to all which, says *Authority*, Nay, But has the Church determined it? * *Have any of the rulers or pharisees believed on him? But this People, who knoweth not the law, are cursed.* Are not they *cursed* who depart from the Church, and will not believe her? who take upon themselves to know the Law, and to *interpret* it, contrary to the Judgment of the Church! They set up *private Judgment* against *Authority*! And I must leave it to every Man's *private Judgment* to judge of all that I have said.

For this is the only general Rule by which God will judge all Men. It is a presumptuous Argument to say, that God is obliged to give every Man an outward Guide, when he has left the greatest Part of the World without it. Was *Abraham* given a Guide to all the World, who was known only to a few Neighbours? The Law was given only to the *Jews*, and the *Gentiles* were not to be judged by it. For † *as many as sin without the law, shall be judged without the law.* And not believing the Gospel is a Condemnation to those only to whom it is preached. ‡ *Go ye, and preach — he that*

* John vii. 48.

† Rom. ii. 12.

‡ Mark xvi. 15, 16.

that believeth not—that is, what you *preach*. So that rejecting the Gospel was the Crime, when it was offered with full Evidence. For this was despising the Goodness of *God* offer'd to us. But for a general Guide to Mankind,* *In the beginning God created man, and left him in the hand of his own council.* He set before him *Life* and *Death*, *Blessing* and † *Cursing*, for him to *chuse*. And *God* will bleis or curse him, according to what he has set before him, whether by Revelation, or by his own natural Reason only. And who is judge of this? None but *God*, who only knows the Sincerity of any Man's Intentions, and what Endeavours he has used towards the right informing of his Judgment. And where there is Use for a Guide, Man has no other Way to determine himself, but by his *private Judgment*

(XVII.) Now to apply this as to our own immediate Concerns at present. I suppose a Man on his Road to such a Place, and coming where there are three or four different Ways, he knows not which to chuse. But he finds there several Guides standing, who all pretend to be appointed Guides of that Road, and offer their Service, with equal Assurance, each saying, that the Way he points is the right, and none other. But the Traveller has a Chart, or Plan, of the Way in his Hand,

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which

* Ecclus. xv. 14.

† Deut. xxx. 19.

which all the Guides allow to be just and right, and would have him walk by it. Only one tells him, he may mistake his Plan, therefore desires he would give it up to him; and moreover, that he should be blind-folded, because otherwise he might be disputing the Way, which would retard their Journey; and besides imply'd a Distrust of his Guide. But another Guide tells him he should keep his Plan in his Hand, and he would give him leave to examine every Step he led him by the Plan, and then his own Eyes should be Judge whether he led him right or not? And he would not desire it should be left in his Power to lead him over a Precipice with his Eyes shut.

The Holy Scriptures are the Plan, and the Church of *Rome* takes them from the People, (lest they dispute about it) and requires them to trust *Absolutely* and *Blindly* to her Guidance.

The Church of *England* shews her Commission to be a Guide upon this Road to Heaven, derived, by Succession, from the Apostles, with a competent, though not an infallible, Authority.

The *Dissenters* have no Commission nor Succession to shew; they have thrust themselves as Guides upon this Road, of their own Heads, not above 150 Years ago, in utter Contempt and Opposition to all the Guides of God's Appointment, from the Days of the Apostles. And they have no Authority at all,
either

either to preach the *Word*, or to sign and seal the Covenant which *God* has made with Man, in the Holy Sacraments of his Institution, nor to bless in his Name. This Honour they have taken to themselves, which the Apostle says, * *No man can take to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.*

And now, since *God* has appointed his Guides to lead us with our Eyes open, and not to take from us the Use of our *private Judgment*; that is, of our Understanding, without which we could not be Men: Since this is all the Security of which we are capable in this frail State; and, to strain it higher, would be to lose it all; Let us not be taken with that presumptuous Sophistry of Infallibility, which hardened the *Jews* against their *Messiah*; unanswerable by the Church of *Rome*, and hides Repentance from her Eyes!

I have given before a Demonstration of the Truth of the Holy Scriptures, and of Christianity, without touching upon the Authority of the Church (only they come in for their Share of the Evidence, as they are Part of Mankind) to shew that our Faith stands not upon the precarious Foot of the Authority of any Church, but upon such Evidence as is agreeable to the common Sense of Mankind, and which they cannot deny, without throwing off all the Certainty they can have in any Facts whatsoever that have been done in the World. But if you argue from the Authority of the Church,

you

* Heb. v. 4.

you rivet every one in his own Way ; for you must suppose that another has as good an Opinion of his Church, as you have of yours. And the *Jew* has moreover the same Promises for his Church, which the Church of *Rome* alleges for her Infallibility and Perpetuity.

And the *Jewish* Church was uncontestably in Possession of all these Promises, for many Ages together, because she was the true and only Church of *God* upon the Face of the Earth, from *Moses* to *Christ*.

Therefore *Christianity* must have such a Foundation to stand upon, as will not give equal (and greater) Advantage to *Judaism* ; else *Christianity* cannot be the Truth, and her Reformation was unjust against the Church in Possession ; and we ought to return to her, who was undoubtedly the Mother-Church, by the Confession of all the Christians themselves. And she still complains, and asks the Question, who was or ought to be Judge, betwixt her and her rebellious Sons, who broke off from her, and set up a new and opposite Communion against her, though they were * a great Company of her Priests, and Myriads of her People ? Yet they were all misled, if our Faith stands upon Church-Authority.

This is a hard Saying to many. And I will retract it, when any one shall have the Charity to shew me my Error.

But I have not said this, till I had first established the Truth of Christianity upon another
Foun-

* Acts vi. 7. xxii. 20.

Foundation, to which neither *Jew* nor *Gentile* can have any Pretence. I have shewed the Way to *Christ* by his own Glory, to which, as nothing can add, so no other Truth can imitate, nor Authority give Sanction to it, except that only of his *Father*, for * *He receiveth not honour from men.*

If any answer me, I desire him first to join with me in this Prayer, that it would please *God* to strengthen those that are in the Truth, and convince those that are in Error. Towards which I have cast in my Mite.

Quod faustum faxit Deus.

* John v. 41.

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