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J. Chamber



AN  
E S S A Y

On the several  
DISPENSATIONS of GOD to  
Mankind, in the Order, in which they  
lie in the Bible :

OR, A  
Short SYSTEM of the Religion of  
*Nature and Scripture :*

WITH A  
PREFACE, shewing the Causes of the  
Growth of Infidelity, and the likeliest Method  
to put a Stop to it.

AND AN  
APPENDIX, proving, that God adopted  
*Abraham* to the Inheritance of eternal Life, *Gen.*  
*xii. 2, 3. xxii. 17, 18.* *John Shute Barrington*

God who at SUNDRY TIMES, AND IN DIVERS  
MANNERS, spake unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in  
these last Days spoken unto us by his Son, *Heb. i. 1, 2.*

ADAM, who was THE SON OF GOD, *Luke iii. 38.*

THE SONS OF GOD saw the DAUGHTERS OF MEN,  
*Gen. vi. 2.*

They which are of Faith, the same are the CHILDREN OF  
ABRAHAM, *Gal. iii. 7.*

*Israel* is my SON, even my first BORN, (*Exod. iv. 22.*)

-- Saying, unto thee will I give the Land of CANAAN, the Lot  
of your INHERITANCE, *Psal. cv. 11.*

Ye are the CHILDREN of the PROPHETS, *Mat. iii. 25.*

Ye are ALL the CHILDREN OF GOD BY FAITH IN  
CHRIST JESUS, *Gal. iii. 26.*

And if ye be CHRIST'S, then are ye ABRAHAM'S SEED,  
and Heirs according to the Promise, *Gal. iii. 29.*

And are the Sons of God, being the SONS OF THE RESUR-  
RECTION, *Luke xx. 36.*

Behold what Manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us,  
that we should be called the Sons of God. -- Beloved, now are we  
the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but  
we know, THAT WHEN HE APPEARETH; WE  
SHALL BE LIKE HIM, 1 *John iii. 1, 2.*

L O N D O N,

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**I**T seems to be a prevailing Opinion, that Deism gets Ground among thinking and virtuous Men; notwithstanding many excellent Tracts that have appeared of late in Defence of Christianity, by bringing together the external Evidence there is for it, and supporting it against the Exceptions that have been made to that Evidence.

It must needs be very fit for Believers to consider, what may be the Causes of so strange and threatenng an Appearance; since the being thoroughly appriz'd of the Cause of the Growth of Infidelity, can alone direct us to the best Method to prevent it.

*I am sensible, There are some, who will think much Enquiry about this Matter altogether needless; satisfying themselves with resolving the Growth of Deism into God's delivering Men up to a reprobate Sense, who don't care to retain the Knowledge of him in their Minds. But I must take Liberty to say, that these Persons entirely mistake the Enquiry; which is not about the Growth of Deism among careless, scoffing, and vitious; but among thoughtful and virtuous Men.*

*I am sensible too there are others, who instead of going further into this Enquiry, will do nothing more than inveigh against Liberty, (the Glory of the Age we live in) and the Inquisitiveness and Freedom of Debate which it has introduc'd, to the great Advancement of Learning and Virtue among us. It must be allowed to these Declaimers, that Men, who don't think at all about Religion, will not be Deists: But neither will they be Believers. They may indeed have the Faith of a Stone (that is, no Disbelief of any Thing) or the Faith of a Parrot (that is, Words without Ideas) but cannot have the rational Faith of a Man, that is, a Belief of the Agreement or Disagreement of Ideas founded on what they have just Reason to apprehend to be divine Testimony. We must therefore be content with Things as they are, and let Unbelievers be among us, in order to have Believers; and not be so angry or disturb'd that*

*that Deism grows, provided that a rational Faith grows along with it. For it is a much happier State to have the Number of rational Believers increase in a Nation, together with a Number of Deists, than to have all People sceptical, or entirely careless and insensible about the Matter. That is, it is better to have a Nation made up of rational Believers and of Disbelievers, than of nominal Believers only (whether they are sceptical or careless, or insensible) who are really no Believers at all. For to say otherwise, is to say, that no Believers are better than some Believers.*

*But to come closer to the Enquiry, for the sake of those who are willing to enter into it; I must lay this as a Foundation in it, that no Man, who believes there is a God, and does but at all reflect on what follows from that Belief, can bring himself to think, that God has not Ways to impart more Knowledge to us, than we can arrive at by the bare Use of the Faculties he has given us: Or to doubt, whether Mankind has not been, is not, and will not be, in such Circumstances, in which it may have been, is, and will be very suitable to the Wisdom and Goodness of God, to impart more Knowledge to them, than they can arrive at by the bare Use of their Faculties, the better to enable them to discharge the Duties they owe to him, themselves, and one another: Or in other Words, to act according to the Truth of Things, and consequently according*

ording to the true Maxims of their own Happiness, and the Happiness of others. And rational Beings can only be better enabled to all this, by such Knowledge being imparted to them, as may assist them under the Weakness of their Reason, (from their short and narrow Views of Things) and against the Strength of their Appetites and Passions. Every considering Man therefore must see, that if God is pleased to impart more Knowledge to Mankind, than their Faculties will discover to them, it must be to this Purpose; since such a Discovery alone is consistent with his Wisdom and Goodness; or with that prior Knowledge he has given us, by the bare Use of our Faculties, and by the Opportunities he has vouchsafed us for the Exercise of them.

And as no Man can reasonably receive any Thing, as a Revelation from God, considered as the Governor of the World, that has not evidently these Characters and Tendencies; so no Man can reasonably reject any Thing as such a Revelation that has them, and that has no others, inconsistent with them.

Revelation therefore appearing clearly in the Times of the Apostles, (when it was best understood) with these Characters and Tendencies, and being supported by other internal, and by the strongest external Evidence; offered to the Senses of those to whom it was proposed; and the Apostles being at hand to clear

clear up any Difficulty that might arise against it, it is no wonder that none then could disbelieve or doubt of it; though but too many refus'd to live up to its Precepts, and profess'd to reject it, purely because they prefer'd their Lusts and Passions to Virtue and Holiness, and to eternal Life, which Revelation propos'd as the Motive to deny the one, and to pursue the other. But in this they were first self-condemn'd, afterwards their Consciences became seared as with a red hot Iron, and they themselves at last were given up to believe a Lie.

But in after Times Things came under a very different Consideration. For Revelation could not be so well understood, when the Apostles ceas'd to be its Ministers: Especially if their Doctrine was corrupted by others. Nor could the Proof that their pure Doctrine really was their Doctrine, or that it was so attested, as it purports to be, be so strong in after Times, as it was in their Times; since the Proof in all after Times must be made, by an Appeal to the Reason of Mankind only, and not to their Senses.

We have now more Difficulties to get at the true Sense and Meaning of Revelation, than attends any Piece of the greatest Antiquity; and we have none of the Illuminated or Inspired to resort to under this Difficulty.

Instead of that Assistance, we have many unnecessary Difficulties flung in our way.

*Several of the Patrons of Revelation have laid more weight upon it than it can bear. For whereas Revelation, as it was delivered by Patriarchs or Prophets, by Christ or his Apostles, was only proposed in Aid of natural Religion, and recommended as highly useful; many since have insisted, that it is absolutely necessary; not barely to give us a Title, on which we may claim eternal Life, as eternal Life is described in Scripture, (which may be justly said according to the Doctrine of Revelation) but to secure Men from eternal Damnation, and to obtain any degree of the Favour of God in another World. But as soon as Persons, to whom Revelation is recommended as thus absolutely necessary, come to see, that it is not so, nor can't be so; as they soon will; it may very easily happen, that they will not trouble their Heads any more about it; and finding the Opinion, that it is absolutely necessary, a great Extreme, may, without thinking further, (as indeed they ought) run into another, (as is but too common in these Cases,) and think it entirely useless.*

*Other Advocates for Revelation, who have understood it better than the former, have indeed pleaded for it only as useful; but many of them in explaining the main Use it is of, have not shewn wherein its great Usefulness consists, as the Apostles always did. I must needs say, I cannot but think the rational Divines, as they are called, very faulty on*

*this Head; not to mention others. For they, having considered Revelation, as designed to do nothing, but to give a fresh Publication of natural Religion, make it of little Use now to any but the Mob (whatever it might be of at the Periods in which it was made) nor of any great Use to them neither. But every one will easily see, that the sinking the Use of Revelation so low, is no ways suitable to all the Apparatus of Revelation: Especially of the last and most perfect Revelation which God made by his Son; who in order thereto took Flesh, died on the Cross, rose from the Dead, and ascended into Heaven, and had all Power conferr'd upon him, till the Consummation of all Things. The peculiar Doctrines of Revelation can never be the Duties of natural Religion; as they have been too much supposed to be by these Divines; but Doctrines to assist us to perform them. In what way Revelation does this, will be the Business of the following Essay; and thither therefore the Reader must be referr'd; in the mean Time this Mistake (and which unhappily for Revelation has been but too common) perhaps has had almost as bad an Effect as the former; and made those to whom Revelation has been only recommended by a very low, or by an intirely misplaced Usefulness, from seeing it to be of little Consequence, or its Usefulness wrong placed, either to reject Revelation, or at least think no farther about it.*

*I can't but think too, that Revelation has suffer'd very much from a too partial Consideration of it. When observing Men see the Patrons of Revelation apply themselves wholly to the Explication and Defence of Christianity, they presently conclude, that the Patrons of those Doctrines have but an indifferent Opinion of the Old Testament, and that 'tis for that Reason, they don't set themselves to consider it. Whereas Christianity is but the last Link in a Chain of Truth, that consists of several others. And he that pretends to shew a Chain of Truth, must shew not one Link only, but several; and shew that they are link'd with the first, and with one another.*

*But yet Revelation has suffered much more from another Quarter than any of these that I have already mentioned. For though no Knowledge, as has been already observed, can be suppos'd to come from God, as the Governor of the World, that is not of common Use and Advantage to Mankind, yet Pretences to Revelation being so capable of serving private and selfish Ends, (utterly inconsistent with all Happiness that is as high and unmix'd as we are capable of, and must last as long as our Beings, or that may add to the Happiness of others) Men of ambitious and covetous Minds have not only in all Ages pretended to Revelations, which they never had, in order to accomplish their base and wicked Designs; but have so misrepresented the Revelation that*



that is from God, as to make it more inconsistent with all the Characters and Ends of a divine Revelation, than any of the counterfeit Revelations, that have gain'd Credit in any Age of the World. These Men have debas'd Revelation from being the most rational and useful Discovery, into one that is almost equally absurd, and more pernicious, than any other religious Forgery or Imposture whatsoever: Whereby they have made some well disposed Men not only reject it, but become keen and bigotted against it. The Apostles laid no such stumbling Blocks in the Way of those who were disposed to receive Revelation. They were free from all Enthusiasm, utter'd no Fargon, taught no Absurdities and Contradictions: They us'd no Charms, or Spells, added no idle Fopperies to Religion, nor any costly Decorations: Nor pretended to any usurp'd oppressive Powers to support it: Much less did they pretend, that the whole of Revelation was made up of these, or of any one of them. They renounced all these Things, and every other hidden Art of Dishonesty, calculated only to raise an high Domination, Power and Profit to themselves, or to any Believers that were to follow them, on the Ruins of the Sense, Freedom and Property of others. On the other Hand, they recommended Revelation to their Hearers, by teaching clearly the unsophisticated Word of God; accompanied by the Demonstration of the Spirit, and of

*Power ; and by approving themselves, through the greatest Humility, Meekness, Diligence, Courage, Patience and Success, to every Man's Conscience, in the Sight of God.*

*These Things which I have mentioned appear to me to be the Difficulties that prevent the virtuous Deists from receiving Revelation, either as those Difficulties arise from Revelation it self, as it is now circumstanc'd, or from the Mistakes its Patrons have made in recommending, or in explaining it. We have now indeed the Bible before us, and may thereby clear Revelation from all these Mistakes ; we may see on what Foot it recommends it self to our Consideration, and what it really is. But here Men meet with Difficulties in themselves, and which are far from being lessened by the Misrepresentations I have just now mentioned. For it is certain, that to get at the true Sense of the Bible, as it is a consistent System of useful Knowledge, there must go great Leisure, Care and Ability. And yet still Revelation is rejected by some well disposed Men, who want none of these, without so much as looking into it : The Reason of which is, that they take it for granted, that that is the View and the Sense of Revelation, which some of its Professors and Interpreters have put upon it. It is certain this is far from being any Instance of their good Dispositions. However, whilst from these Misrepresentations, they think it either*

*useless*

useless or pernicious, they will perhaps think themselves under no more Obligation, or find no more Inclination to study the Bible, or attend to the Evidence there is for the Truth of it, than they feel within themselves to study any other idle Enthusiasm or Reverie, or any Piece of Imposture or Forgery; or to attend to the Evidence that may be offer'd in behalf of them.

If they go so far, under these Prejudices; as to look into the Bible; yet it is odds, if they don't read it, in order to fortify these Prejudices. It is still greater Odds if when they go to study the Bible, they entirely divest themselves of them, and read it with the Spirit of Candor and Equity. And it is yet the greatest Odds of all, if they read it with that Attention and critical Skill that is necessary to understand any Piece of Antiquity, and particularly the Bible; part of it being the most ancient Book that is preserv'd to us, that can receive little foreign Assistance towards the understanding any Thing of it, and that can have no foreign Assistance at all, in relation to the peculiar Matter of it. And I take this (viz. the not studying the Bible in a critical Way) to be one of the greatest Causes of the Growth of Deism among thoughtful and virtuous Men. I mean of those Causes which arise from within themselves. And I think it will appear to be so, if we consult the History of the Learned. For we shall find, that

\* some

*some of the greatest Men, and the freest Enquirers, who have studied the Bible in this Way, have attained the greatest Understanding, have had the most steady Belief, and expressed the highest Admiration of the Scriptures: Such as Erasmus, Grotius, J. G. Vossius, Locke, Newton, Moyle, &c. whilst others, who have not studied it in this Way, from nominal Believers have become settled Doubters or Unbelievers; especially if some other Things have concurr'd; as if they have been of unattentive or narrow Minds, or have not been us'd to so great a Compass of Thought as Criticism requires: — If they have been us'd to strict Demonstration in Parts of Learning that are capable of it, especially in natural Religion; and are thereby much disposed to doubt of every Thing, that has but probable or moral Evidence to support it: — If from observing the pious Frauds that so early took Place, and the bad Lives of such as would be thought its best Professors, which still continue, they add to their sceptical Disposition, Distrust, Suspicion, and Jealousy. All these, I think, should be consider'd as an unhappy Turn of Mind, that disposes Men to relish Deism; especially when they have been strongly distasted at Revelation, by the gross Misrepresentations of it, which I have just now mentioned.*

*These several Causes constitute so many different Ranks and Classes of virtuous and*  
*thought=*

*thoughtful Deists ; which if we consider thus particularly, may furnish us with more just Notions of them, and with better Methods to recover them, than if we should only consider them in the Lump. As to the Case of those nominal Deists, who are so, from being perfectly heedless and unthinking, loose and vicious, it is of a very different Consideration, is not within our Inquiry, and besides, has no Difficulty attending it.*

*I have thought it, for some Reasons not so proper hitherto to distinguish those, who reject Revelation, from those who don't embrace it, or the real Deists from the Scepticks. Yet I think it very proper, before I go any farther, to say this of them, as well as to them, that though where (they apprehend, on their best Inquiries, that) there is a Want of Proof of the Truth of Revelation ; or where there is a Want of Leisure to examine it, their not receiving Revelation may be excus'd, if they can make it appear at the Bar of Him, to whom all Things are naked and manifest, that that was their Case ; yet nothing can excuse their rejecting it, and their Zeal to induce others to reject it, but seeing clearly some Thing in it that is absolutely inconsistent with Reason, or with it self. And though upon this foot we may have many Scepticks, yet I think there will not be a great Number of real Deists.*

*From what has been said, I think it appears plainly, that the gross Misrepresentation of the Sense of Revelation has been one of the greatest Causes of Scepticism, and of real Deism. Whether that Misrepresentation be made by venting absurd and superstitious Notions, or by superstitious Practices, which suppose these Notions, and propagate them, makes no difference. Let no Man then complain, that Doubts about Revelation, or the Disbelief of it, spread so far, or produce the Fruits we daily see, who will not set himself to rectify every Misrepresentation that has been made of it. And let not him that will not set himself about this great Work in good earnest; and above all, let not him that waters and cherishes any of these Absurdities, or any Degree of Superstition, think, that he has any Right to complain of the Growth either of Scepticism or real Deism. On the contrary, let him expect nothing less, than that somewhat of a much more fatal Nature will spring up in its Neighbourhood. The Religion of Deists is true Religion, though they want the Aid of Revelation, to enable them the better to perform the Duties of their Religion. But Superstition will as certainly make Atheism spring up in the Minds of the Loose and Immoral, as it makes Deism grow in the Minds of sober and thoughtful Men; I mean of Men who think without thinking thoroughly. And woe be to him, whose Absurdities*

*Jurdities and Superstition make either of these Opinions, but particularly the last, like the most noxious Weeds, become more rank and prolific! When instead of these absurd and superstitious Misrepresentations of Revelation, Believers will condescend to profess the Doctrines, pay the Worship, and practise the Duties of Revelation in its original Simplicity, and after the Model of the great Deliverers of it; then, and not till then, may we expect, that all the virtuous and thoughtful Deists will attend to the external Evidence of Christianity, that has been so admirably well brought together by several able Hands, of late, in order the better to support it. But it will be well, if instead of this Condescension, some, who would be very angry, if they were not allow'd to be amongst the best Friends of Revelation, are not more incens'd at him, who out of a disinterested Regard to Truth, (now that Revelation is under so strict a Trial) offers this Reflection to their cool and serious Consideration, than at those very Deists, who make it so necessary to lay it before them.*

*If the great Cause of the Disbelief of Revelation be such Misrepresentations of Revelation, as have made Men think it unnecessary to attend to it, or necessary to oppose it; especially*

cially falling in with the particular Turn of some Mens Minds ; it is obvious that the first, if not the best, Thing that can be done to stop the Growth of that Disbelief, will be to give a true Representation of Revelation ; so that it may appear a rational, consistent and beautiful Scheme of useful Knowledge, and enamour every rational Enquirer with it. From such a Representation of it, we shall be best able to prove the Truth of it, and to answer the Objections that acute Men may raise against it ; and to make the virtuous and thoughtful Deists, from some Relish of it (instead of the Distaste they had to it) be willing carefully to attend to every Thing that shall be offer'd to state or to support it : Especially such of them as have not themselves Leisure, Capacity or Inclination, to come at those Proofs, or make such a System or Representation of Revelation from the Bible.

Every one knows, that there have been various Systems and Compendiums of Revelation offered to the World, and many of them, no doubt, for this purpose. But I must own, that though among those which have fallen in my Way, I have seen several, to which, I believe, the Growth of Deism may be justly attributed, in this prying Age, from their great Inconsistence with Reason and Revelation ; yet I have not met with any that has, in my Apprehension, closely follow'd the prevailing Notion,



*Notion, the Method, or the Language of the Bible. And yet it is certain, that none but one that does, can even from the Form of it, be calculated to answer the good End proposed; even if the Matter of it was never so consistent with, or agreeable to the Doctrines of the Bible.*

*In order to represent the Sense of the Bible, several Authors have run into a figurative or metaphorical Divinity: And among them, some have not been wanting to pursue these Figures in a very wild and offensive Manner: Metaphors and Allegories, indeed, are justly and beautifully used in the poetical and rhetorical Books of Scripture; but those Figures themselves at best always want a Key; instead of opening the Sense that is couch'd under them.*

*Others have run into abstracted and metaphysical Notions; which when they are not founded in the Nature of Things, such as the Schoolmen us'd, are ridiculous: And when they are, yet are not of a Piece with the Scripture; which generally represents Things by no other Ideas, than such as are the most common and familiar to us; as being alone suited to the bulk of Mankind, for whose Benefit it is designed.*

*Others, indeed, have represented the Scheme of Revelation under Notions that are common and familiar, and that are scriptural too:*

*But then they are such, as are either only topical, that is to say, us'd in particular Texts of the Bible; or else such as are only suited to particular Periods and Dispensations. Under this Head, to pass by other Systems, those (which have been of the best Design) may be rang'd, which have treated Divinity under the Notion of a Covenant, of a Kingdom, or of the Christian Church.*

*Those who have writ Systems of reveal'd Religion in any of these Methods, have, besides the Faults peculiar to each of them, been guilty of one that has been common to them all; namely, that they have compos'd them according to the Rules, in which the Systems of other Arts and Sciences are dress'd up: But this Method can never make those Systems of a Piece with a Revelation which has been deliver'd to Mankind in quite another Manner.*

*And though several Divines have avoided these mistaken Methods, when they have handled particular Subjects of Divinity; the Scriptures having been very carefully studied of late in a just and critical Way, to the great Honour of the present Age, and in which some have out-shin'd all that have gone before them; yet we have not been favour'd with a finish'd Piece of this Kind, or so much as with a Sketch of it.*

*Those*

*Those who have come the nearest to what I aim at, and who ought to have great Merit with all who study their Bible, are the Divines who have considered Revelation historically, the Way in which Revelation has been conveyed to Mankind. But then such Discourses as these are to be consider'd only as Histories: Which will indeed be of great Use to him that will offer a scriptural System to the World, but are not that System it self; nor may not even help those, who compose them, or are instructed by them, to the Notion on which that System must be built.*

*But the Piece or Sketch I aim at is such an one, as will shew the single Notion that runs through the several Dispensations of God to Mankind in its full Light, (if it shall appear that there is such a Notion) and that pursues it in the precise Order and Manner in which it was exhibited in those several Dispensations, and will at the same Time shew, how all the peculiar Doctrines of Revelation refer to it. For such a Piece or Sketch alone will discover to us all the Beauties of revealed Truth; shewing it in its proper Connexion and Relations, (particularly its Use and Advantage) and in its Unity, the strongest internal Evidence, that can accompany it.*

*How well soever therefore others have deserved in their several Provinces, yet still, observing the great Use as well as the Want of*  
*such*

*such an Undertaking, as I have just now mentioned, I have been led to offer a rough Draught of this Kind to the Public; in hopes it may receive Amendments from others, if it be capable of it; or that it may ingage those of greater Leisure and Ability, when they fling this away, to substitute a Better in the Room of it.*

*The great Acuteness of the Age, and particularly of a distinguish'd Writer in it, has furnished several Objections against Revelation, which in stead of the Discountenance of Power, require the best Attention of those, who are most firmly perswaded of its Truth and Advantage. But if the sober Deists were disposed to deal fairly with the Christian Religion, they would give us their Scheme of Infidelity, as well as their Objections against the true Scheme of Revelation; that so we might take a comparative View of them, and shew the great Disproportion both of Evidence and Objection against the one and the other.*

*Indeed it must be own'd, that the Deists have not been wholly wanting to our just Expectations in this Particular. They have at least flung out a general Hypothesis or two of Deism, how little soever they have supported them. They have first pretended, that those*  
*who*

*who have banded these supposed Revelations to us, were errant Cheats. This has been the more avowed Opinion of the Enemies of Revelation, till of late; when finding themselves beat out of this Hypothesis, by seeing that this would not agree with the Matter of Revelation, or with the clearest History of those who have deliver'd it; they have with more Subtilty betaken themselves to another; pretending, that the Writers of the Books of the Old and New Testament were meer Enthusiasts, or Persons who judg'd themselves illuminated or inspired without being so. Though it will be found, on a careful Consideration of the Matter, that the Deists (whether they themselves see it or no) play between these two Hypotheses, shifting from one to the other, and blending them, inconsistent as they are, together.*

*It has been extreamly well observed, by a Writer of a fine Taste in this Controversy, that Enthusiasm never deals much in Facts: On which however all the Jewish as well as the Christian Revelation is wholly built. But let us try this Matter by another Touchstone, which will better serve our present Purpose; for we are considering, whether the whole of Revelation be Enthusiasm, and not whether one or two great Branches of Revelation only be so or no. Now Enthusiasm, in the Nature of the Thing, can have no Unity. And let the*  
*Deists*

*Deists shew us in Fact, if they can, a Set of enthusiastic Writers (who if they are at all intelligible) are at Unity with any considerable Number of their Predecessors, in former Ages; or so much as a single Enthusiast, that is consistent with himself, through many Volumes, or even through one single Volume, or it may be, one might say, a single Page of their enthusiastic Performances. If it shall appear then, that there is one worthy and noble Design pursued through the Books of the Old and New Testament, by one wise, plain and simple Mean, though they had Forty or more different Authors, and were not written in less than sixteen Hundred Years; it will amount to the clearest Demonstration, that the Bible cannot be the Work of Enthusiasts, writing in different Ages. And will not every one then see, that it must be from Him, who exists through all Ages, and sees what is past, present, and to come: Who has always the same View, must have fix'd on the wisest Methods to attain it, and yet must suit his Discoveries to the different Circumstances of those, to whom he makes them; if their Circumstances vary from each other, as they must in a Tract of many Ages be suppos'd to do. If any one should say, that the Writers of the Old and New Testament have thought of some Probabilities, and then couch'd them in dark, general and indeterminate*

*minate Expressions, capable of being differently accommodated and apply'd; and that succeeding Writers have consulted the former, and endeavour'd to imitate them in such dark, general and indeterminate Expressions, with an intent, not only that they might be differently accommodated and apply'd in future Times, but also that they might bear some Relation to former Books; I say, he that pretends to alledge this, entirely quits the Hypothesis of Enthusiasm, in order to overthrow Revelation, and has recourse to the exploded Hypothesis of Imposture. For representing the Writers of the Old and New Testament to have acted as the Deists in this View suppose them to have done, is representing them not as hot-headed, mad Enthusiasts, who, born away with their present Impulse, never stop to consider any Thing, (former Writings, or their own) but as the most cool-headed, designing Knaves.*

*The one Design I have mentioned, as running through the Bible, I take, with all other Writers on this Subject, to be the displaying the Glory of all God's Perfections, particularly his moral Perfections; or which will come to the same Thing, to assist our Reason in pursuing our own Happiness, and promoting the Happiness of others, as long as our Being lasts, and as long as we have other Beings about us. I take this Design to be*

uniformly pursued by one wise, plain and simple Mean, Plot or Contrivance, calculated to strike every Man, that has the Use of his Reason; though there are various Underplots, if I may be allow'd to use these Expressions, to support the main One, suited to the Incidents of Mankind, and beautifully related and proportioned to each other: Which, as far as I know, has not been taken notice of. Now, if such a Design, thus pursued, shall appear evidently to run through the Books of the Old and New Testament, a Man may with infinitely greater Propriety, suppose the most perfect Drama (where the finest Design is carried on by the best chosen Plot, and by the most consistent Underplots, and beautiful well proportion'd Incidents) to have been writ by a Number of the greatest Madmen or Ideots, by Piece-meals, in different Ages; than to imagine a Thread of such an End and Mean running through above forty Writers in more than sixteen Hundred Years, to be the Work of so many Enthusiasts. Or we may as well suppose the World to be framed by meer Chance, or, which will strike all but philosophical Minds more, the most magnificent, beautiful and convenient Palace, that the Imagination can figure to it self, to be built by Men unacquainted with all the Rules of Architecture, in several Ages, and without any Model to build by, and to be supported by meer Chance, through as many

more



more Ages, as to imagine such an Unity of Design and Mean, as I have described, to be the Result of Enthusiasm and Accident mix'd together.

I have already hinted at some Considerations, that shew the Hypothesis of Forgery, by which some Deists have endeavoured to account for Revelation to be a very absurd one. But let us farther examine that Hypothesis of Revelation by this Unity which I have just now observ'd to run through it. And here I would desire the Deists to consider, how hard and difficult it is to observe Unity in any Piece of meer Fiction, where the Writer aims at Unity with the closest Intention. This we may easily learn from the dramatic Writers of all Kinds, especially if their Plot be all Fiction and not Story; who though they have this Unity ever in View, yet often depart from it: As we may easily see by reading them, or at least by reading those who give us their Criticisms upon them. And let any one, who is used to Italian or Merchants Accompts (as they are called) see whether they can ever depart in the least from Truth in them, without feeling that Departure themselves, or shewing it to others that narrowly inspect them; though the Departure be not such as vitiates the Accompt, or hinders the whole Ledger from being exactly ballanc'd at last; and where therefore of Consequence the Accompt must be true.

Now if it be so difficult to observe Unity in a Fiction or Falshood, or where there is a great Degree of Fiction attending it, even in any single dramatic Performance, though the Author applies himself to observe it never so carefully; and if it be so impossible to mix any, even the least Falshood, with the Truth of Accompts, without that Falshood's appearing plainly, though it is not such as destroys the Ballance of the Book, (so little will Truth and Falshood ever agree) how can any one imagine the Books of the Old and New Testament to be Forgery, any more than Enthusiasin; when nothing but Unity and Agreement appears in such a Number of Writers at so great distance of Time from each other? And that not only in the Main, but (when all just Allowances are made for Books circumstanc'd as they are) even in the Detail of Particulars.

Thus, in my Opinion, it appears, that such a Sketch as I have mentioned, is the best Way to explain Revelation, and to support it, till a finish'd Piece of the same Design shall appear. And I wish, if any great Master shall go about it, he would particularly set the Proportions of Revelation in such a Light, as that their Exactness, Beauty and ~~Grandeur~~, might strike every one that casts his Eye on it. And  
by

by the Proportions of Revelation, I mean not only those Proportions, which appear in every Dispensation of God to Mankind, consider'd apart, and by it self; but in the several Dispensations, as they bear a Relation to each other. In order to explain my Meaning the better about these Proportions, I will give an Instance of some which are very considerable, in the Second Corollary, at the End of this Essay.

If this rough Draught of Revelation bring Men to lay aside their Prejudices against it, and embrace it, at a Time when it undergoes so strict a Disquisition, it will answer all I design by it, besides the Instruction and Satisfaction of my own Mind.

I thought once to have delayed the Publication of the Essay, till I had finished some Notes I have by me, the better to explain and support several Assertions in it; and which, I believe, it will sometimes be thought to want. I chose to cast what I chiefly design'd for that Purpose into Notes, where the Proof from Scripture would be consequential and not direct, the better to preserve the Thread of the Discourse. But as I have not the Leisure at present, that is necessary to finish them, I have resolv'd to submit this Essay without the Notes, to the View of the Public, in hopes that, as  
 Things

*Things stand, it may be of some Service to it.*

*I am very sensible that this is a Design of a great Compass and Difficulty. If any Expression therefore has drop'd from me, through too close an Attention to the Matter, and where I have not had the Aid of former Writers, that is less accurate or precise, I hope the Candor of the Reader will excuse it; and make every proper and reasonable Allowance, that may be due to an Undertaking of this Nature, or the frequent Interruptions of the Author.*

*There can be but little Use in knowing an Author's Reasons for printing, at the Time he does, rather than at another. If the Performance be worth any Thing, it is never altogether out of Time; if it be worth nothing, it can never be in Season. However, to satisfy the Curiosity of him that may ask the Question, I will only say, that these Papers have lain by me a great many Months; in hopes I might see these Thoughts in a better Dress from some abler Hand, now that Revelation is under so careful a Consideration. Particularly I expected they might have been superseded by some Account I had of Doctor Burnet's Boyle's Lectures. But being disappointed not only by others, but by him in this Particular (though I am glad of an Opportunity of re-  
turning*

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*turning him my Thanks for so far exceeding our reasonable Expectations in many others,) I resolv'd to submit this Essay to the Examination of the Friends of Truth, and of that free Enquiry, which is the only Way to attain Truth.*



A N





A N

# ESSAY

On the several

## DISPENSATIONS

O F

## GOD to Mankind,

As they lye in the *Bible*.

**I**N Order to give a distinct Account of the various Methods, in which God has extraordinarily discovered himself to Mankind (which have been fitly enough called his Dispensations towards them) it will be necessary to trace them up to that, which is the first of them, and which naturally leads to all the rest.

By the Methods in which God has extraordinarily discover'd himself to Mankind,

B

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I mean those Methods, by which he has conveyed farther Knowledge to them, than they could arrive at by the bare Use of the natural Powers he has given them. I call them extraordinary Discoveries, for want of a better Word to express my Meaning: *Immediate*, which some have used, not being a proper Word to this Purpose. Since it restrains these Discoveries to those, which have been immediately made by God, to the Person or Persons to whom he made them; whereas I would take in such Discoveries, as he has made by the Mediation of Angels, or of Prophets; or such Discoveries as have been convey'd down to others, from those to whom they have been either mediately or immediately made. All these extraordinary Discoveries go under the Name of Revelation; and by that Term I shall for the future generally express them.

The first of these Dispensations, every one will presently see must be the State in which God created our first Parents; and which is known by the Name of the State of Innocence, or of the State before the Fall.

And in this State it self, it will be necessary to consider what was previous to any Revelation from God to them; at least, what was previous to any such Revelation in the Order of Things (however it might be in the Order of Time) before we consider such Revelation.

For



For though it does not necessarily result from the Nature of God, or of Man, that God should make extraordinary Discoveries of his Will to Mankind ; yet it necessarily results from the Nature of both, that when God gave Man Understanding, ~~and~~ Will, ~~elective~~ and active Powers, that he must make Man subject to a Law or Rule of his Choice and Conduct.

For whatever necessarily resulted from the Frame of Nature, or from the Powers which God had given Man, and the Circumstances, in which God had placed him, would be that Rule to him.

Thus the Law of Self-Government or Temperance would immediately appear to him : Because an improper Indulgence of his Appetites and Passions (or Intemperance) would appear to be quite contrary to his Make and Frame ; For his Make and Frame was to yield to his Appetites and Passions, where he saw that yielding to them was for his Preservation, and the regular Propagation of the Species ; not where they would be to his, or their Hurt, or Destruction.

Thus also, if he found himself surrounded with other Creatures, even that were of an Order below him, he must see, that if they were endued with Powers of feeling Pleasure and Pain, he ought not to deprive them of Pleasure, or inflict Pain, unnecessarily. And if he was so happy as to find other Crea-

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tures of the same Rank with himself, about him, he must see, that they having Rights as well as he, he ought not to infringe them. And that, as his own Happiness or Misery would be increased by theirs, he consequently ow'd them a constant and perpetual good Will.

And when he once came to consider, as he soon must, that there was a Being supremely Powerful, Wise and Good, to whom he and all other Beings ow'd their Existence, he must immediately consider Temperance and Benevolence, not only to be due to himself and others, as they flow from his own Frame, and the Circumstances in which he was placed; but as what was thereby express'd to be the Will of his Maker, who had given him that Frame, and placed him in those Circumstances: And therefore must consider Temperance and Benevolence as due to himself and others, by Virtue of the Law of his Maker.

And he must then likewise presently see, that the highest Veneration, Gratitude, Obedience, Submission and Resignation, were universally, constantly and perpetually to be paid to such a Being, as long as his own Existence continued.

These Reflections therefore, either arose in the Minds of the first Man and Woman; or at least, would have arisen in their Minds on the least Attention, if they were not anticipated

anticipated by Revelation. But as Revelation does not give us an Account of any such Anticipation, it does not seem likely, that in Fact there was any such Anticipation: Since God does nothing in vain in the Moral World, any more than in the Natural; and therefore is not likely to have revealed that to our first Parents, which they might easily have come to the Knowledge of, without any Revelation.

Whenever these Reflections arose in their Minds, it would also occur to them, that the Rule God had given them, as resulting from his Will, who had given them such a Frame, and placed them in such Circumstances, was so perfectly adjusted to their Nature and Situation, that it was fit and best for them to regulate their Temper and Conduct by it, if it were but thereby to be as happy as the State they were placed in would allow, or as happy, as they could be in any given Circumstances, as long as their Being continued; and that therefore, if they deviated from this Rule, they would lose the Advantage that attended the observing it, and meet with some Inconveniencies that attended the departing from it; so that these Advantages and Inconveniencies may be considered as the natural Sanctions of the Law of Nature.

But besides the Happiness that would result from observing this Law, it was highly suitable and congruous, that a Being;  
that

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that came perfect out of the Hands of God, should be placed in additional Circumstances of Dignity and Felicity. He had no other Father but God: He was created in his moral Image and Likeness: He was therefore his Son by Creation: And whilst he preserved his Duty and Obedience, it was fit he should be placed in a State that became so high a Relation: Or more particularly, that he that resembled him in moral, should also resemble him in some of his high natural Perfections, and in the Glory and Blifs that results from them.

And so we find he did, from positive Expressions, or from plain Hints in *Moses's* History. Particularly we find he was placed in a pleasant Garden, free from Toil, Care and Vexation, with Dominion over the Works of God's Hands, and clothed with a Glory, (as a proper Badge of his high Relation to God, and of the Power and Dominion God had given him) and vested with Immortality; as we shall see presently: All this was conferred on him as an Inheritance, that was very suitable to an Earthly Son of God.

In this Sense and Meaning is *Adam* called *the Son of God*, *Luke* iii. 38. and not barely as God created him, for so he did all Things; or, as he created him a living Soul, or a Being endued with rational Powers; for so he did all <sup>Angels</sup> ~~Men~~, bad as well as good; and would equally be the Father of the one, as well as the other. God,

God, who had given our first Parents such additional Circumstances of Dignity and Felicity, can't be supposed to have been wanting in any Thing, that was necessary for their Subsistence and Comfort ; and therefore as it might be very necessary to supply their want of Experience, with a Revelation about their Food, for their own Preservation ; and about Marriage, for propagating the Species ; we meet with an Account of the first, *Gen.* i. 29. ii. 9. and of the second *cb.* ii. 22, 23. 'Tis highly probable too, that they were endued with a Language at once, which could not have been formed by themselves in many Years ; and without which, there could have been little Society between the first Pair, or between them and their Descendants.

However, though *Adam* was created a rational Being, and Innocent or Perfect, and placed in the happy, blisful and glorious Circumstances I have mentioned ; yet he could not positively assure himself how long his Being, or these happy, blisful and glorious Circumstances would last ; or that he should have any considerable Term in them granted to him. For Being it self, was what he had no Right to, nor the additional Degrees of Bliss and Glory, which attended it ; nor had he any Right to the Continuance of either. Here therefore a farther Revelation was also most of all wanting, in order to his  
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receiving a proper Threatning and Promise, the most powerful Motives to Obedience: God was accordingly pleased to give it; and to let him know, that though his Life was but Terrestial and Animal, and therefore Corruptible; yet it should be continually restored and preserved (together with the Dominion, Glory and Bliss, which accompany'd it) if he continued perfectly dutiful and obedient, by *the Tree of Life*, which was one of the Trees of the Garden, that God had given him for Food: But that on the other Hand, he would certainly lose all by yielding to his Appetites and Passions, instead of obeying the Law of God; and particularly if he should but taste of *the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*, which may not be improperly called the Tree of Death.

There can be no manner of Doubt, but that our first Parents understood that the Tree of Life was of a sanative and restorative Nature. But it was not possible for them to hope to be restored and preserved by it, against Sin, as well as against natural Decays: They might therefore indeed expect, that it would preserve them if they continued innocent; but that if they sinned, either they, or the Tree, or its Vertue would be removed from one another: And there can't be much more Doubt made, but they understood, that the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, was of a noxious and deadly Nature,

ture which would disorder their Blood, and make their Body the Seat of Distempers, and at last, of Death. But could they imagine, that that wou'd not be the Case, if they violated any other Precept God had given them, as well as this Prohibition? Could they be so stupid, as to think; that this additional Penalty, or one of equal Severity, would not attend the Breach of the Laws of their Nature, (over and above such lower Penalties as would necessarily result from the Breach of those Laws) as well as the high Penalty that was annex'd to the Breach of this revealed Prohibition? Would they not suppose, that a Being of impartial Justice, would certainly punish every Crime in Proportion to its Guilt? And that therefore if they violated any other Command that was of the like, or of greater Clearness and Importance, that he would punish it with the like, or with greater Severity? Life therefore could only be understood to attend perfect Vertue, and Death or some equal Punishment must have been understood to follow every equal Instance of Disobedience and Vice. So that this Promise and Threatning, which was a Part of the Law of Food, must be consider'd as reveal'd and additional Sanctions to the Law of Nature, and design'd as a farther and more powerful Enforcement of Obedience to it.

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*God*

But notwithstanding that *Adam* was thus a Son of ~~God~~ by Nature or by Creation, deriv'd from him so, as to have no other Father, resembling him in his moral Perfections, and having an earthly Animal Dominion, Glory, Blifs, and Immortality as his Inheritance, (the last of which was made known to him by Revelation, on Condition of his Obedience, with a Threatning of Death on Disobedience) yet by criminally indulging his Appetites and Passions, in Compliance with the Temptation of the Devil, in eating the forbidden and noxious Fruit, instead of continuing the Son of God, or, in other Words, instead of continuing to be like God, and to obey him, and so to have any Right to this earthly Inheritance himself, or to transmit it to his Posterity; he forfeited it, became a Child of the Devil, whom he imitated and obey'd; and brought a *Curse* (the Portion of the Children of the Devil) upon himself, and on all his Descendants; *namely*, Toil, Care, Vexation, and at last Death, *Gen.* iii. 17, 20. For being no longer in the Image or Likeness of God himself, he begat not Men in that Image or Likeness, (or Sons of God, and Heirs of Life, Blifs, Dominion, and Glory) but in his own *Likeness, after his Image*, *Gen.* v. 3. *Sons of Men*, as they are call'd, *Gen.* vi. 1. and *Heirs* of the Curse. See a like Expression, *1 Sam.* xxviii.



xxviii. 19. As *Adam* and *Eve* were driven out of Paradise, were stript of their Glory, and the Dominion it was the Badge of, and became subject to strong Appetites and Passions, to Inquietude, Toil, Care, Vexation, Diseases, and Death; so all their Children were born out of Paradise, without any of the glorious and blisful Circumstances that their Parents were at first invested with, and subject to all the unhappy Circumstances, which they either felt in themselves, or from Things about them.

As God had given the Hopes of an immortal Life and Happiness to our first Parents on their Obedience, and threatned them with Death on their Disobedience, in order to give them additional Motives to persevere in their Duty, the Devil, that wicked and subtle Spirit, try'd to turn the Promise and Threatning to a quite contrary Purpose; and in all Probability, tempted them by representing to them, that that State of *Happiness*, tho' great and desirable, and promis'd to be continued, yet was not promis'd, but on Condition of Obedience; and was therefore but precarious: That it depended not only on their Obedience, but on the perpetual Use of the Tree of Life; and that Death was threatned on Disobedience, by which all would be irrecoverably lost. That what was wanting therefore, to make them compleatly happy, was to know, how they might indefeasibly possess the Good they enjoy'd;

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joy'd; and how they might certainly avoid the Evil, with which they were threatned. That eating the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, would furnish them with that Knowledge, and that they would, upon tasting it, *become like Gods, knowing* the Means by which they might so assure themselves of the Good they possess'd; as to be out of all Reach of the Evil with which they were threatned: The Way in which God himself that made them, and who had plac'd them in these blissful and glorious Circumstances, possesses the one, and is secur'd against the other. When they first hearkned to this Proposal, they fell; for here Lust was fully conceiv'd: They no longer submitted and resigned themselves to God's Disposal, but presumptuously affected a State infinitely superior to that in which he had placed them; and inconsistent with it: Since that in which God had placed them was a State of Tryal. And having indulg'd their vain and high Ambition, they easily fell into a Compliance with the Means propos'd: The only Means that offer'd for gratifying it. And could then even suffer themselves to be so far deluded (for Reason and Passion rise and fall in Proportion to each other) as to eat of the Fruit; on being told, that God had not forbidden them that Tree; tho' they knew most assuredly, that God had not expressly forbidden them any Thing else. And moreover, seeing it to be a Tree good for Food, and pleasant to the  
*Eye,*

*Eye, as well as a Tree to be desir'd to make one wise; The Woman took of the Fruit, and did eat, and gave to her Husband, and he did eat: Which being the Overt-Act of Disobedience, is said to be the first Transgression; tho' it was but the Consequence of that Lust fully conceiv'd, which properly and strictly was so.*

No Doubt can be made, but that this vigilant and malicious Spirit, *who goes about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour*; and who was hardy enough to make several Attacks on the second *Adam*, after the strongest Repulses; would soon have renew'd his Temptation to the first *Adam*, after this easy Victory. And nothing less was to be expected, than that after he had seduc'd him and his Wife to an Act of most presumptuous Disobedience, in order to gratify a low Appetite of their Body, and a high, tho' vain Ambition of their Mind, he would soon have fallen in with the Suspicions and Distrust of their guilty Thoughts, and have tempted them to despair of ever obtaining Mercy from their offended Maker: Thereby effectually to prevent all Attempts to return to their Duty.

In this deplorable Condition, God was pleas'd to give them some Hopes of his Mercy, in order to prevent the farther Attempts of the Devil, and the fatal Consequences of their Despair; the common, tho' not the  
reasonable

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reasonable or necessary Attendant of Guilt. The sentencing the Serpent, the Author of all this Wickedness and Misery, could not but give them some Hopes: The seeing, on their being sentenc'd, that they should not dye immediately, but should be continued as the Parents of a future Race, could not but give them more: But what must needs give them the strongest Hopes, was, a Promise, that some one or more of the Woman's Seed should bruise this very *Serpent's Head* [THY HEAD, *Gen. iii. 15.*] *who had beguiled them.* That is, should destroy the Power and Policy of this very Serpent, who had, by this Subtily, brought all this Misery upon them; and such as should descend from them. And God farther told them, that *he would put Enmity between the Seed of the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman.*

But notwithstanding this gracious Intimation, which was not only a Promise to destroy the Policy of the Serpent, but imply'd a Command to be more watchful against his Arts and Wiles, more vigorous in resisting all his Temptations, and to be at constant War and Enmity with all that should afterwards become his Seed, (that is, should imitate and obey him) yet *Cain*, the First-born of human Race, instead of resisting him, presently became a Lyar and a Murderer, as that wicked Spirit, his Father, was then begun to be:

And that notwithstanding God's gracious Admonition and Caution to the contrary, *Gen. v. 6, 7.* Whereby *Cain* plainly rejected the Hopes this first Promise made to Mankind should have kept alive in his Mind, and which ought to have animated his whole Conduct. He had therefore a peculiar Curse inflicted on him, *Gen. iv. 11, 12.* And was, at the same time, driven out from *the Face of God*: *Gen. iv. 14, 16.* Or, the Place where God made glorious Manifestations of his Presence and good Will, by the *Shechinah*, or Host of Angels: Having, by the Contempt he express'd of the first Promise, and of God's gracious Admonition to him, and the wicked Temper he persisted in, rendred himself utterly unworthy of any of his farther gracious Communications. On his Banishment from the Family and Presence of God, he [*Cain*] became the Head of the *Family*, which the *Devil* set up in the World.

This Family came also under one Part of the Curse of the Serpent, *-viz.* That God would put Enmity between the Seed of the Woman, and the Seed of the Serpent.

For God gave the Woman *another Seed*, even *Seth*, instead of righteous *Abel*, whom *Cain* slew, *Gen. iv. 25.*

The Family of this Patriarch, continued to be the *Family of God*, and was taken notice of  
as

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as such, when his Descendants became numerous ; being *call'd by the Name of the Lord*; as the marginal Reading is, *Gen. iv. 26.* Or, *the Sons*, or *Children of God*, *Gen. vi. 1.* Not only as they paid that Obedience to the Law of their Nature, and to such other Laws as were immediately reveal'd to them, as was due to the Law of a Being supremely powerful; wise, and good ; who created and preserv'd them, and was kind, tender, and indulgent towards them, and as they imitated him in Purity, Justice, and Mercy ; but as they might form Inferences and Hopes, that since they obey'd him, and became like unto him, tho' they were not born to the Inheritance of a Son of God, &c. (a Right which *Adam* had forfeited for them, as well as for himself) yet God would not fail to *adopt* them to some suitable Reward and Inheritance ; tho' without knowing so fully what that Reward or Inheritance should be. So that as God was the God and Father of *Adam* in Innocence, by ~~Nature, or~~ Creation; it was also expected, that he would by *Adoption* become the God and Father of every one after the Fall, who should imitate and obey him. Whence it came to pass, that God and Father, or Terms that imply them, as Sons or Children of God (in Opposition sometimes to the Seed of the Serpent, and sometimes to the Children of Men, who are Heirs of Death) are promiscuously

promiscuously us'd, even in this Part of sacred History, whilst the Notions of divine Adoption were but faint and languid.

However to give them a more assured and lively Notion of it, God saw fit, after that *Enoch* had directed his Course of Life according to God's Will, thro' the Faith of a future Reward, (as the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* assures us, *Heb. xi. 5, 6.*) and had been a Prophet and Instructor of others, *Jude 14.* God saw fit, I say, to take him; to assure good Men of a future State of Reward and Happiness in Soul and Body.

Such in the Family of *Seth* as acted up to the Law of their Nature, and to such farther Rules as God had given to *Enoch*, or any Others, and by them to the rest of Mankind, animated by the same Faith and Hope, *Believing that God was, and that he was a Rewarder of them that diligently sought him; pleas'd him, and were accepted by him,* *Heb. xi. 4, 5, 6, 7, 12.*

For tho' these Discoveries being very general and indeterminate, the Reasonings of their Faith could be but weak and doubtful too; yet their Faith bearing a Proportion to the Matter, and the Indistinctness of the Revelation, must be equally acceptable to God, as a Faith of greater Strength and Efficacy might render others, if it bore but the same Proportion to any clearer Discoveries he should af-

terwards vouchsafe them. And if the Vertue of these early Patriarchs, tho' animated by fainter Hopes of a future Reward, was equal to a Vertue animated by a stronger, in after-times; in that Case, their Vertue must be more (not less) acceptable to God, than that of the later Patriarchs, of *Jews*, or of *Christians*, in the other Case.

About the Time of *Noah*, these two Families, *viz.* of God and of the Devil, which were to be at perpetual Enmity, and were separated from each other by God's express Order, (*Gen.* iii. 15.) as well as by the Interposition of his Providence, (*Gen.* iv. 11, 12, 14, 16.) yet mingled again: Appetite prevailing against the Appointment of God. *For when these Sons of God saw the Daughters of Men that they were fair, they took them Wives, of all which they chose,* *Gen.* vi. 2.

From these Inter-marriages which God had forbid, Corruption and Violence spread over the Face of the whole Earth. And what less was to be expected from Inter-marriages arising from the Heat of Lust, which had overcome the Fear of God, and all Regards to his Promises and Commands; but a Gigantick Race; Men of uncommon Size and Strength, uncultivated by the Principles of Reason and Revelation, by which alone the Appetites and Passions of Health and Vigour are to be controul'd. So that *Noah*, who, perhaps, was the only Person that had kept free from



from this unhappy Mixture, and the more unhappy Attendants and Consequences of it, was the *only righteous or sincere Person*, Gen. vi. 1. Whereupon God resolv'd to sweep away this impious Race of Men with a Flood, and to cleanse the Earth from their Corruption and Violence ; preserving none but *Noah* and his Family alive : By whom, as the pure Race of *Seth*, he would people a new World.

For the sake of the singular Piety of this good Man, God seems to have blessed Mankind immediately after the Flood, so far as to have remov'd part of the Curse, by taking off the great Perverseness of the Seasons, and the Sterility of the Ground ; by making Mankind more fruitful than their Anti-deluvian Ancestors ; and by restoring them to a greater Degree of Dominion over the brute Part of the Creation, than they had had since the Fall. All which was confirm'd by a Covenant, that *he would not renew his Curse on the Earth any more, either* by the Inclemency of the Heavens, by the Barrenness of the Earth, or by the total Destruction of it ; and also by a Covenant with every living Creature ; that in Compensation to them, for being in this greater Degree of Subjection to Mankind, *he would not destroy them or the Earth any more.* See Gen. ~~ix~~ xxi. 17—20. Compar'd with Chap. v. 29. viii. 20, 21, 22. ix. 1, 2, 3, 7, 9—18. See Dr. *Sherlock's more sure Word of Prophecy*, pag. 87—119.

This Covenant was in it self a great Blessing ; but yet might be understood to be a much greater, as it might be apprehended to be a Pledge of a very superior Covenant, that God designed in a few Ages after to make with Mankind ; when he should expressly promise to recover good Men from Death, the far more bitter Part of the Curse that still remain'd behind, and expressly entitle them to eternal Life.

This seems to have been intimated by *Noah*, in what he says prophetically of *Shem* : Promising a farther and peculiar Blessing, when he *blesse*s the Lord God of *Shem*, Gen. ix. 26. God's being the Lord God of *Shem*, must denote a farther Blessing than any that had been granted by God to *Noah* and his Sons in general, or to *Japheth* in particular, the Eldest of them. For being the God of *Shem*, is being the Father of *Shem*. And the Inheritance that God, consider'd as a Father, is ever said in Scripture to give to any of his Sons, is Life ; unless it be when it relates to the Adoption of *Abraham* and his Posterity to some earthly Inheritance ; to which they had no Right by Birth or Acquisition, or any other way than by divine Donation.

On the other hand, the unbelieving and disobedient Part of the Family of *Noah*, which

which was *Ham* and his Descendants, particularly *Canaan* seems to have renounc'd their Share in the Blessings that belong'd to the Children of God, and to have become *the Family of the Devil*; and accordingly to have been mark'd out as such by the Curse of God in many remarkable Instances, as had been the Case of *Cain* before the Flood, *Gen. iv. 11 — 22.* These Instances of God's severe Vengeance were sometimes necessary to prevent such unhappy Mixtures between these two Families, as had brought on the Flood; and were, in their natural Tendency, Motives to Repentance. And if they had not that Effect, yet must have render'd the Justice of God in any future Punishment the more conspicuous; and at the same time have confirm'd the Children and Family of God in their Faith and Obedience. Under this Head, to speak of them once for all, may be rank'd the Confusion and Dispersion of *Babel*, the Destruction of *Sodom*, the Plagues of *Egypt*, the Extirpation of the *seven Nations*, &c.

Notwithstanding this universal Desolation by the Flood, in nine Generations, the Knowledge and Worship of the one only true God, and all Vertue, had in a manner forsaken the Earth: And the World apostatizing from their Maker, became Worshipers of false Gods. As the Worship that had been paid to the true God, was paid to him very much under the

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the Notion of a Father ; it feems highly probable to me, that the firft Worſhip of the Devil might be introduc'd under the ſame ; ſince falſe Religion, eſpecially at the firſt, would certainly have a near Semblance of the true : And it has been an antient and common Obſervation, that the Devil affects to ape God. The *Phallagoga*, an Idolatry thought by many learned Men to be extremely antient, gives great Countenance to this Opinion : Eſpecially if *Spencer's* Notion be juſt, (which ſeems highly probable) that Circumciſion was appointed, among other Reaſons, to obviate this Idolatry. See *Spencer De Leg. Hebr. Rit.* lib. 1. cap. 4. ſect. 3. But whether this particular Notion be juſt or no, yet it is certain, that Idolatry was ſo general, that even the Family of bleſſed *Shem* was not entirely free from a lower kind of it ; they worſhipping Images or *Terraphim*, together with the true God, *Joſh.* xxiv. 2. However,

God wink'd at this, ſuffering their Manners, without ſending any Meſſenger to reclaim them.

But, ſoon after this Idolatry began, God call'd *Abraham* out of *Urr of the Chaldees*, chooſing him (who probably was the only Perſon that had kept himſelf free from it, *Joſh.* xxiv. 2. *Nehem.* ix. 7, 8. *Joſeph. Antiq.* lib. 1.) as the Head of a Family, in which he would preferve the true Religion, *Gen.*  
xviii.

xviii. 19. (consisting in a Belief of and in Obedience and Submission to the one true God) And by the Means of whose Travels, distinguish'd Protection and Vouchsafements, he would give such as were well dispos'd in *Canaan* and *Egypt*, &c. [*Gen.* xii. 17, 19. xiv. 18—21. xxi. 18. xxv. 3—7. xxvi. 6—34.] and elsewhere, an Opportunity to enquire after him.

In regard of *Abraham's* singular and unexampled Faith and Obedience on the greatest Tryals, God was pleas'd to become his *God, or his Father*. See *Gen.* xvii. 7. xxxi. 42. *Exod.* iii. 6. and many other Places. For, as has been observ'd already, God and Father are Terms that are often us'd promiscuously in Scripture. God also promis'd to *blefs him*. This Blessing seems to be the recovering him from Death, the remaining Part of the original Curse which had not yet been expressly taken off to *Noah*: And by this, *Noah's* blessing the *Lord God of Shem*, the Ancestor of *Abraham*, was explain'd; and that the Lord was the God or Father of *Shem*, was fully confirm'd, *Gen.* xii. 23. See *Gen.* xxii. 17, 18. For God now *expressly adopted Abraham*, *Shem's* Descendant, to the Inheritance of eternal Life: And also all the Families of the Earth that should become his spiritual Seed; *i. e.* Should imitate him in his Faith and Obedience, *Rom.* iv. 12, 16. *Gal.* iii. 9, 29. Or in  
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other

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other Words of Scripture, that *should be perfect before God* as he was: That is, should live in a steady Course of sincere Obedience, Submission to God's Providence, and Resignation to his future Disposal, from a firm Belief of his Protection, Support, and future Reward. For this Blessing was not to be confin'd to such only as should imitate him among the Race of *Shem*; but to be expressly extended to any among the other Families of the Earth, even the most accursed, that should follow his Example. However, *Abraham* was to have this singular Honour, that of whatever Family of the Earth, they were, that should imitate him, they should not receive their Title to this Inheritance immediately from God, as he did; but as the *Children of Abraham*, or thro' *Abraham*, who was the Father of us all, Rom. iv. 17. (whether *Shemmite* or *Canaanite*, *Jew* or *Gentile*, *Male* or *Female*, *Bond* or *Free*) *As it is written, a Father of many Nations have I made thee, before him whom he believed, even God, who quickneth the Dead, and calleth those Things which be not, as tho' they were.* And to give *Abraham*, not only the Promise of this Inheritance, but also a Promise of a Pledge of it, God likewise promis'd to adopt his natural Seed to an earthly Inheritance, and part of them to the Inheritance of *Canaan*, (the Delight of all Lands) who had no other Right to it, *Exod. xiii. 5.* God was pleas'd  
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to repeat these Promises to him, on great Occasions, for the Confirmation of his Faith, *Gen.* xiii. 14, 18. x. 5. xvii. 21. And to make them still clearer in Proportion to his Faith's growing stronger. And in order still farther to encourage and strengthen his Faith and Trust in God, God was pleased to appoint Circumcision, as the Seal of these Covenants or Promises: (*Gen.* xvii. 1 — 15. *Rom.* ix. 4. *Heb.* xi. 13.) Or in other Words, as a farther Assurance of this Adoption to an earthly as well as to an heavenly Inheritance. And therefore Circumcision was enjoined to none, but such as were entitled to both these Inheritances. So that, I think, Circumcision should be considered as the Badge of God's visible Family, or of God's Sons by a double Adoption, and of them only.

That *Abraham* might have the more strong Consolation in the lively Hopes of this double Inheritance (and of one of them, *viz.* the earthly, as a Pledge of the other, *viz.* the heavenly) God was pleased at last in infinite Condescension to confirm them by an Oath, *Gen.* xxii. 16. And to the intent that the Vigor of these Hopes might be the better preserved, on which their Performance of the Condition so much depended, and consequently the Performance of the Promise on God's Part, God saw fit to repeat these Promises (which he had so solemnly confirmed to *Abraham*) to *Isaac* and to *Jacob* afterwards,

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(*Gen.* xxvi. 34. xxvii, 29. xxviii. 4, 13, 14.)  
Heirs together with him of the same Promise,  
*Heb.* xi. 9.

*Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their Descendants, being the first Family of all the Families of the Earth, that received any express Promise, that God would be their God, and bless them; or in other Words, that he would be their Father, and that they should be his Children; Theirs was the Adoption, the Promises, and the Covenants, and the Inheritances, Rom.* x. 4. *Heb.* xi. 8, 13. Hence it is, that God calls *Israel* or the Children of *Israel* (the Descendants of *Abraham*) his Son and his First-born, *Exod.* iv. 22. *Israel* and his Sons being adopted to *Canaan*, the Inheritance of the First-born, whilst *Ishmael* had only *Idumea*, and *Esau* only Mount *Seir* for a Possession, *Deut.* xi. 5.

And hence it is that God is also the Father of all *Abraham's* spiritual Seed: *The Seed, or People, that was to be born; or the Seed that was to serve him, and that was to be accounted to him for a Generation, Psal.* xxii. 30, 31. God having adopted them from being the Children of Men, and of the Devil, Heirs of the first and second Death (which last is called Wrath) to an heavenly Inheritance, by his Free Grace, in *Christ Jesus* our Lord.

But farther, the Blessing promised to *Abraham*, the Father of all the Faithful, and to his faithful or spiritual Seed, was not a bare  
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Deliverance from all the Curses that *Adam* brought on his Seed, or that which they unhappily acquir'd by becoming the Seed of the Serpent (as has already been shewn) but the assuring him of a superior Blessing to that which *Adam* had forfeited: Or the assuring him of the Inheritance of an adopted Son of God, *viz.* a Resurrection to an heavenly Dominion, Glory, Bliss, and Immortality, as we learn from our Saviour's Argument against the *Sadducees*, *Luke* xx. 37. and from St. *Paul's* Epistle to the *Galatians*, Chap. iii. 14. under the Terms of *the Blessing of the Spirit*: The Spirit being to quicken or raise us up, and being in the mean time the Earnest of this Adoption, that is the Redemption of our Bodies from the Bondage of Corruption, *Rom.* iii. 21. and the Inheritance which is to follow it.

And from the New Testament, where this Matter is more fully explained, we learn, that when this Redemption shall be effected by the Spirit, then instead of an animal, earthly Body, cloathed with a Glory derived from the first *Adam* (who was but a living Soul, *1 Cor.* xv. 45.) in which we might have enjoyed an earthly Paradise, or a solitary Garden, that we were to have dressed, and where we should have had Dominion over the Fish of the Sea, the Fowls of the Air, and over every living Thing that moveth on the Earth, and subdued them; *Gen.* i. 28. ii. 15. and where we might have sometimes convers'd with animal Men,

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like our selves, and now and then have seen the Glory of God, and heard his Voice, as *Adam* did in the Cool of the Day, *Gen.* iii. 8. (which, as we have before observ'd, was the Inheritance with which he was vested soon after his Creation;) We may have a glorious, celestial, <sup>newer full</sup> incorruptible Body, shining like the Sun in the Firmament, deriv'd from the second *Adam*, who is a *quickning Spirit* (1 *Cor.* xv. 45.) and resembling his glorious Body; in which we shall inhabit the heavenly *Jerusalem*, where there shall be *no more Curse, nor no more Night*, *Rev.* xxii. 3, 5. but where *we shall be Kings and Priests unto God*, and *have Dominion over the Wicked*, *Psal.* xlix. or as *St. Paul* says, *judge Angels and the World*, 1 *Cor.* vi. 2, 3. And at full Rest and Leisure, and without any Interruption, enjoy the blessed Society of the Assembly of the First-born, whose Names are written in Heaven, and of an innumerable Company of *Angels*; and where after we have been introduced by *Jesus* the Mediator of the better Covenant, to God the Judge of all, *we shall be ever with the Lord, and see him as he is.*

*Abraham* being the first, to whom this Blessing was expressly promised after the Curse that had been pronounced on the Fall; Blessing and Cursing are afterwards often used in Scripture as Terms equal to Life and Happiness, and to Misery and Death. (See *Deut.* xxvii. 14, 26. and xxviii. 2—14. *Matth.*

xxv. 34. *Rom.* iv. 9. *Gal.* iii. 8, 9, 10, 13, 14.) And it may be always signify this in part, if not in whole.

This Blessing is expressed in other Words of Scripture, as *forgiving*, or *not imputing Sin*, *Rom.* iv. 7, 8. And *justifying*, *imputing or counting for Righteousness*, *Rom.* iv. 3. *Gal.* iii. 8. The reason of which Expressions is plain, since whosoever is *Rectus in Curia* is intitled to all the Privileges and Blessings that belong to the Jurisdiction of that Court; or rather to all the Privileges and Blessings which belong to the Subjects of that Kingdom, which erects or constitutes that Court.

After the Fall God had hitherto only manifested his Glory and Will to particular Families, *Seth's*, *Noah's*; and at last to *Abraham's*, *Isaac's*, and *Jacob's*, by an express Covenant of Adoption confirm'd by a Seal, a promis'd Pledge and an Oath. But the Family of *Jacob* multiplying exceedingly, till it came from seventy Souls, which went down into *Egypt*, (*Gen.* xlvii. 27.) to be about six hundred thousand Men, besides Children, or Male-children, (*Exod.* xii. 37.) and God remembering his Covenant, or his temporal Covenant, or the temporal part of his Covenant made with their Forefathers *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and their natural Seed, that he would give them the Land of *Canaan*, the promis'd Pledge  
of

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of the Performance of the better Promise,  
(*Exod* ii. 24. and iii. 8.) He now resolved  
to give them the actual Possession of the Earnest  
of it, and to take this Family, People, Nati-  
on, and Kingdom, to himself; and conse-  
quently that he would become their King,  
and their God. And sending a Message to  
them by *Moses*, that he would deliver them  
from the Bondage of the *Egyptians*, and re-  
solving also very soon to propose to them to  
become his People, he then first calls them *his*  
*People* in speaking to *Moses*; *Exod.* iii. 17:  
and afterwards in Messages, which he sent by  
*Moses* to *Pharaoh* about them, *Exod.* v. 1.  
and vi. 7. The better to prepare them for  
such a Kingdom, God had suffer'd them to  
groan under a long and cruel Oppression in  
*Egypt*; and in order to fix their Attention,  
and likewise draw the Attention of Mankind  
to Himself through them, he was pleas'd to  
deliver them from their Oppression, in a Man-  
ner that must make the greatest Noise in the  
World.

Perhaps God saw it the more fit to erect this  
Family into a Kingdom under Himself at this  
Period of Time, to prevent their worshiping  
the Devil, as *Baal* or *Lord*; that is, as the  
Lord or God of the Country which they were  
going to inhabit: Which about this Time was  
the Notion under which Worship was paid  
him by all the People in their Neighbourhood.  
See *Spencer de Theocr. Judaic.* Mankind  
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having now still farther apostatiz'd from the true God, and sunk deeper into the Worship of the Devil, as their Father and Lord, (though he was the grand and avowed Enemy of God, and of Mankind) and practising all sorts of Impiety and Wickedness in honour to him: Such indeed as were intirely suited to their own dark Minds, to the Prince of Darknes, and to the Empire he had usurped over them.

The better to obviate this Mischief, as well as for other wise Reasons, God was pleased fifty Days after their going out of *Egypt*, actually to erect them into a Kingdom under Himself, as their King and their God, by the Covenant in the *Wilderness* at Mount *Sinai*: Namely, that as he had delivered them out of the Land of *Egypt*, and out of the House of Bondage, he would take them for a People, and they should take the Lord for their God, and should obey him. *Exod.* xix. 4, 9. and xx. 2, 19. *Deut.* i. 17. and xxvi. 17, 18. *Josua* xxiv. 22. *Hosea* xiii. 10. *Exod.* xxiv. 3, 12.

The *Circumstances* which attended the entering into this Covenant were highly suitable to that Transaction. The Time of erecting this Kingdom, was when they could not but have very awful and grateful Thoughts of God; in a Place retir'd from all Mankind, who were Idolaters, and consequently from all Solicitations to any of their idolatrous Practices, and in so awful a Manner as was calculated to strike them and their Posterity with the most tremendous

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mendous Impressions of the Authority of the  
Lawgiver: All which would be little enough  
to preserve such a wayward and untractable  
People from the Superstitions of their Neigh-  
bours.

To these, such of any other Family as by  
the Consideration of God's amazing Providen-  
ces towards the *Israelitish* Family and Nation,  
should be brought to acknowledge the God of  
*Israel* for the only true God, and would submit  
to the Laws of this Kingdom which he had  
erected, were joyn'd: And a general Natura-  
lization of all such became a standing Law of  
their State. And as Circumcision had been  
the Badge of God's Family, so now it was  
made the Badge of all his male Subjects (*John*  
vii. 32.) who were to be the Inheritors of the  
Land of *Canaan*.

As this Kingdom was, among other Purpo-  
ses, design'd as a Reward for the Piety of  
*Abraham*, and as a Reward for his Descen-  
dants, who though far from being all perso-  
nally pious, yet were the only Family that  
worship'd the true God, or own'd the Rule of  
Virtue; God saw fit to bless them at once,  
and before-hand with the Riches of *Egypt*,  
as had been foretold to *Abraham*, *Gen. xv. 14.*  
(which they seem to have demanded as due for  
their hard Labour, *Exod. ii. 35, 36.* and which  
the *Egyptians* willingly gave them to get rid  
of them) and with a great and remarkable  
Overthrow of that People at the *Red Sea*:

When

before they actually became his people

When after the most cruel Oppression, and contrary to the most express Agreement, they came to hinder them from going into the *Wilderness* to sacrifice, as God had commanded them. They were likewise to have had an immediate Possession of the Land of *Canaan*, (*a Land which he had espied for them; Ezek. xx. 6. A Land flowing with Milk and Honey*) and had a free Government established over them, (See *Harrington's Art of Law-giving*, Book II. *And the Prerogative of Popular Government*, Book II. c. 3.) that excelled all others, not only in the peculiar Honour and Advantage of having God for their King, but (as might naturally thence be expected) in the most excellent Laws and Constitutions; till they by their incurable proneness to Idolatry and Vice oblig'd him, as a wise and gracious Governor, to defer their going into *Canaan* for some Years, and to propose Laws to them that were not good in themselves, but which were necessary from their wicked Temper and Disposition, as Remedies to prevent greater Evils, and even their utter Extirpation, long before it overtook them. See *Ezek. xx. 4—27*. Nor would their Wickedness suffer God to stop here, but at last, in just Punishment of their Obstinacy and Perverseness, forc'd him to withdraw more and more from the Exercise of his Regal Authority over them; and at their foolish and perverse Desire, to commit it to such, as used

them with a Harshness and Severity that was but too, like the Kings of all the Nations round about them. Thus however, by the Covenant at *Sinai*, the *Israelites* became God's People: Or a People that he had separated to himself from all the People of the Earth, who were Children and Subjects of the Devil, and to such a Degree, as to make the highest Acts of Wickedness the highest Acts of their Devotion to him, or to other Idols by his Suggestion. On this Account the *Israelites* are called *an holy People or Nation to the Lord*, *Exod.* xix. 6. *Deut.* vii. 6. and xiv. 2. and xxvi. 19.

It may be of use on this Occasion to stop a Moment, to recollect, that those, who by the Covenant at *Sinai* were become his People, were already *his Sons*, or Children, or First-born, and that he had been their *Father* by express Covenant from the Time of *Abraham*, as he was now to be their King: And to observe, that from hence it is that *Children* and *People*, are in effect the same thing, and promiscuously used in Scripture. *Exod.* vi. 7. and x. 3. and xix. 5, 6. and xxxi. 9. and *Hosea* i. 10. *Rom.* ix. 26. *Gal.* iii. 26.

This may account for what might otherwise appear somewhat strange in the sacred Writers. And after this, the Terms of God and Father, or Terms which imply them, are still used promiscuously with greater Frequency in the old Testament.

Thus



Thus God erected [ the Family, or ] the Children of *Israel* into a Kingdom : But it was but a temporal or an *earthly Kingdom*, though under himself, who was an heavenly King : In which he always acted suitably to that high Character, whilst he condescended so far as to become their earthly or temporal Prince. And though this Kingdom, which he administer'd, was but an earthly Kingdom, yet if they would but have observ'd its Laws, without the least Breach of any one of them, they would have obtained Life by the Works of this Law. *Ezek.* xx. 10 — 27. *Deut.* vi 25. *Gal.* iii. 10. *Rom.* iv. 4. and iii. 27. (That is, as I apprehend, an animal or terrestrial Life.) For as God took them for his People, it was but fitting that he should give them a spiritual and a perfect Law. See *Psal.* xix. 7. *Mat.* xxii. 36. *Rom.* vii. 12. And a perfect Law perfectly obey'd must entitle all that so obey it to Happiness and Life. On the other hand, as God was the supreme Magistrate in this Kingdom, so he could punish the Breach of such Laws as were spiritual. For though he ordinarily left the *Israelites* to be proceeded against by the inferior Magistrates, by *Plea* or *Controversy*, or *secundum acta & probata*, yet he seems to have inflicted Punishments in some cases immediately himself, which I take it are pointed out by such a Phrase as this, *The Lord will set his Face against that Man*, *Lev.* xvii. 10. Instances to this pur-

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pose may be seen, *Exod.* xxxiii. 35. *Lev.* x. 9. *Numb.* xii. 10. xvi. 31, 32. *2 Sam.* vi. 7. *2 Chron.* xxvi. 18.

But notwithstanding the *Israelites* had such Promises and Threatnings, yet Men being very frail, from the Strength of their Appetites and Passions, and the numerous Objects that surround them, and that perpetually solicit and provoke them; and the Law being also weak, or insufficient to assist their Reason in the Pursuit of Vertue, by not promising the Forgiveness of Sins that were past, or of future Transgressions; but instead of any such Promises, denouncing Death for each of them (*For cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Law to do them: Deut.* xxviii. 26. *Gal.* iii. 10.) And being also weak, by not proposing a sufficient Reward, or a Reward that was attainable; the Law, notwithstanding that Part of it was spiritual and perfect, and could have given Life to any, who could have observ'd it exactly, (*Lev.* xviii. 5. *Matt.* xxii. 36. *Rom.* iii. 27. iv. 4. vii. 12, 14.) became only the Law or Instrument of an imperfect Constitution thorough its Rigor as a spiritual Rule, and thorough the Weakness of this Constitution, (of which it was the Law or Instrument) on account of its being without a sufficient or an attainable Reward.

And though Part of this Law was spiritual, and regarded the very Motions of the Mind, yet

yet the far greater Part of it was carnal : (Indeed all the Law was so, that could be exactly obey'd.) This we learn from an express Assertion, *Heb. ix. 10.* And from being told, *That it purify'd nothing but the Flesh : But could not purge the Conscience, Heb. ix. 13, 14.* (to which it was altogether unprofitable, *Heb. vii. 18.*) Nor make the Comers thereunto perfect.

From both these Considerations it appears how this Law became deadly, as *St. Paul* asserts, *Rom. vii. 10.* The Rigor of that Part of the Law that was spiritual, requiring Perfection on pain of Death, made that Part of it deadly ; it being impracticable ; and the Penalty of every Disobedience to this part of the Law being Death, and the great Number of Precepts that were carnal, made those who were subject to them also often liable to Death. Besides, the Law was Death or deadly, because it could not give Life : As those Precepts could not in their own Nature which were carnal : No more than those, which though in their own Nature perfect, yet through the Weakness of Mankind, and the Defects of the Constitution of that Kingdom (allowing no Forgiveness, Relaxation or Abatement, and not proposing a sufficient or an attainable Reward) could not be perfectly obey'd.

This Law, which was partly carnal, and all of it deadly, God gave the *Israelites*, to let them see, that as this was not the Law of

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a perfect Constitution, the Constitution it self  
was not design'd to be perpetual: And even to  
shew them at last, that it was intended to lead  
them to a better Hope, viz. The Law of the  
Spirit of Life: Or, The Law of that King-  
dom which cannot be shaken: Or, as St. Paul  
expresses it under other Images; God gave  
them this Law to be a School-master to bring  
them to Christ, Gal. iii. 24. And thus Christ,  
or the Christian Religion may be said to be the  
End of the Law, or to be prophesy'd of by it,  
or contained in it, just as Equity is said by our  
Saviour to be the Law and the Prophets,  
Mat. vii. 12.

As Moses was God's chief Minister in erect-  
ing this earthly Kingdom; so Joshua, the  
Judges, Kings and Prophets, were his chief  
Ministers in preserving and continuing it. Jo-  
shua and the succeeding Judges were rais'd up  
by God, to introduce the Israelites into Ca-  
naan, or to preserve the Possession of it to  
them, on several extraordinary Emergencies.

The People at last growing weary of these  
uncertain and occasional Governors, and of  
the Form of Government that prevail'd under  
them, and affecting to be like their Neigh-  
bours, desir'd a King: Though they thereby  
rejected God from ruling over them, 1 Sam.  
viii. 7. God gave them Saul in his Anger, and  
took him away in his Wrath. The People  
might

might well be afraid, least *David*, whom God had anointed in *Saul's* stead, might have no Line, any more than *Saul*; and might be apprehensive of the Effects of such an unsettled State, introduc'd by their own Folly and Wickedness, in asking a King. They might well fear, lest the Government should be quite unhing'd; and lest *Canaan* it self, the Pledge of a better Inheritance, should be intirely lost: And which now, besides, too like other Pledges, when the Thing of which they are the Earnest is unseen or delay'd, had lost a great deal of its Force. To prevent the ill Consequences which might have ensu'd from any Uncertainty in this Matter, and to give a new Spring to their Hopes, the Continuance of the Kingdom under *David* and his Line, seems to have been made a Pledge of the future Kingdom, of the future Son of *David*, spoken of *Psal.* ii. 7. lxxxix. 19, 20. (who is also call'd *David*, *Jer.* xxx. 9. *Hof.* iii. 5. *Ezek.* xxxiv. 23, 24. xxxvi. 24, 25. from the most exact Resemblance and Analogy between *David* and him) and consequently of the Righteousness of that Kingdom, and of Life as the Reward of that Righteousness. God gives therefore a Promise of this Pledge, and of the Thing pledg'd by it, and confirms them by an Oath. The Promise of the Pledge indeed was conditional, as may be seen 2 *Sam.* vii. 14. xxiii. 5. 1 *Kings* ii. 4. viii. 25. But the Promise or Covenant of the Thing pledg'd, was

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 absolute, as may be seen 2 *Sam.* vii. 16,  
 26, 27. 1 *Chron.* xvii. 14, 23, 24, 27. *Acts*  
 ii. 25—37. *Psal.* lxxxix. 26—39. *Isaiab*  
 lv. 3, 4. *Acts* xiii. 34—38. *Jer.* xxxiii. 17,  
 21, 26. The absolute and conditional Pro-  
 mise may be seen together, *Psal.* cxxxii 11,  
 12. where likewise the absolute Promise, if  
 not the conditional, is confirm'd by the Oath  
 of God: As it also is, *Psal.* lxxxix. 35. What  
 has been said of this Covenant with *David*,  
 may serve to shew us, why the *new Testament*  
 Writers lay so much stress on Christ's being a  
*Son of David*, or of the *House and Lineage*  
*of David*; (in too many Places to be quoted)  
 of his being to have the *Throne and Kingdom*  
*of his Father David*, and of his being to  
 reign over the *House of Jacob*, and that for  
 ever, *Matt.* i. 20. *Luke* i. 32, 33. *Acts* xiii. 23.  
*Mark* x. 47. And this may also serve to shew  
 us, why the Apostles, on Christ's Ascension,  
 say that he was then actually rais'd to *David's*  
*Throne*, *Acts* ii. 30, 36. xv. 16.

But as on the Kingdom's becoming Heredi-  
 tary, God seems to have withdrawn more  
 from the Exercise of his regal Authority, and  
 the Answers by *Urim* and *Tbummim* ceas'd;  
 (See *Spencer de Leg. Hebr. Rit.* Lib. III.  
 cap. 7.) And as from the Time of *Abaz*, the  
 Affairs of the Kingdom of *Judab* seem'd ad-  
 verse and threatenng, till at last they became  
 quite desperate, and so both the Pledge of the  
 Continuance of the Kingdom under the Line of  
*David*,

*David*, and of *Canaan* it self, seem'd to lose all their Force and Virtue ; God saw fit to supply this Defect ; and keep their Hopes alive by clearer Predictions of the universal and perpetual Kingdom of *David*, or of the Son of *David*, or the *Messiah*, by a Succession of Prophets, from *Isaiab* to *Malachi* ; who spake not only of this Kingdom, of its Extent and Duration ; but of the Righteousness it should introduce, and of Life, as the Reward of that Righteousness, (*Isaiab* liii. liv. 12, 17. *Fer.* xxiii. 5, 6. xxxi. 31—35. xxxiii. 15, 16. *Dan.* ix. 24. xii. 2, 3. *Hab.* ii. 4.

This Succession of Prophets had also this in common with the Prophets that went before them, that they were often sent to explain the Law, or to give new Rules for their Conduct, on particular Occasions ; to exhort, admonish, reprove, threaten, comfort, or animate this People, as there was Occasion. For the Prophets are to be consider'd, as having a sort of legatine Commission from God, if I may be allow'd to use that Expression (especially such as were sent to the House of *Israel* after their Revolt from the Line of *David*) according as the Circumstances of the Nation requir'd. For to the Nation they were sent, not to particular Persons ; and to the Nation, were their Rules, Admonitions, Reproofs, Denunciations, Encouragements, and Promises given ; and nationally are they to be understood : Though there are several Things interspers'd, relating

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to the Religion of Nature, and of *Abraham*,  
and the farther Expectation of being deliver'd  
from Death, and adopted to eternal Life, by  
Prophecies clear enough to keep such an Hope  
alive in their Minds (particularly in the Books  
of *Deuteronomy*, *Joshua*, and the Prophets)  
as the surest Principle of national Fidelity and  
Obedience; together with entire Books writ-  
ten for their Instruction in moral and divine  
Things: Such as the Book of *Job*, *Psalms*,  
*Proverbs*, and *Ecclesiastes*.

But though it was an earthly Kingdom, and  
immediately answer'd the Ends of such a  
Kingdom, and no other; yet it was also de-  
sign'd for other Purposes. Particularly it did  
not only serve to put the *Israelites* perpetual-  
ly in mind of God, as the Creator and Go-  
vernor of the World, as the Rewarder of  
the *Patriarchs*, and as the God of *Abra-  
ham*, whenever they had to do with Him as  
the King of *Israel*; (all the Homage that was  
to be paid to Him as King of *Israel*, being  
suited to the Character of an heavenly King,  
though condescending to act as an earthly  
King;) but it was set up in the World, as a  
Light on a Hill (as the Family of *Abraham*,  
*Isaac*, and *Jacob* were before) in order to  
make all the World gaze on it, and enquire  
after the *God of Israel*; after the End for  
which such particular Laws, and so peculiar  
a Polity was given this People; and after  
the Expectation this People had, either near  
or



or more remote ; or that might be reasonably entertain'd about them. See *Sherlock on Providence*, p. 393.

Nor was it design'd only to raise an Expectation among the *Jews*, and among Mankind, of the Kingdom of the Messiah, but to prepare Things for it : So as to raise the greater Attention to it at Christ's Appearance, and so as that it might be known when it should take Place, at his being seated on his Throne, *at the right Hand of the Majesty on high*. [See *Sherlock on Providence*, p. 364.] This was done by Prophecies, and such Analogies, as I shall briefly mention presently.

As these were the great and ultimate Ends, for which the earthly Kingdom was erected, so in the mean time God design'd, by making the prosperous and adverse State of that Kingdom (both within it self, and with respect to its Neighbours) always keep a due Proportion to the Virtue and Vice of the Bulk of the People, to furnish a Story, from whence the noblest Moral might be drawn ; not only for the Benefit of themselves, and of their Posterity, but of other Persons and Nations that were either Cotemporary with them, or that succeeded them.

And if I may be allow'd to anticipate my Subject a little, since I am on this Head, rather than return to it again ; I would observe, that it must be visible to every one, that compares the earthly with the heavenly Kingdom, that

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there is a great Similitude and Analogy between them: At least between the great Outlines of them: That is, that the heavenly Kingdom answers all those Purposes to Men's Minds in a very superior Manner, which the earthly Kingdom served to Mens Bodies. And without all doubt this Similitude or Analogy was design'd with great Wisdom and Beauty by the Framers of them, to let us, who live in the new Age, see that they had one Author; and that the one was design'd at last to lead Men into the other; so that the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* was able to shew the *Jews*, that whatever was excellent in the Tabernacle, Temple, Altar, Priesthood, or Sacrifices of the earthly Kingdom, *for the purifying of the Flesh*, was provided in a much higher Degree *in the Kingdom that could not be shaken*, towards the *purifying the Consciences* of its Subjects *from dead Works*. But I do not pretend that the *Jewish* Tabernacle, Temple, Altar, High-priest and Sacrifices, when they were appointed, were design'd to intimate to the *Israelites*, at that time, that there was to be a christian Tabernacle or Temple, Altar, High-priest, and Sacrifice; since I don't find by any Passage in the Old Testament, that any such Thing was intended by them; or by any Passage in the *Old Testament*, or in the New, that they had any such Effect. But on the contrary, plain Hints in both, especially in the latter, that they

they did not produce any such Sentiments in the Minds of that People. I should rather therefore from these Observations, as well as from the Nature of the Resemblances and Analogies themselves, conclude that they were such as might be traced after the heavenly Kingdom took Place, according to the Idea or Model of which they were framed, rather than such, as could prefigure the Christian Tabernacle or Temple, High-priest, Altar or Sacrifice before hand. And by the by, I believe this will be found to be the Case of Prophecies too in a good measure, &c. Besides, the Expressions that are us'd by the *New Testament Writers* concerning this Matter, fully confirm this Opinion. For on this Account the Holy Place [Sanctuary] is call'd the *Antitype* (as ἀντίτυπα should be render'd) of the true. *Heb. ix. 24.* And when [the Sanctuary, or] Holy Places are said to be the Antitypes of the true, the Meaning is, that [the Sanctuary, or] Holy Places were made after the Type or Model of the true Sanctuary or Holy Place. For as τύπος, a Type, signifies a Model, ἀντίτυπος, the Antitype, signifies what is made after that Model. See *Doctor Sykes Essay*, &c. p. 181, 182. The first Divine that has given Occasion to think justly on this Subject: Though in express Contradiction to this Text, the earthly Sanctuary has been called the Type of the heavenly: Whereas the heavenly Sanctuary is here supposed

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fed to be the Type, and the earthly Sanctuary is expressly said to be the Antitype. So likewise St. Paul calls the *Law a Shadow*, Heb. x. 1. *Colof. ii. 17.* And he in the last Text adds, *That the Body is Christ*: That is, the Christian Religion, or the heavenly Kingdom, is the Body, which casts the Shadow, *viz.* the earthly Kingdom. It is here very pertinent to our purpose, to observe, that a Shadow is only such a Resemblance as represents the Outlines of the Body, but is not such a particular and distinct Resemblance, as a Picture or Image is, which represents the particular Features of the Face, and every particular part of the Body. This is the express Assertion, *Heb. x. 1.* where the Author says, *For the Law having a Shadow of good Things to come, and not the very Image [εἰκόνα] of the Things, can never with those Sacrifices — make the Comers thereunto perfect.* This may serve not only to confirm the Notion I here bring it to support, but what I advanc'd but just before, *viz.* That the Law was such a Representation of the Gospel as would shew the Analogy after the Gospel took place, rather than prefigure it before hand.

From hence we may farther see, how Christ is said to be in the Law and the Prophets: Namely, as a Type or Model may be said to be in its Antitype, or that which is made after that Model: Or as a Body may be said to be in a Shadow, that represents the Outlines of

it: Or as a stately Building design'd for the Heir, when at full Age, may be said to be in a less Building of the same Proportions, built of worse Materials, intended for the Heir during his Nonage. In a Word, Christ may be said to be in the Law (not typically indeed, but) antitypically, umbratically, and analogically.

It has been already observ'd, that the Law of the earthly Kingdom was deadly. And since it was, it was happy, that being made only between God and one Family, *viz.* of *Israel*, it could not disannul the Covenant or Promise, which God had made four hundred Years before to *Abraham*, and all the Families of the Earth, that should imitate his Faith and Obedience, as *St. Paul* is shewn to argue with great Force by *Mr. Lock*, in his incomparable Note on *Gal. iii. 15—21.* and therefore though God could justify none of the Subjects of his earthly Kingdom to eternal Life, by the Rule, Law or Constitution of that Kingdom; yet he justify'd as many as were the spiritual Seed, or Children of *Abraham*, *i. e.* *who trod in the Steps of his Faith and Obedience*, *Gal. iii. 6—10. Rom. iv. 10—13.* according to the Promise and Covenant made with *Abraham*, and all his Seed, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*; *Rom. iii. 30.* Of the latter Sort were the Profelytes of the Gate, such as are describ'd, *Psal. xxvi. 3—7. Who were to receive the Blessing of the God of Jacob:* And such in every Age, and in every Nation,  
that

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 that feared God and wrought Righteousness;  
 Acts x. 34, 35. So that *David*, who well  
 knew there was *no Sacrifice* appointed by the  
 Law of *Moses* for Murther and Adultery, and  
 such Breaches of the moral Law; *Psal.* li. 10.  
 but that *the Soul that sinned should die*, (See  
 2 *Sam.* xii. 13.) Yet knew the Blessedness of  
 him whose Transgression is forgiven; whose  
 Sin is covered, and unto whom the Lord im-  
 puteth not Iniquity, *Psal.* xxxii. 1, 2: *Rom.* iv.  
 6—9. And knew too, that he was that blef-  
 fed Person, who was sincere, or in whose Spi-  
 rit there is no Guile, Ver. 2. Or as he says in  
 another Psalm, who was of a broken and a  
 contrite Heart, *Psal.* li. 17. Thus this, tho'  
 an earthly or temporal Kingdom, was the only  
 Kingdom, and the *Israelites*, and such as  
 joyn'd with them, the only People God had  
 in the World; from the time of erecting this  
 Kingdom, to the sending down of the Holy  
 Ghost.

*John Baptist* indeed came preaching above  
 three Years before, that Men should repent;  
 because the Kingdom of God was at hand:  
 The Kingdom which several of the *Prophets*,  
 and *Daniel* in particular had foretold, as the  
 fifth Monarchy, *Dan.* ix. 14. And the  
 Word himself condescending to take Flesh did  
 the same; and sent out his twelve Apostles, and  
 after them his seventy Disciples in his Life-  
 time to do the like: And taught Men to pray  
 that this Kingdom might come, that is, might  
 come

come speedily: *Mat. vi. 10.* And after he had fully taught a Rule, and had been himself an Example of that Righteousness, which if his Disciples were conform'd to, he assured them they would obtain eternal Life, and had as a Son become obedient unto Death, God begat him from the Dead, making him the First-fruits of those who slept; whereby he declar'd him to be his Son, *Rom. i. 4.* and the Heir of all Things. In a few Days after He gave him Glory, *1 Pet. i. 21.* and vested him with kingly Power, upon his triumphal Ascension; when he first entered Heaven for us, or as our Forerunner, and sat down at the right Hand of God: And being then also anointed with the Oil of Gladness above his Fellows, (*Heb i. 9.*) Angels voluntarily subjecting themselves to him: Or in other Words of Scripture, being filled with all Fulness as the Head of his Kingdom, Church and People, He filled his Apostles with such a proportionable Fulness under him, as fitted them to be the chief Ministers of his Kingdom; enabling them (by the Holy Ghost shed down upon them, *Acts ii. 33.*) to convince the Jews, that he was exalted to the right Hand of God, or to all Power: Enabling them also to persuade the Jews to be reconciled to God, and to publish the Laws and the Mysteries of this Kingdom, or to open the State of it. When I say that the Apostles were enabled to convince, persuade, and instruct the Jews; I

mean Individuals ; for to such only were they sent. Christ also filled others as inferior Ministers of his Church or Kingdom, for other Purposes ; namely, to teach, exhort, admonish, reprove or comfort his People, or discharge other Offices in it, according to its various Exigencies.

Then the Kingdom of God, of Christ, or of Heaven (called also the *Kingdom of Light*) took Place in the World. The *Jew* that became a Subject of this Kingdom, or one of God's People in it, became so only by believing Christ to be risen and exalted to be the King of it, and by making an open Profession of his Belief, at his being publicly translated into this Kingdom by Baptism ; and if he persevered in obeying the Laws of this Kingdom, which were mild and gentle ; and to which the Frame and Constitution of it gave him sufficient Encouragement, Motives and Assurances, he became one of its faithful Subjects, sanctify'd in Soul, Body and Spirit ; and entitled by the Grace of it, to the Reward of an endless Life.

By this new Frame and Constitution, eternal Life was far more firmly assur'd than by the *Abramick* Covenant, by the *Jewish* Constitution, by the Kingdom settled on the Family of *David*, by the Predictions of the Prophets, or by the Predictions, or the Preaching of *John Baptist*, or of Jesus, whilst he was a Prophet upon Earth. For Believers  
now



now were not only entitled to it, by being Children of *Abraham*, or of the *Prophets*, by being *Israelites* or Subjects of the Line of *David*, or by being Disciples of *John Baptist* or of *Jesus*; but in as much as they being *Partakers of Flesh and Blood, and he also taking part of the same*, (being a Son of *Abraham*, Rom. i. 4. *Heb.* ii. 11 — 15.) died and revived, that we, through our Relation to him, as the First-born among many Brethren (or our elder Brother) through the Spirit of God, which he receiv'd, and then sent from the Father, at his Ascension, might be *begotten to a lively Hope*, or become assured of our Adoption; that is, of our being *the Sons, and consequently the Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Jesus Christ*, Rom. viii. 15 — 18. Or as it is express'd, *Gal.* v. 4 — 7. *God sent forth his Son — that ye might receive the Adoption of Sons. And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying Abba, Father.* Thus the Spirit sent down from the Father and the Son, became the Earnest of the heavenly Inheritance to Christians, as *Canaan*, and the Kingdom of *David*, had been to the *Israelites* before. From this Time God and Father are not only very often promiscuously us'd, but join'd together in Scripture. For though they had been us'd promiscuously before, as has been already observed, yet this was little understood, or at least attended to

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in our Saviour's Time; when through the  
Corruptions that prevailed, the *Patriarchal*,  
*Abrahamick* and *Prophetick*, as well as natu-  
ral Religion, and a spiritual *Messiah* were so  
much forgot, and the temporal Kingdom so  
wholly regarded, that our Saviour tells them,  
that no *Man knows the Father, save the Son*;  
*and he to whom the Son will reveal him*,  
Mat. xi. 27.

Besides, our Adoption is not only farther  
secur'd in *Christ Jesus*, by God's becoming  
our Father, and our becoming his Sons and  
Heirs, in the Manner I have just now men-  
tion'd; but as *Christ Jesus* our elder Brother,  
and with whom we are joint Heirs, is actually  
possess'd of his Inheritance; and is become the  
first Fruits of the Resurrection, and Ascension:  
He being first entered into Heaven, and for all  
Believers; (even for those, who had only an  
Adoption in *Abraham*) as the Forerunner:  
And to us (who have our Adoption in right  
of being *Christ's* Brethren, as well as in right  
of being the Children of *Abraham*) as taking  
Possession, and preparing a Place for us: God  
not having design'd to give any thing more to  
*Abraham*, and his spiritual Seed, before  
*Christ*, than a Title to Life; whilst the actual  
Possession of Life was reserved for one, that  
was far more Righteous than *Abraham*, who  
was perfectly and completely so, even *Christ*  
*the Righteous*. So that as Death actually enter'd  
by *Adam's* Sin, Life actually enters by  
Christ's

Christ's Obedience: Notwithstanding that a Title to Life was given to *Abraham*, and his spiritual Seed before. And in this Sense I understand *St. Paul*, *Rom. v. 12*——*21*.

But farther, we are not only entitled to the Inheritance by our Adoption in *Christ Jesus*, but as it is a *Reward* given us by the same Law of this Kingdom, that prescribes our Duty, as the Terms of obtaining that Reward. This Law must therefore be considered as a Covenant, since it does not only prescribe our Duty, and entitle every faithful Subject to a general Protection; (which every Kingdom proposes to its Subjects) but to the special Reward of a glorious and eternal Life, from the unspeakable Bounty and Munificence of our heavenly King. And farther, this Law must likewise be consider'd as a Covenant, which Christ has mediated between God and us.

In every well constituted Kingdom, Law and Compact is the Security of the Subject; not only of such as preserve their Duty and Allegiance, but of such as have fallen into Rebellion and Revolt. How much more must the Law and Covenant of this Kingdom be thought to be such a Security, when we consider it as mediated by one of so great Power and Dignity, as the second Person in it.

But we may be still farther assur'd, that the Law of this Kingdom shall have its full Force and Effect, since the Mediator of the Covenant is made the King of this Kingdom, and is in actu-

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actual Possession of it, for our Benefit, and appointed by the Father to keep Possession; and to prepare a Place for us. And in order to the better administring, it has all Power over all Things in Heaven and Earth put into his Hands (as the King of his Church) him only excepted, who has put all things under him. He has likewise all Judgment committed to him, in order to judge and determine of the Actions of all Men, to pronounce Sentence on them, and to award Execution at the Consummation of all things. To which end, the Gospel assures us, that he will raise the Wicked as well as the Just, in order to his passing this final Judgment. So that he has not only Life, but a Power to give an endless Life, and inflict the second Death, according to *what Men have done in the Flesh, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

This Kingdom, and universal Power, Christ has also obtained on a Covenant between the Father and himself, *viz.* because *he was* [or became] *the Son of Man*, John v. 27. And he having performed the Condition, which in other Words was his taking Flesh, and dying on the Cross, cannot fail of having this Kingdom and Power confirm'd to him, as the Reward of his Obedience. So that coming to his Kingdom and Power on the Terms of so painful a Submission to the Will of his heavenly Father, he is often represented as coming to them by Purchase; and as purchasing his Church,

Church, the Subjects of this Kingdom, whom his Power is to secure, (from the Bondage of Sin and *Satan*, and its Wages, Death) *with his own Blood*, Acts xx. 28. Ephes. i. 14. Whereas God only purchas'd or redeem'd the People of his earthly Kingdom to himself from *Egyptian Bondage, by almighty Power, and an out-stretched Arm*, Exod. xii. 6. Deut. iv. 20. and xxxii. 6. *Psalms* lxxii. 2. And the Security, which we may suppose Christ to have acquir'd by his purchasing us with so great a Price, must needs be our Security too; since he is our immediate King, and we are immediately his People, *and the Lot of his Inheritance*, Ephes. i. 14.

But lest any Suspicion should yet remain in the Minds of guilty Men (who are ever full of all possible Misgivings) of what might be the Event; since after all God is greater than the King of this Kingdom, or the Mediator of this Covenant; and that he is always consider'd as the offended Party; lest any Jealousy, I say, should lurk in our Minds on this account, Christ is represented not only as the King of this Kingdom, but as the *High-priest* of our Profession, offering himself to God as a Sacrifice of a sweet smelling Savour by the eternal Spirit, and powerfully interceding as an Advocate with him, in virtue of that Sacrifice, in order to obtain all Blessings from him, and dispensing them to us; *and we are sure that God always beareth him*. From this  
Con-

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Consideration it is, that we are commanded to pray to the Father in his Name: Coming to God through an Intercessor being a proper Support of the Faith of such who have been guilty: As we may all see by consulting our own Minds, or the History of Mankind, even when we are only guilty to one another. Besides, that it is but fit and congruous, that if the Father dispenses his Blessings to us by the Son, we should offer up our Sacrifices of Prayer and Praises by him also. And it seems too, that Christ being our High-priest, and presenting himself a Sacrifice to God for us, is also design'd to shew us the Holiness of the Supreme and Subordinate King of this Kingdom; and of the Law he has set us, and to furnish us with powerful Motives to obey them.

But that we may have all possible Assurance, that God will hear Christ at all times, we have the strongest Proofs that he has heard him. For on praying the Father for the Spirit, as he said he would, *John* xiv. 16. he received it, and sent it down on his *Apostles*, and *first Disciples* in proper Proportions and Degrees, as he had before promised. Thus this Spirit was first in Promise, and then in Fact an Assurance, that God had heard Christ; and a *Pledge*, that he would hear him in all his Intercessions for us.

This Office of an High priest is also farther confirm'd to him, and consequently to us, by *the Oath of God*; who has sworn to him, *Thou art*

*art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchizedeck, Psal. cx. 4. Heb. vii. 21. That so by two immutable things, by which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay hold upon the Hope set before us.*

By all these Ways we are assur'd of its being God's good Pleasure to give us the Kingdom. But yet lest after all we should have any doubt of the Sufficiency of Christ's Power, or of his Interest to preserve us to it, and we should imagine, that any might be able to pluck us out of his Hand, notwithstanding the Kingdom and Power that is thus committed and secured to him; yet still, I say, as we can't but know, that none can pluck us out of his Father's Hand, we are (to prevent any doubt or suspicion on this Head) expressly assur'd, that *He and the Father are One*, John x. 34. And that we shall be *kept by the mighty Power of God through Faith unto Salvation*. Oh! *the Height and Depth, the Length and Breadth, of the Love of Christ that passeth Knowledge!*

Finally, That those who should live in the Ages that were distant from the most known and important Facts of this Transaction, might not have the least Hesitation, about the Truth of them (on which the Doctrines and Duties that the Subjects of this Kingdom are to believe and practise, together with their Hopes, depend) Christ has instituted a Feast at his

I

Table,

Table, (such an one as suits the State of this Kingdom, and the Bulk of the Subjects of it,) as a proper and solemn Memorial to be often repeated, in order to preserve the Evidence of the Truth of these Facts in such a Manner, as is least liable to be counterfeited, (accompanied with Words which demonstrate the Institutor of this Feast to be the High-priest of our Profession, and the Prince of our Salvation) analogous to the Passover, the most solemn Feast of the earthly Kingdom, and calculated to raise the most proper Sentiments in our Minds towards him, and all our Fellow Subjects, till *the Lord himself comes the second Time, without a Sacrifice for Sin unto Salvation.* To which purpose, as well as those of offering up our joint Prayers and Praises, and Alms, and of admonishing one another in his Name, Christians must assemble themselves together in a decent and orderly Manner.

All the Texts that relate to *forgiving Sin, and imputing Righteousness; or that speak of the Righteousness of God, or of Faith, or of Faith working by Love, or of the Works of Faith, or of Abraham, or of our being justified by Works,* are to be understood either to relate to the Covenant with *Abraham*, or to the State of the Kingdom of Heaven.

From this Time forward this heavenly Kingdom became so eminently the Kingdom of God, and the Subjects of it so eminently his People [*the λαός that should be born*] that  
the



the other low earthly Kingdom designed chiefly to prepare things for this, and his earthly People the Subjects of that Kingdom are scarce ever consider'd: Though that earthly Kingdom continued, and the *Jews* remain'd the Subjects of it for near forty Years after Christ's Ascension to his Throne; God affording them that Time and Opportunity to enter into his spiritual and heavenly Kingdom, and giving them the last and most demonstrative Evidence of their Obligations to enter into it by the Convictions of the Spirit; as well as fresh Motives to that Purpose, by the Provocation God saw fit to give them to Jealousy (some few Years after it had been only offer'd to them) by taking in first the Devout, and then the Idolatrous *Gentiles* to be his People, and the Subjects of this heavenly Kingdom; who had been till then (a very few excepted) *Enemies, walking according to the Prince of the Power of the Air*, ever since the Apostacy soon after the Flood; and having a great part of that time been kept separate from God's People (or the People of his earthly Kingdom) and the Children of his Family, by the ceremonial Law, the Wall of Partition, which immur'd or enclos'd the *Jews*, and kept out the *Gentiles* from them, *Gal. iii. 23.* But that Wall of Partition being now to be broken down, and an Embassage of Peace being to be sent to the *Gentiles*, by *Peter, Paul* and *Barnabas*, to perswade them to be reconciled, and to enter

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into his heavenly Kingdom, and so to become  
Fellow Members, and Subjects of that King-  
dom, (without being subject to the Laws of  
his earthly Kingdom) with the Remnant of  
*Jews* that had, or should enter into it (and  
remain Subjects to the Laws of his earthly  
Kingdom) God's Purpose took effect, (for  
who shall resist his Will?) And all of them  
together came to have God for their God in  
the most high and exalted Sense, as they be-  
came his spiritual People (*by Faith in Christ*  
*Jesus*, Rom. iii. 29. and ix. 24, 25.) the *true*  
*Jews or Israel of God*, or *the Circumcision not*  
*made with Hands*. Rom. ix. 14. Gal. vi. 16.  
*A chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an*  
*Holy Nation, a peculiar (or a purchas'd)*  
*People*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. Both *Jew and Gentile*,  
*Circumcision and Uncircumcision*, Barbarian,  
*Scythian, Bond and Free*. For though the  
*Jews* had been a holy People from the first,  
acknowledging the only true God, and the  
Rule of Virtue, and were at this Time free  
from Idolatry; yet they had strangely devi-  
ated from that Rule to superstitious and impi-  
ous Traditions. But now they were enabled  
to understand and observe the Rule of Virtue  
far better than ever they had done before;  
(as the Prophet *Jeremiah* foretold they should)  
and so became God's People in another Man-  
ner than they had been his People: *Not ac-*  
*cording to the Covenant of the Tables of Stone,*  
*but by putting his Laws into their inward*  
*Parts,*

*Parts, and writing them in their Hearts,* Jer. xxxi. 31. quoted *Heb. viii. 10.* and alluded to *2 Cor. iii. 3—10.* And as the *Jews* now became more eminently Holy; so the *Gentiles* now first became [Saints, or] Holy, at their being *translated out of the Kingdom of Darknes into this Kingdom of Light,* *1 Cor. i. 2.* *Ephes. i. 1.* Then first *renouncing the Works of Darknes,* and separating themselves from the rest of the World, which lay in Idolatry and Vice.

From what has been hitherto said of the *Abrahamick Covenant,* and the Constitution of the heavenly Kingdom, we may see, that they are the same in Substance, and differ chiefly as two Covenants between the Father of a Family and his Children may be supposed to differ; the one of which is more fully explain'd, and corroborated than the other: Or as a Covenant between the Father of a Family and his Children may be supposed to differ from the same Covenant between the same Parties, consider'd not only as a Father of a Family with his Children, but as a King with his People. In order to give a fuller Security to their Adoption or Inheritance, by Law and Compact, the most solemnly ratified and confirmed, so as to entitle them to their Inheritance, not only as their Inheritance, but as their Reward.

And from all that has been hitherto said, we may see, that the heavenly Inheritance was

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was first intimated to *Adam*, and to the *Patriarchs*, (both by the gracious Discoveries God made to his own Family, and by the amazing Curses and Judgments he brought on the Family of the Devil) was expressly promis'd, seal'd, sworn and pledg'd to *Abraham*, and to all his spiritual Seed through him ; (though the Knowledge of the Promise, Seal, Oath and Pledge, was not publish'd beyond his Family, and such as would come to enquire of that Family about it) was pointed out by the Imperfection and the Antitype of the *Jewish* Constitution ; was pledg'd afresh in Promise, by the Covenant with *David*, and in fact, to his Seed, who sat for above four hundred Years on his Throne ; was foretold by the *Prophets*, (when the former Pledges seem'd to fail) as what should take Place under the Kingdom of the *Messiah*, the Son of *David*, in the Age to come ; was prophesied of by *John Baptist*, as what would be accomplished in *Jesus*, whom he pointed to as then among them ; was preached by *Jesus* in the Days of his Flesh, as what would take Place after his being lifted up ; was actually possess'd and enter'd upon by him, and for us, at his Ascension, as the First-born among many (Sons of *Abraham*, who were all his) Brethren ; was sworn to *Christ* ; was signified by Baptism ; was commemorated by the Lord's Supper ; and last of all, was seal'd and pledg'd by the Spirit, as a Proof that **Christ** has Power

er to give Life, (from his being exalted to all Power both of Government and Judgment,) and that he will in due Time actually give it his Brethren and Subjects, by that very Spirit by which God rais'd him, and by which he will raise us up from the Dead : By which also some of the *Apostles* went and preached this whole Doctrine to all the *Jews*, and others of them, according to his Command, to all the *Gentiles*.

Thus God had from the Shedding down of the Holy Ghost (the first Act of Christ's regal Power) till the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, two Kingdoms and two People in the World ; but of different Kinds, *viz.* an earthly and an heavenly one. And though the Subjects of the earthly Kingdom had no Privilege in the heavenly Kingdom, beyond the *Gentiles*, who were not Subjects of the earthly Kingdom, besides the first Offer of entring into his heavenly Kingdom ; yet they continued the Subjects or People of his earthly Kingdom, under his temporal Protection, (such at least as was suited to the low State of their Fidelity and Obedience, and to the wise and merciful Ends of his universal Government of the World,) owing and paying Obedience to the Law of his fleshly or carnal Commandments. This must necessarily have been the Case, since his spiritual Kingdom related wholly to the Minds of  
Men,

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Men, and alter'd nothing in their civil Obligations. Indeed it bound down their Political (as well as Oeconomical) Duties more strictly upon them. *Rom.* xiii. 1—8. *1 Cor.* vii. 10—25. So far was it from dissolving any civil Polity or Government in the World; or theirs in particular.

But when after all the most gracious and condescending Methods had been try'd, the Subjects of this earthly Kingdom would not serve God, and obey the Voice of his Son, *the great Prophet*, as they had promis'd they would, as a fundamental Stipulation at the erecting the earthly Kingdom, *Deut.* xviii. 15—20. *Exod.* xx. 19. *Acts* iii. 23. Nor would not enter into his heavenly Kingdom, but continued a rebellious and contumacious People for about forty Years, after the erecting this Kingdom, (the Time that he had suffer'd the Manners of their Fathers in the Wilderness,) he brought *the People of the Prince*, (call'd so, because he was the Head of the fourth (or only) Monarchy then in the World, according to *Daniel's* prophetick Language) upon them; as *Daniel* had foretold, (*Chap.* ix. 26.) and as Jesus himself foretold also, (*Luke* xix. 41—45. and xxi. 20.) and destroyed them; whereby he abdicated this his earthly Kingdom, affording the *Jews* no manner of Protection; they having entirely

ly forfeited it, and the keeping up that earthly Kingdom, being no longer of that use to the *Jews*, or to the World, for which it was chiefly and ultimately intended; now that the heavenly Kingdom had so fully taken Place: For *Christ was the End of the Law*, Rom. x. 4. And it had been foretold, that *when He for whom the Government was reserved* [*ὅς ἐν ἔλθῃ ᾧ ἀπόκειται*] *should come, and the People should be gather'd unto him, the Sceptre should depart from Judah, and a Lawgiver from between his Feet*, Gen. xlix. 10. according to some, and those I think the best, Readings of the Septuagint. Whereupon as God ceas'd to be their King, they ceas'd to be his People, or to owe any Allegiance to the Laws of his earthly Kingdom; and became the avow'd and determin'd *Enemies* of his heavenly Kingdom, Rom. xi. 28. The very Character of the idolatrous *Gentiles*, Rom. v. 10, 11.

From this Time God has had but one Kingdom, and one People in the World, (*viz.* a heavenly and a spiritual Kingdom over a willing People) ruling only over the Spirit of their Minds. However, for their *Father's sake* (upon whose Account the *Israelites* were first taken to be a People, *Deut.* iv. 37.) the *Jews* are still so beloved, that it is probable, there will come a time, according as God seems to have reveal'd it by his holy Apostles and Prophets,

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that they shall be restor'd, not only to be his spiritual Subjects, but his earthly People again in their own Land. *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!*

This earthly Kingdom however, when restor'd, is to cease before the heavenly one. For that will not determine but with the End and Consummation of all God's Dispensations towards the Children of Men. When all the Enemies of God's Family and Kingdom, and of his Children and People, are *to be put under Christ's Feet; the last of which shall be Death*: Then will his Kingdom appear in its brightest Glory. *And when the Father shall have subdued all Things unto him, [Christ] then also shall the Son himself be subject unto him [the Father] that God may be all in all,* 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26, 28.

That the one great Design of Revelation, and the one great Mean, by which that Design has been pursued in the several Dispensations of God towards Mankind (though discovered  
in



in different Ages of the World in different Ways) may appear the more clear and perspicuous; I will endeavour to draw what I have said a little closer together, in a short *Recapitulation* of the whole.

Which is this: That after *Adam*, whom God had created innocent or perfect, and whom, as such, he had vested at his Creation with the Inheritance of an animal, terrestrial Glory, Dominion, Bliss and Immortality, (by which he became *the Son of God*, Luke iii. ult.) and that not only for himself, but for his Posterity, had forfeited it for them as well as for himself; by eating of the Tree of Death, *or of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*, in disobedience to God's express Command, and in compliance with the Temptation of the Devil: It being the good Pleasure of God, I say, that *Adam*, who had been thus his Son by Creation, with all his Descendants, the Sons of Men, should not finally continue the Children of that apostate Spirit, and so remaining under the Power of Death, have their Portion with him in the *Blackness of Darkness for ever*, through Despair of ever diverting the Displeasure of their Maker; or through their being without a well grounded Hope of obtaining a Recompence sufficient to support them in a constant Course of Self-denial and Obedience; God was mercifully pleased to give some Intimations to *Adam* and the *Patriarchs*, (particularly to *Enoch*

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and *Noah*,) that He would become a Rewarder after Death [or a Father] of all those who should diligently seek after his Will and obey it. I mean that Will of his *written in their Hearts*, or imparted by Revelation, relating to their Temper and Conduct, which was so perfectly suited to their Nature and Circumstances, as to render it fit for them to search after and obey it, abstracted from all Considerations of this future Reward. On the other Hand, God also gave several Instances of his high Displeasure against the Family of *Cain* and *Canaan*, (which are to be considered in their respective Ages, as the avowed Families of the *Devil*,) and against such as mingled with them, (who rejected and despised all the gracious Intimations of his Purpose of adopting the Children of Men,) thereby the better to keep the Children of his own Family in a just Awe and Fear of Him.

And to the Intent, that he might at the same Time assure them the more effectually of that his most gracious Purpose, he afterwards in great Tendernefs and Condescension, vouchsafed to make an express Covenant with *Abram*, the Father of all the Faithful; in regard of his singular and unexampled Trust in the Power of God, and Obedience to his Will, in the most trying Instances, that he would *Adopt* him to the Inheritance of a glorious, spiritual, and celestial Kingdom, Bliss and Immortality, infinitely exceeding the Inheritance

heritance which Mankind lost by the Disobedience of *the Father of all the Living*. God was moreover pleased to give *Abraham* the Promise of *Canaan*, as a promis'd Pledge of his performing that better Promise; and Circumcision, as a Seal to both these Promises: And was also pleased to ratify the Performance of them by an Oath. Nor did he make this Promise to *Abraham* alone, but in making it to him, he made it to all the Men of all the Families of the Earth, in all Ages, that should become his Seed; that is, that should imitate his Faith and Obedience.

He afterwards also, for several wise Reasons, erected this Family, and such as would joyn themselves to them, into an *earthly Kingdom*, so constituted, as to point out a better; and as in many proper Ways to prepare Men and dispose Things for the Establishment of it; and to answer many other great Ends, both to them and the World, in their own Time, and in all future Ages. He also gave them the actual Possession of *Canaan*; and afterwards made a Covenant, concerning the Family of *David*, (and confirm'd it by an Oath,) as Pledges of the Performance of this better Promise. And after the unpromising adverse or desperate Circumstances of the *Jewish* Nation, made both the Pledges seem to lose their Force with the *Jews*, this Hope was kept alive by Prophecies of the latter Prophets of a better Kingdom under the Messiah;

fish ; especially in the Minds of such, as would become the *Children of the Prophets*, and imitate them in the Faith of these Predictions.

And to the Intent, that he might in due Time assure this Inheritance to them in a clearer and stronger Manner, than he had done by the Intimations to the Patriarchs, by the Covenant with *Abraham*, as the Father of a spiritual Family or Seed, or by the Covenant of *Sinai*, or of *David*, or by the latter Prophets, he first sent his holy Child *Jesus* to assure them of this, as a Prophet and Teacher of a higher kind than he had ever sent before ; and to give us a clear Rule and a perfect Example of such a Righteousness, (after the Forgiveness of what was past,) as would entitle us to this Inheritance. Whom, after that He had become obedient to Death, God raised from the Dead, and gave him Glory ; erecting a Kingdom under him, as the First-born among many Brethren ; constituting him for this high and voluntary Act of Obedience, in suffering Death, the Heir and Lord of all things ; that so if the *Jews*, or others, (whether they were already his adopted Children or not, ) on a Message sent to them from himself by the *Apostles of Christ Jesus*, would now become the faithful Subjects of this his heavenly Kingdom, and be publickly translated into it by Baptism, they should both be recovered from Death, the Appointment of the Sons of Men, and saved from Wrath to come, or the second  
Death,

Death, the Portion and Reward of the Family and Kingdom of the Devil; and also have this heavenly Inheritance much more firmly secured to them in right of Children, by Adoption in *Abraham*, as the Father of the Faithful. For Christ was a Child of *Abraham*, putting his Trust in God, Heb. xi. 13. and was actually raised from the Dead, and consequently became their elder Brother. He also became their elder Brother on another Consideration, viz. as he sent to them the Spirit of their heavenly Father, now become the Spirit also of himself, their elder Brother, (on his receiving it from the Father,) as a Pledge and Earnest of their Adoption; thereby confirming their Title to this Inheritance as *Heirs of God*, and making or constituting them *joint Heirs* with himself. But their Title to this Inheritance was yet more strongly confirmed to them by this new Constitution; not only by its confirming their Title by Adoption, but by its giving them a new Title, viz. that of a *Reward* to their Obedience of the mild and gracious Law of this Kingdom: To which Reward they should have an indefeasible Title, by that very Law, which prescribed the Terms of this Reward: The Law it self, which is considered as a Covenant, (since it not only prescribes the Duty of a Subject, but entitles every one that performs it, to this Reward,) being moreover ratified and confirmed by the most great and solemn Transactions, that we

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can conceive between the Father, as the Monarch of the Universe, and the Man Christ Jesus, as the King of this Kingdom under him; in behalf of the Kingdom which he was to receive from him, and in behalf of such as would become the Subjects of it.

And to the Intent, that the most distant Ages of the World might be assured of the Truth of the most important Facts of this Transaction, he has instituted a Feast to be often repeated in his Kingdom, as an undoubted Memorial of them, analogous to the most solemn Feast of the earthly Kingdom, and calculated to raise the most proper Reflections in our Minds, till he *comes the second Time without Sin unto Salvation*. To which and all the other holy Purposes, *viz.* of Baptism (mentioned before) Hearing the Word of God, public Prayers, Praises and Admonitions, Christians must assemble themselves with Decency and Order.

Thus has it pleased God in infinite Wisdom and Mercy, to take the most wise and condescending Methods, in order to prevent our Despair, and to animate and confirm us in the Hope of such a Degree of immortal and celestial Dominion, Bliss and Glory, as would be infinitely superior to all the low, mix'd and momentary Pleasures, that might seduce us from our Duty, (and the Happiness that both constitutes it to be our Duty, and that results from it,) without which superior Reward, the grand Enemy of God's Kingdom, would for ever  
have

have diverted Mankind from any Endeavours after Obedience, or at least from a steady Perseverance in it: As he first tempted them to Apostacy by an Act of the highest Presumption, from a vain Hope of gratifying a low Appetite of the Body, and a foolish and wicked Ambition of their Mind.

In order to understand the Nature of the earthly Kingdom of God over the *Israelites*, and the heavenly Kingdom of God over *Christians* the more fully, it must always be remember'd, that as the former was erected many Ages before the latter, so the former continued near forty Years after the latter, <sup>took place.</sup> During which Time these two Kingdoms were Cotemporary to each other.

And though it is probable that the earthly Kingdom may be again erected; yet it must cease and determine before the heavenly one; which will not end but with the Consummation of all Things.

Thus I have considered *Adam as a Son of God by Creation* before the Fall: And all Mankind after the Fall, either as the *adopted Sons*, and afterwards the People of God, or as the Children, and afterwards the Subjects of the Devil; and accordingly entitled to an endless Life, as it is described in Scripture, or appointed to the second Death.

## COROLLARY I.

As this is the Sum of what has been said, so the Corollaries which may very fitly be drawn from it are, That *Religion*, or as some Divines have very justly distinguish'd it, the Religion of the End, has always been, and always will be the same, from the Beginning to the End of this World, and of that which is to come: But the *Religion of the Means* [Mean] has been somewhat different, in the different Ages of the Children of Men. By the Religion of the End, I mean the steady Government of our own Appetites and Passions, and a constant Benevolence to others, necessarily resulting from the Frame of our *Nature*, and from the State of Things, consider'd as the Law of a Being supremely powerful, wise and good, and to whom consequently all Reverence, Gratitude, Obedience, Submission, and Resignation, are due. And in this Religion of the End, natural and reveal'd Religion, as to the Matter of them, are entirely the same. And by the Religion of the Means [Mean] (which has been the chief and peculiar Matter of Revelation,) I intend the Method which God in infinite Condescension and Kindness to Mankind, has used by Revelation, to keep or make them Religious: Such as the Method used with our first Parents in  
 Inno-



Innocence ; with them, and the Patriarchs after the Fall ; with *Abraham*, and all that knowing his Story, should imitate his Virtues ; with the *Israelites*, and all that were acquainted with their Story, and then with the Disciples of *John Baptist*, and of *Jesus*, and the Believers in *Christ*. All which Methods will fall under the general Head of Motive, or Promise ; very much heightned however, as it contains an Assurance of being delivered from the severest Threatning. Or if you will, this Matter may be a little more particularly stated thus. The Religion of the End is Piety, Virtue, or the Obedience of a Child of God. The Mean to keep or make Men Children of God, has been the promis'd Continuance of the Possession, or the Hopes of such a future Reward or Inheritance, as might preserve Men in being obedient to God, or recover them to it, and to the Inheritance that belongs to it, after they were become Children of the Devil, and Heirs of Death and Wrath. That Inheritance was Paradise, and the promis'd Continuance of it on Condition of Obedience, to our first Parents in Innocence ; and to them and their Descendants after the Fall ; Heaven or eternal Life, as it is revealed in Scripture, (*i. e.* a State of Dominion and Bliss, to be enjoy'd in a celestial, spiritual, powerful, and glorious Body, in the Presence and Glory of God, not subject to any future State of Trial,) through a Recovery from the

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first Death, and Salvation from the second Death. This could never have been discovered by our Reason, but was graciously hinted to our first Parents and the Patriarchs; expressly promis'd to *Abraham*; pointed out by the Law and Constitution God gave the *Israelites*; pledg'd by the Possession of *Canaan*, and afterwards by the Covenant with *David*, and his Line; clearly prophesy'd of, particularly by *John Baptist*; to be farther confirm'd by the *Messiah*; actually confirm'd by him, as a Prophet, to his Disciples, whilst on Earth; but chiefly by him as a King, to his Subjects, on his Death, Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven; as appear'd by his sending down the Holy Ghost. Such as have used the several Methods of opening this great Mean of Religion, to the making themselves Religious in the several Ages of the World, and have thereby promoted their Virtue and Piety, or the Temper and Conduct of a Child of God, have comply'd with the Obligations they were under, with regard to the Religion of the Means [Mean] and of the End.

It must at the same Time be observed, that all these several Methods, which are considered as the Religion of the Means [Mean] have been exactly suited to the different Circumstances of Men and Things in these several Dispensations; the first beginning where one would reasonably expect it, namely, with the Creation of Man; the rest naturally following from the Fall of Man; and

and all the former Methods leading to the last, centering in it, and being fully and gloriously compleated by it.

Thus has the Religion of the Means [Mean] been somewhat different in respect of Clearness and Certainty, and different Accommodation to the different Circumstances of Mankind, in the several Ages of the World; whilst the Religion of the End has not only been invariably the same, but at the same Time always so certain and plain, as to be of it self sufficient to lead all Men to it, and to leave them without excuse, if they did not know and practise it. However, to such as have understood and practis'd it the best, better Means, or greater Assistances have been still given as a Reward for the Improvement of what they already had. And when such Means have been afforded, they have been always attended with sufficient Evidence of their Fitness and Genuineness (as the Religion of the End has always been with the fullest Evidence of its Truth and Desireableness) to convince honest and upright Minds, who alone would make any good Use of them; but without any such Degree of Evidence, as would be unnecessary to them, and would be wasted on others, namely, on depraved Minds; whose Addictedness to their Vices would render such overbearing Evidence useless and ineffectual, if it had been indulged them.

## COROLLARY II.

From what has been faid, we may fee, what Relation Faith bears to the Religion of the Means [Mean]: Or of what Ufe Faith is in reveal'd Religion. The Religion of the Means [Mean] as it has been juft now ftated, is the Method which God has taken to make Men Religious, by revealing certain Propofitions to them. Now Faith, as it is here underftood, is the Affent of the Mind to the Truth of thofe Propofitions on divine Testimony; without which, thofe Propofitions could have no forcè on us. How vain then is the Objection of the Deifts, that Chriftians afcribe a great deal too much to Faith, as it is here underftood, becaufe Faith in this Senfe, (as muft be allow'd) is no Virtue. They pretend that Faith in this Senfe is fupposed to fave Men; and that Men are fupposed to be damned for the want of it. Whereas really Faith is represented of no ufe in the Religion of the Means [Mean] but what it muft neceffarily be of. For Faith is juft of fo much ufe to the Believer, as the Propofition believed has a Tendency to promote his Virtue and Happinefs. He that believes fuch a Propofition has all the Advantage of that good Tendency of the Propofition, from his Belief of it. He that does not believe fuch a Propofition, cannot have that Advantage.

Thus

Thus for Instance, he that believes that eternal Life, as it is describ'd in Scripture, will be the Inheritance of a Child of God, has all the Motive to Virtue and Piety, and all the Comfort that a Belief of that Proposition must necessarily give him. He that does not believe that Proposition, must want that Comfort, and that Motive. So that here is nothing attributed to Faith, as it is here understood, but what necessarily flows from it: And which is no more than what the Deists attribute to Knowledge in natural Religion, tho' Knowledge is no more a Virtue than Faith, but bears exactly the same Relation to natural Religion, that Faith does to reveal'd Religion. For Religion, whether natural or reveal'd, must begin in Knowledge or in Faith, and must from hence settle in Temper, and so hold on in Practice, that is ever to end in the Rewards resulting from Virtue, in the Reason of Things; or in those Rewards which God has wisely and bountifully annex'd to Virtue and Piety, by the Revelation he has made of his Will. Indeed if any would carry this a little farther, it may justly be said, that Christians ascribe no more to Faith in reveal'd Religion, not only, than the Deists do to Knowledge in natural Religion; but than the Atheists do to Knowledge in relation to moral or political Good and Evil.

## COROLLARY III.

Though the Means of Religion (which is but in other Words the Religion of the Means) have been somewhat different in respect of Clearness, Certainty and Accommodation to the different Circumstances of Mankind in different Ages; yet these Means of Religion have always been beautifully proportioned to the State of Things, and to each other. I mentioned these Proportions in the Preface, and referr'd the Reader hither. I will now point out some of those Proportions (among numberless which occur) in three of these Means of Religion; or if you will, in the one great Mean of Religion, differently exhibited and ascertain'd in three different Dispensations; namely, the annexing Life as the promis'd Reward, or Inheritance belonging to Righteousness (in order to keep or make Men righteous) under the Dispensation of Innocence, of *Abraham*, and of *Christ*: Some of those Proportions stand thus. — The Continuance of an animal Life, in a gross terrestrial and corruptible Body, cloath'd however with a Glory, and accompany'd with the Dominion and Bliss of an earthly Paradise, and the high Privilege of conversing sometimes with the *Shechinah*, was promised to the first *Adam* (who had no Father but God) in Innocence, or a State

State of Trial, on his paying perfect Obedience to the Law that he was under, without passing through Death to it; and a Power in some sort to transmit such a Life, in a Body like his own, to his Posterity. — A future endless Life, in a spiritual, celestial, powerful and glorious Body, accompanied with the Kingdom, Glory and Bliss of Heaven, where we are always also to behold the Glory of God, and see him as he is, without being subject to any future Trial, after being a long time under the Power of Death and Corruption, was first intimated upon the Loss of the earthly Paradise to *Adam*, and all his Sons, that were sincere; and was afterwards more expressly promised to *Abraham*, for the sake of his eminent Sincerity (which under the Name of Faith God counted for Righteousness) and to all his Sons or Seed; or to all Men of any other Family performing sincere Obedience to the same Law: The Reward of Heaven, though greater than that of Paradise, being unseen and future; and the Obedience that Man pays since the Fall, though imperfect, being at least equal to the perfect Obedience in Innocence, and in the Possession of Paradise, considering the Weakness of Men's Reason, and Faith, and the Strength of their Appetites and Passions. However, this Promise was then published to none, but the Family of this sincerely righteous Man: Of which indeed such of other Families as would,

might enquire about it. — But the highest heavenly Life and Glory, after a short Death, without seeing Corruption, and an universal Power and Dominion is actually conferr'd on the *second Adam*, the holy *Jesus*, (a Son of *David* by his Mother, but who had no Father but God) of the spiritual as well as carnal Seed of *Abraham*, the only begotten Son of God, and the First-born or Begotten of all his Brethren from the Dead, (and therefore by Nature, and the highest Preheminence, *the Son of God*) in order to his recovering all to Life, and to his giving that endless Life in a Body form'd and fashion'd by his Spirit, like his own Body, to all the sincere (his younger Brethren) whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, (according to God's Offer and Promise published by his Command to all,) and in Order to his sentencing the Insincere (the Children of the Devil) to the second Death : Whilst this Life, and the Power of giving Life, is given to him, not only for his being perfectly righteous, or obedient to the same Law, in Flesh, that we are under ; but for his having also perform'd a perfect Obedience to a peculiar and a higher Law that he voluntarily put himself under, even that of the greatest Self-denial and Abasement ; particularly emptying himself of his Glory, taking the Fashion of a Man, and the Form of a Servant, and becoming obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross, in order to make Men sincerely Righteous ; that

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is, conformed to that lower Law of Self-denial and Abasement, (or that lower Rule of Righteousness) which they are under.

#### COROLLARY IV.

That the Father should send the Word to take Flesh, to live a mean Life, and die an ignominious Death, has been the Astonishment of Angels and Men. I have hinted in the Preface, that to say, that *Jesus* came to give a new Publication of natural Religion, will not account for that amazing Phenomenon. For why might not an inferior Being, or a meer Man, that never existed before, as the *Socinians* represent Christ to have been, have given us such a Publication, as a Prophet sent from God? Could not a meer Man, or an inferior Being, have set us an Example? Assured us of the Forgiveness of Sins that were past? Or of all necessary Assistance for the Time to come? Could not an holy Man have been raised from the Dead, and thereby have assur'd us, that human Nature might revive? Some indeed have alledged other Reasons for this great Transaction: But I must leave them who offer those Reasons to support them. A Matter of this Consequence must not be trusted to disputable Points. In the mean time, if the great End of the Christian Revelation be what I have represented it in this Essay, and hinted

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in the foregoing Corollary, *viz.* to assure us in the fullest Manner that could be, (after the prior Assurances of a lower Nature which had been given) of eternal Life, as it is described in Scripture, and in a Way suited to the Reason and Proportion of Things; it may let us into some further Account of this wonderful Appearance; or at least set it in a fuller Light. For who was so fit for the Father to make us his adopted Sons by, after we were become the Children of the Devil, and Heirs of Death and Wrath, as his only begotten Son? Who was so fit for the living God to give us eternal Life by, as he, to whom he had given to have Life in himself, (and to whom alone that high Privilege seems fit to be granted) and who we might therefore be assured, was able to give it to us? *John* vi. 40—57. Who was at all fit to receive the eternal Spirit of the everlasting Father, in order to give it to *Jewish* and *Gentile* Believers, as the Earnest of eternal Life, but he that was produc'd before the Creation, [*ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως*, *Colos.* i. 15.] and the First-born from the Dead, and thereby had in all Things the Preheminence? His well beloved Son, in whom he was always well pleased; *Gal.* iv. 6. And who was so fit to be entrusted with that universal Power of Government and Judgment, that was necessary to secure to us, in the fullest Manner, the future Possession of eternal Life, as he, that was the Heir of all Things?

Things? *The Word*, who was before all Things, who was with God, and was God, by whom all Things were made; the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person, And who upholds all things by the word of his Power.

Farther, how fit and congruous was it for the Son of God to take Flesh, in which Appetites and Passions had had the Ascendant, to the losing Life, in order to his regaining Life by perfect Self-denial and Obedience? *Rom. viii. 3.* To the Intent that we might see, that being conformed to him in such a Degree of Self-denial and Obedience as was required of us, was the only Way to recover a better Life than that, which had been lost by the undue Indulgence which our first Parents gave to their lower Powers? What was so like to enamour us with Self-denial and Holiness, the only Way to eternal Life, as seeing the Son of God, in such a Body as ours, *holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from Sinners, going about doing Good?* And what can reconcile us so strongly to the Sufferings of this present Life, by which *we are to inherit the Kingdom of God*, as seeing that *it pleas'd him for whom are all Things, and by whom are all Things, in bringing many Sons to Glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through Sufferings?* *Heb. ii. 10.* Finally, what can be a greater Support and Encouragement to us, under Self-denial and Sufferings, than to know, that in reward to Christ's Self-denial,

denial, Holiness, and voluntary Abasement in Flesh, for the Good of Mankind, he is become the First-born from the Dead, has a glorious Body, and in that glorious Body enjoys the highest Degree of heavenly Glory, Honour and Power? Or what can be a greater Security to us, than this Advancement of his, that upon our being conformed to him in the Likeness of his Life and Death, we shall also be conformed to him in the Glory of his Resurrection?

### C O R O L L A R Y V.

The fifth Corollary is, That on perusing this short System of Revelation, a very proper Way naturally offers it self of examining Revelation, and the View I have given of it. Revelation is supposed, according to what has been already said of the Religion of the Means, to be an extraordinary Discovery God has mercifully made, to assist Mankind to act reasonably, or according to the Truth of Things, under the Weakness of their Reason, and the Strength of their Appetites and Passions, in the low Situation of reasonable Beings, in which Mankind seems to be placed. Let Revelation then be examined by the Desireableness of the End, (in which it entirely agrees with natural Religion,) by the Fitness of the one great Mean it has all along proposed for attaining that

that End ; by the Fitnefs of the various Methods by which that one great Mean has been exhibited to Mankind, in their various Circumftances, in the feveral Ages of the World ; and by the Beauty and Proportion of the Relations, which thofe Methods bear to each other : And then let the System which I have offer'd be examin'd by its Confiftency with Revelation, and with it felf. If Revelation will bear an Examination by thefe *Criteria*, no reasonable Man can doubt, whether that Revelation be of God ; nor whether the Representation that I have here given of Revelation, agrees in the Main with it. We all allow an Hypothefis of Nature to be a true Hypothefis, if it agrees with Nature, and folves all its *Phænomena* confiftently, as far as we are acquainted with them. *Cartes* beautifully fays fomewhere, that if a Man fhould happen to find out a Key that would decypher a Letter, writ to him in a Cypher, by a Friend, fo as to make it fuit the Character and Circumftances of both the Correfpondents, we might certainly conclude it was the Key by which it had been writ. How much more then may we be affured of this in Revelation, where we have all the *Data* before us ? Which I fuppofe are many more than we have to examine an Hypothefis of Philofophy by. In both thefe Cafes we go upon this fure Principle, that Falfehood will not appear to agree far with Truth ; any more than a crooked Line will appear  
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(even to no better Eyes than ours) to agree in many Points with a streight one. But if the Rule of Revelation be farther extended than that of Nature, it will sooner discover any Deviation. But I forbear to add more on this Head; having anticipated my self, in a good Measure, in the Preface. Nor would it have been so proper to have said any Thing on the internal Evidence of Revelation here, were it not to connect it with what I am going to say of its external Evidence; and so to endeavour to represent the Force of the whole Evidence for Revelation in one short view. And when a reasonable Man lays both of them before himself in this manner, how will he be able longer to withstand it?

By the external Evidence of Revelation, I mean the Marks of great Power or Knowledge, or Wisdom, which accompany it: Namely, the Miracles, which first attended mediate or traditionary Revelation in the Case of *Moses*; and afterwards of *Jesus of Nazareth*; and then Prophecy, which follow'd in the Religion of *Moses*; and all the prophetick Gifts of several Kinds, and in the highest Degrees, which follow'd in the Religion of *Jesus*, on his Ascension to the right Hand of Power; and which must be allow'd to be the greatest of all the external Evidences; whether we consider the Nature of these Gifts (they being not only Marks of the greatest Power and Knowledge, but of the greatest  
Wisdom

Wisdom too, being fit means to spread the Knowledge of the Christian Religion) or the Representations which the New Testament gives of them. If any should pretend that they don't receive the Bible, because they have not leisure to consider the external Evidence there is for its being a divine Revelation; let them consider the internal Evidence, which will take up less time; and then no want of leisure can be pretended as an Excuse. But above all, let him take care how he rejects Revelation, who has Leisure and Ability to consider both. For if a Train of distinct Marks of Power, of Knowledge, and of Wisdom, above what is Human; and if Marks of the greatest Power, Knowledge and Wisdom, all joyn'd together in the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, are not sufficient to attest that the wisest Mean, (exhibited differently, but properly and proportionably to Mankind, under different Circumstances in different Ages) in order to attain the most desirable End, is from God; when this End and Mean sufficiently recommend themselves to us, without that Attestation, we seem to put it out of the Power of God to give us the Favour of a Revelation. For what can be the Stamp of Divinity upon a Revelation, that is it self every Way worthy of God, if Marks of the greatest Power, Knowledge, Wisdom and Goodness, both in a long Succession, and in Conjunction, be not? Let those who reject such a Revelation,

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take care, lest it be their Condemnation,  
that *Light is come into the World, but that*  
*Men love Darknes rather than Light, be-*  
*cause their Deeds are evil!*

## C O R O L L A R Y VI.

When reveal'd Religion appear'd in all this full Lustre of internal and external Evidence, as it did in the Times of the Apostles, the Time when Revelation was fully compleated, it must certainly have had very great Effects on Mankind, in informing their Minds, and regulating their Lives. And therefore, as on the one Hand, if there had been no such Effects produc'd, it would be unnatural to suppose, that the Doctrines of Revelation ever could have had this internal and external Evidence; so on the other Hand, the Accounts we have in the History of the *Acts* and *Epistles*, and in the Writings of the Cotemporaries, and immediate Successors of the *Apostles*, of the great Effects it actually produc'd in all the Places where it came, is a further Evidence of the Truth of reveal'd Religion: Since by these Histories it appears, that the Effects which were wrought by Revelation in all this Clearness and Strength of internal and external Evidence, were in Kind and Degree, just what one would naturally expect from that Evidence.

C O R O L L



## COROLLARY VII.

Such a Design, such a Mean, such Methods of discovering that Mean to Mankind, so related, so proportion'd to the State of Mankind, and to each other, such well attested Instances of Power, Knowledge, and Wisdom accompanying them, and such Success attending them, are the true and infallible Marks of a Revelation from God ; every Thing concurring, that we can now suppose about it, either *a Priori*, or *a Posteriori*. What more can be desired to set the Truth and Excellency of divine Revelation in the most glaring Light, than to obtest and conjure reasonable Men to compare it with the pretended Revelations either of former or later Times ? And to see, whether they will bear a Trial by these Marks, or any Comparison with the Bible ? Beginning from the monstrous, inconsistent, immoral Theology of the Pagans, till we go through the almost equally absurd System of *Æons* of the first Hereticks, and come down to that of *Mabomet*, or of the *Roman Antichrist* ; and of those that have mix'd any of her Corruptions, or their own with the Word of God ; even after all the Refinements, any of these several Systems have undergone by the greatest Wits, that have patroniz'd them in the several Ages of the World. The bare

mention of such of these Systems, as are made up of nothing at all, or of little else, but Falshood, makes a Trial of them by these *Criteria* entirely needless; and a farther Comparison between them and the Bible perfectly ridiculous: To any other Purpose at least, than that of a Foil, which it don't at all want. And as this can't be the Place of making a Trial, and Comparison between the Bible, and these Schemes, where there is more Truth mix'd with Falshood in various Proportions and Degrees; so it will not be difficult for those to make this Trial or Comparison, who are well acquainted with any of these compound'd Systems, and with the simple and unmix'd System of the Bible. All that I shall add is, That Revelation stands in a proportionable Degree of Opposition to every false Religion, to the Degree of Falshood which they contain; and in Conjunction with them, so far as they have any Mixture of Truth; as Heresy always has. In so much that it aims at nothing less than the total Subversion of the Pagan Theology, by recalling Men from the Worship of many Gods, through many Mediators or Lords, but all of them Patrons of Vice, to the Worship of the One only true God, by one Lord or Mediator, even *Jesus Christ the Righteous, who cleanses us from all Sin*: Whilst it directs us, only to purge out the Leaven of Error, Hypocrisy and Malice that is in Heresy, in order that we may become

come an unleavened Lump of Sincerity and Truth.

### COROLLARY VIII.

If we compare Revelation with natural Religion (which the Deists with us allow to be true Religion,) they are, as to the Religion of the End the same; that is, the Duties that are due to God, to our selves, and to one another, in both of them are exactly the very same; and whatever has been revealed in any Age of the World, as a Mean to attain that End, has had a natural Fitness to promote that End, in the Circumstances Men then were; though they might not probably have hit upon that Mean: Nor could they without Revelation have ever been assur'd, that it was a true one. For though every one sees, that the Reward of eternal Life, Dominion and Glory, not subject to any future State of Trial, and the peculiar Bliss that results from them, is the most proper Means to promote Virtue; yet how should we know, that they would be the Reward of Virtue, if God had not revealed it to us? Or how, on the other Hand, could we have known unless God had revealed it to us, that wicked Men should be raised from the Dead, and after a Trial, according to their Works (by which the Reward of eternal Life is very much heightned)

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be sentenced to the second Death. Though now we know it, every one must allow it to be a powerful Motive to Obedience. And the same may be said of all the rest of the peculiar Doctrines or Precepts of Revelation. As the Doctrine of Mediation, and the Institution of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; as I have endeavoured to make appear in the Course of this Essay: Since natural Religion then is on all Hands allowed to be true, is it not most highly probable, that revealed Religion is also true, from this Consideration alone, that revealed Religion has the greatest Fitness to promote natural Religion, in those Points, where they don't coincide? Where one Thing has a Tendency to promote another Thing, we conclude that they stand related as End and Mean in other Cases, both in the natural and moral World; and why then should we not in this? Besides natural and reveal'd Religion agree thus far farther: That reveal'd Religion is as fit as a Mean; as natural Religion is desirable as an End: And that as natural Religion may be reduced to one End; so revealed Religion, in that which is peculiar to it, may be reduced to one Mean; namely, discovering to us the most powerful Motive of Obedience, *viz.* the Promise of eternal Life, heightned by its being a Salvation from the second Death. So that, on the whole, the Bible appears to contain a Revelation from God, whether we consider it, in it self,

(*i. e.*

(*i. e.* in the internal and external Evidence which attends it,) or if we compare it with false Religions, or with the true. It stands in the greatest Opposition to the one, and in the most close and the only proper Relation to the other: That is to say, of a most useful Mean to attain it.

### COROLLARY IX.

If the Deist shall still alledge, after all that has been said, that natural Religion don't want the Aid of those supernatural Motives, since it contains Motives of its own, both of Rewards and Punishments, from the necessary Consequences of Things, sufficient to support Virtue: All that needs be added, is, That more Motives will beget more Virtue. And that Revelation furnishes us with an additional Motive, and of greater Force, than natural Religion furnishes us with, will not be denied by any one, on the Supposition that the Bible is a Revelation from God. For it acquaints us, that Death is the Punishment of Sin, that the Wicked shall rise and undergo a Trial, and receive a Doom to unspeakable positive Misery; but that the Righteous shall not only escape the Anxiety of a Trial of uncertain Event, (from the Consciousness of their own Integrity,) and the Shame and Anguish of a Sentence of Condemnation; but that

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when the Heavens are to be roll'd up like a Scrawl, when the Elements are to melt with fervent Heat, and when the Earth, with all its Works, are to be consumed and burned up, and the Wicked shall be overtaken by this universal Conflagration, that God will find out a Way for the Escape and Salvation of the Righteous. Revelation farther assures us, in the clearest and strongest Manner, that they shall, in celestial, spiritual, glorious and powerful Bodies, inherit the Kingdom prepared for them; and in Mansions of Glory enjoy the most glorious Society, and behold the Glory of God himself, seeing him not only in his Works of Creation and Providence, but *as He is*; and shall enjoy this unspeakable Bliss and Felicity, without the least Chance of ever losing it. And what can strike Men, if the greatest Security of avoiding the utmost Misery, and of enjoying the greatest Glory, Dignity, Power, Dominion and Bliss for ever, shall not? And yet none can say, that the Light of Nature could furnish us with this Motive, or that the Light of Revelation does not. And what is there, perhaps, but some one of all these things, (which jointly make up the Motive of Revelation) and that in a poor, low Degree, and of uncertain and short Continuance, that engages us in any of the unwearied Pursuits of our whole Lives? This is sufficient to shew us, how powerful all these Considerations must be when joyn'd together; and

and how worthy therefore they are of a divine Discovery ; and consequently that as Revelation contains a stronger and more powerful Motive to Virtue, than we could have discover'd by the Light of Nature, it is wisely calculated to produce more Virtue among Mankind. This it has a Tendency to do in all Cases ; but has a very superior Tendency to do it in some : As for Instance, in the Case of powerful and sudden Temptation ; and particularly in that, where we are reduced to the Necessity of losing our Life immediately, or of sacrificing our Virtue to save it.

### COROLLARY X.

If it be farther alledg'd, That Actions, which for the Matter of them are virtuous, yet when perform'd for the sake of extrinſical or poſitive Rewards, ſuch as Revelation is here ſuppoſed to propoſe to us, (or in other Words, Rewards that don't flow from the Nature of Things) ceaſe to be virtuous, (which is what a late noble, learned and polite Author has very much inſiſted on,) I anſwer ; That indeed to be above all Reward or Happineſs, but that which neceſſarily reſults from the Nature of Things, is the higheſt Perfection ; but this can belong to no Being, but the unorigi- nated Father of all Things ; who being incapable of any Addition to his Happineſs, can,  
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when he acts in regard to other Beings, only act to communicate Happiness to them. But as to Beings capable of additional Happiness, or of positive and extrinſical Rewards, though it muſt be own'd, that their doing good Actions, without feeling Pleaſure in doing them, and without any Regard to thoſe natural Rewards of good Actions, which are the neceſſary Reſult of them, and purely for the additional or extrinſical and poſitive Reward, would deſtroy their Virtue; yet if the extrinſical and poſitive Reward be adequate, and worthy of the Purſuit of a reaſonable Being, it is Virtue to purſue it, and to act with the more Vigor in order to obtain it, not indeed excluſive of the natural Rewards of good Actions, but in Conjunction with them. No Man can doubt, whether it be Virtue to purſue our own true Happiness; that is, Pleaſure that will not injure our ſelves or other Beings. For what is Virtue but our trueſt Pleaſure and Happiness? Whether that Happiness reſults from the Nature of Things, or from ſuch a Connexion, as the Governor of the World has revealed to us to be ſettled by him, makes no difference. And ſure it will be but acting reaſonably, or according to Truth, and the Nature of Things, to purſue more Happiness with more Vigor, than a leſs Happiness; from whichſoever of theſe two Originals that Happiness may be derived.

Befides;



Besides, as in the Case of the natural Reward of good Actions, to pursue those Rewards, may be said properly enough to be pursuing Virtue it self, both in Fact, and in the Opinion of the Objector; so who shall say, that pursuing the additional and positive Rewards of Virtue, (on the Supposition of the Bibles being a Revelation from God) is not pursuing Virtue in the same Sense too? Is it not highly probable, that the Glory, Dignity, and Dominion, to which we shall be advanced, will be for the Service of that Kingdom; that it is the Father's good Pleasure to give us? Is not pursuing this celestial Glory, Dignity and Dominion then pursuing Virtue; or an Opportunity of being useful to that Kingdom, over which we, as Kings, are to be placed? The Scripture represents the Glory, Dignity and Power of Christ, as the Reward of his Obedience; but the Scripture, at the same Time, represents that that Power is exercised for the Benefit of his Kingdom, the Church; and therefore his having an Eye to the Glory that was set before him, was pursuing the glorious End for which he died; since that Glory was putting him in a Condition to answer all the Ends of his Death to Mankind. And may not we expect in our Proportion, such a Kingdom as is prepared for us for the same Purpose? That so as it was given to Christ, to sit down at the Father's right Hand, and to be advanced to universal

Empire, with a View to the Good of that universal Empire; it may be given to us also, to sit down at his right Hand, and be advanced to some particular Province for the greater Good of such a Division? It must certainly be great Wisdom and Goodness in the Governor of the World to propose additional Rewards in order to encourage reasonable Beings to pursue their own true Happiness, and the Happiness of other Beings, against the Difficulties which they have to encounter in that Pursuit. But if it be Wisdom, Goodness and Bounty, in the Governor of the Universe, to propose these additional Rewards to reasonable Beings, can it destroy Virtue in those reasonable Beings to be mov'd by those additional Rewards? This would be to set up a Virtue in the Governed intirely inconsistent with the Wisdom, Goodness and Munificence, *i. e.* with the Holiness of the supreme Governor of all Things:

These additional and positive Rewards seem necessary to support the Virtue of all inferior Beings, and particularly to be design'd as a Counterballance to the strong Appetites and Passions which belong to ours. But God has not propos'd these positive Rewards separate from the Rewards that are the necessary Result of virtuous Actions, but in Conjunction with them, or as an Addition to them. If then the Virtue of one Man, instead of being supported by a joint Regard to positive Rewards,

wards, and the natural Rewards of Virtue, should be hurt and weakened by a single View to positive Rewards, then it is he that hurts himself, by separating what God has joined together: And he must suffer for his own Folly, and for the depraved Taste, from whence alone such a Mistake could arise.

On the whole, I think this Objection of the Deists arises from too exalted an Idea of our selves; since none but the supreme Being is above additional and positive Happiness. Nor has the Objection any Strength but what it derives, from confounding the single Pursuit of a base, mean, low, arbitrary, unfit and selfish Reward, or of a Reward that is injurious to others; with a joint Pursuit of the natural Rewards of virtuous Actions, and a Pursuit of a positive, high, glorious, well adjusted Reward, and that is calculated to give us farther Opportunities of extending our Benevolence to others: The first of these is Vicious and Mercenary, the last is Virtuous and Heroick.





A  
NOTE,  
By Way of  
APPENDIX,  
TO THE  
DISPENSATION of *Abraham*.

Particularly to these Words,

*Essay, p. 23. God now expressly adopted  
Abraham to the Inheritance of eternal  
Life.*



TOOK Notice in the Preface,  
that I had some Notes by me,  
to explain and support several  
Things that I have advanced in  
this Essay; and gave some  
Reasons why I publish'd the Essay without  
them, though I at first intended to have fi-  
nished them together.

I hinted there too, that what I had chiefly flung into Notes, was consequential Proofs of what I have advanced (where I had not exprefs Texts to the Purpose) and especially Proofs that were of a critical Nature.

I there also acknowledg'd, That I believed some of the Things advanced in this Essay would be justly thought to want that Proof. But I believe nothing I have said will be thought to want it more, than what I have asserted about the Dispensation of *Abraham*: And therefore I have added here as an Appendix what I should have put in a Note, if the Notes had been finish'd and complete.

I have asserted, *Essay*, p. 23. that *God expressly adopted Abraham to the Inheritance of eternal Life*. The Proof that I have there given, is, that *God blessed Abraham, and that God became his God*. I will now endeavour to shew more fully, how Adoption to eternal Life is contain'd in these two Expressions.

But I would first desire the Reader to carry it in his Mind, that the Proof I am to give of this Point, is a Proof from History, and not from a System of Doctrine. This I say to shew, why the Reader ought not to expect many exprefs Texts to this purpose: But only such as may fairly occur from incidental Passages in an History, which was address'd to a People, who were in a good Measure appriz'd of many of the great Facts before, from  
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Tradition, and which was written in order to engage them to fear God, from an Account of what his Dealings had been hitherto with Mankind, and what Expectations they might entertain from him for the future.

When *Moses* therefore tells us, that *the Lord blessed Abraham, and became his God*, what Ideas are we to suppose that *Moses* had, and intended to convey to the *Israelites*? And what are the Ideas, we are to suppose that these Expressions rais'd in their Minds? It will be readily allowed, that these Words are granting Words, (at least the first) all along in *Moses's* History. Nor can it be denied, that it must be something of great Importance, that *Moses* would introduce God as giving to *Abraham*, when *he blessed him and became his God*, considering that *Abraham* is represented as an high and singular Instance of the greatest Piety in the degenerate Age wherein he liv'd, and under the greatest Trials that *Adam*, or any of his Children, ever underwent: And considering that *Abraham* was the Father of that Nation, to whom *Moses* wrote, and at the Head of which he himself then was; and which at that Time, God had taken to himself, for an holy and a peculiar People.

This we may be assured of in the general. But to be a little more particular as to each of these Expressions, I desire the following Things may be put together: Many of which are insisted on, or hinted at, in several Parts of the foregoing *Essay*. And

And, I. As to the Expression, that *God blessed Abraham*; and in relation to this Expression, I desire it may be observed;

I. That God blessed *Adam* and *Eve*, and when God gives a Blessing, we may be sure the Grant operates and conveys something that is considerable; otherwise the Grant would be trifling or illusory. We find by *Moses's* History, that what God bless'd our first Parents with, was *Fruitfulness*, Gen. i. 28. *Dominion* over all the other Creatures, *ibid.* Food, v. 29. *A pleasant and fruitful Garden*, Chap. ii. 8—15. with the Means of *Immortality*, viz. *the Tree of Life*, v. 9. and with a *Covering* which was most probably a *Glory*: For which I think several good Arguments may be offer'd, though this is not the Place for them. The Texts in the New Testament where this *Glory* that *Adam* was cloathed in seem to be referr'd to, are *Rom.* viii. 3. *1 Cor.* xv. 42—46. *Philip.* iii. 21. *2 Cor.* v. 2, 3, 4. *Rom.* viii. 23. All I shall farther say here is, that they were at *first naked*, and were not ashamed, v. 25. But when they were stripp'd of their *Glory*, they were afraid (not ashamed) because they were naked, Chap. iii. 10. as well knowing, that the Garment which they had lost was a Garment of Dignity, a Badge of all the Blessings they had from God; and they might well therefore be afraid, when they had lost it, that they should be depriv'd of all those Blessings, upon

hearing God's Voice in the Garden, in the very same Manner in which they had received them.

Accordingly on their Disobedience a Curse was pronounced on them, instead of the Blessing. The Curse on *Eve* seems to be a great Degree of Unfruitfulness. *I will greatly multiply thy Sorrow, and thy Conception and Sorrow* in bringing forth Children, *v. 16.* in Opposition to the original Blessing; *Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the Earth,* Chap. i. 28. — The Curse pronounc'd on *Adam* was Care, Toil and Sorrow, all the Days of his Life, by reason of the Curse of the Ground: And that he should return to the Dust out of which he was taken, *Chap. iii. 17, 18, 19.*

2. That there was still a further Curse pronounc'd and inflicted on the Ground, that *Cain* should till, after he had slain his Brother, *Gen. iv. 12.* From whence he (*Cain*) seems to have left off tilling the Ground, and to have betaken himself to other Arts; such as were necessary to build a City, *v. 17.* And his Descendants seem likewise to have quitted the Tillage of the Ground after his Example, and to have turn'd Herdsmen, *v. 20.* Musicians, *v. 21.* and Artificers in Brasses and Iron, *v. 22.* &c. which also agrees with the History of *Sanchionathan*, as well as of *Moses*.

This further Curse on the Tillage of the Ground pronounc'd on *Cain*, and that probably,



bly followed his Descendants, seems to have been a Mark of their being the avowed Family of the Devil, and was agreeable to other Curses that always followed that Family in future Ages.

3. That it is probable, that *Seth's* Descendants did still Till the Ground, and had a Produce from it, though with great Labour and Toil; but it was reveal'd to *Lamech* about six Hundred Years before the Flood, that in *Noah's* Time they should receive some Comfort or Blessing concerning the Work and Toil of their Hands, because of the [original] Curse which the Lord had pronounced on the Ground, *Gen. v. 29. viz.* after the Fall: See *Sherlock's more sure Word of Prophecy.*

4. That after the Flood God took off a great Part of the original Curse; blessing *Noah* and his Sons in many Instances, as he did *Adam* and *Eve* at their Creation. God bids them *be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the Earth*, *Gen. ix. 1.* and thereby probably took off part of the great Sorrow in bearing and in bringing forth Children, that might be the Occasion of less Fruitfulness before. We find that *Noah* had but three Sons when he was six Hundred Years old, *Gen. vii. 7.* and he is the only Antediluvian whose Descendants are all enumerated. But we find that though the Age of Man was shortned to five Hundred Years immediately after the

Flood, yet *Ham* had four Sons, *Gen.* x. 6. *Shem* five, *v.* 22. and *Japheth* seven, *v.* 2. It should seem therefore that in Fact, those who lived after the Flood were more fruitful than those who lived before it. But God does not stop here, but also takes off the Curse from the Ground, or its Sterility, *Chap.* viii. 21. *I will not for the Future curse the Ground for Man's sake.* So the *Hebrew* Word should be rendered, as it is, *v.* 22. and so the *Septuagint* has render'd it. He likewise promises favourable Seasons, *v.* 22. *Moses* accordingly observes, that after the Flood, *Noah* began to be an *Husbandman*, *Gen.* ix. 20. Not barely a Tiller of the Ground for meer Necessaries; (that *Noah's* Ancestors had been all along) but a Planter of a Vineyard, for the Superfluities of Life: As expecting greater Fertility from the Removal of the Curse, and the Grant of a Blessing. And *Moses* further acquaints us, that Things answered his Expectation: And that his Vintage yielded him but too generous a Juice, unless he had made a better use of it, *v.* 21.

*Lastly*, God restores *Noah* and his Sons to a greater Dominion over the Beasts of the Earth, the Fowls of the Air, and the Fishes of the Sea, than they had before, or probably since the Fall. Perhaps the making the Beasts of the Field more tractable, was one way, by which God removed the Curse of the Ground, and added to its Fruitfulness, as well

as to the *Food of Mankind*. In every Instance of God's Blessing any one, we must, as has been observed already, suppose some Curse removed, and some Favour granted; and in the Case of God's Blessing *Noah* and his Sons, we see the Curse remov'd in part, or in whole (as far forth as it seems to have been God's Design to remove it, till there shall be no more Curse) that had been pronounced on Mankind at the Fall; except the last part of it, *viz. That Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return.*

When God blesses *Abraham* then, *Gen. xii. 2. xxii. 17.* It must, as in the Case of our first Parents, and in the Case of *Noah*, denote the Removing some part of the original Curse, and restoring the original Blessing in part or in whole; or giving an equal Blessing, if not a greater, than the first. What less can be imported by the Phrase used, *Gen. xxii. 17.* one of the Places I just quoted, *In Blessing I will bless thee?* Especially as it is introduced on so great an Occasion, as the Offering up the Heir of the Promise, and as it is confirmed by an Oath. Or what less can be imported, when *in him* (or in Blessing him) God declares, that *he blessed all the Families or Nations of the Earth*, i. e. that should imitate him in his Faith and Obedience? The Blessing that arose from taking off the other Parts of the Curse, the rest of the Families of the Earth, as the Descendants of Noah, (to whom those

those Blessings were granted) partook in already. Now, since the other Parts of the Curse had been removed in the Blessing to *Noah* and his Sons, what can this most solemn Blessing of *Abraham*, and in him of all the Nations of the Earth, (in the Language of those early Times, when the Blessing and Curse on our first Parents was so deeply impress'd on their Minds, and so thoroughly understood,) carry less in it, than restoring *Abraham* expressly to Immortality (not indeed without tasting Death, but) from or after Death; the great and most bitter Part of the original Curse, which had not yet been taken away; so that this Expression plainly implies *Adoption to eternal Life*, in the Language of these Times.

II. I am to shew, That *God's* adopting *Abraham* to the Inheritance of eternal Life is included in the other Expression, of *the Lord's being THE GOD of Abraham*. And here the Adoption is not implied but expressed. And in order to make that out, I would premise,

That Sir *Isaac Newton* has fully proved, *Princ.* p. 482. that the Term *God* is a relative Term; and a Term of Relation that is founded in *Dominion*. That being supposed, the Term *God* must signify the Dominion and Authority of a Father, of a Master, or of a King.  
For

For all Sorts of Dominion and Authority may be reduc'd to one of these.

Now God indeed may figuratively have been always said to be the *Master* of Mankind, and they may be said to be his Servants; in as much as in many Things God resembles a Master, and Mankind his Servants; and he is therefore often mentioned as such in Scripture, though never till after the Death of *Abraham*: Yet God is not properly and strictly ever consider'd as a Master, in any part of Scripture, because he has never enter'd into Covenant with Mankind, under the Notion of a Master with his Servants.

In like manner, God may always figuratively have been said to have had a *Kingdom* ruling over all; in as much as there are many Resemblances between God's Power over all Things, and the Power a King has over his Subjects. But God is never so much as mentioned as a King, even incidentally, in Scripture, till about the Time that he by Covenant at *Mount Sinai* became the *King* of the *Israelites*. Nor had he a People till then. And afterwards indeed, he also by Covenant became the supreme King of all *Christians*, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*.

But God had Children, or a Family, before he had a Kingdom and a People; even from the first Man and Woman. And therefore whenever the Term *God* occurs in Scripture, before either of the Periods, in which the su-

preme Being became by Covenant the King of the *Israelites*, and of the *Christians*, in a strict and proper Sense; the Term *God* must import the other Relation of Power and Authority, *viz.* that of a *Father*; agreeably to the Authority that then prevailed in the World, which was Family or Patriarchal; and that God must, from the very Nature of Things, have been ever considered as a Father, even in the patriarchal Period, before he was a King over a People, will fully appear from what follows.

1. That *Adam* was *created* an earthly and animal *Son of God*; having no other Father but God; being made like him in his moral Perfections; and vested with Dominion, the Bliss of Paradise, Glory and Immortality; as an Inheritance suited to the high Relation he bore to God. All which carries in it the whole Notion of a Father, in the most strict, proper, and precise Sense of the Word.

2. That *Adam* by his Disobedience *lost* the moral Image or Likeness of God; and was thereupon divested of the Inheritance of a Son of God; driven out of Paradise, kept from Returning to it, made subject to Toil, Care, Vexation, Diseases and Death; and instead of the Glory which he had in Innocence, a Badge of his Sonship to God, God made him Coats of the Skins of Beasts, as a Cloathing that might serve to shew him, to  
what

what a low State he had reduced himself, by suffering his Appetites and Passions to get the better of his Reason. From whence this Moral was plainly held forth, That he *being in Honour, and without Understanding, was become like the Beasts that perish.* *Essay, p. 10.* God also gave him a plain Intimation, that if he would continue to obey the Serpent, he must share in his peculiar Curse, *Essay, p. 14, 15.*

3. That *Adam* forfeited this Inheritance, not only for himself, but for his Posterity; begetting Men not in the Image or Likeness of God; Heirs of Dominion, Bliss, Glory and Immortality; but in *his own Likeness, after his Image, Sons of Men, and Heirs of his Curse: Namely, Toil, Care, Vexation, Diseases and Death.* *Essay, p. 10, 11.*

4. That *Cain* being born an Heir of the Curse, and at last not barely continuing a Son of Man, but becoming the Seed of the Serpent, imitating and obeying him (in being a Liar and a Murtherer, as he was) notwithstanding God's gracious Admonition and Caution to the contrary, became the Head and Founder of the avowed Family of the Devil in the World; and was accordingly mark'd as such by peculiar Curses, that seem to have follow'd him and his Posterity. *Essay, p. 14, 15.*

5. That notwithstanding this, whoever from the Sons of Men, and Heirs of Death, became like unto God, resembling him in Pu-

rity, Justice and Mercy, might form Inferences and Hopes, that he might become a Son or a Child of God, through Adoption to a suitable Inheritance; though perhaps without knowing what that Inheritance should be. *Essay*, p. 16. A Child of this Character God gave to our first Parents in *Seth*, instead of *righteous Abel*, whom *Cain* slew. He and his Descendants were the avowed Family of God in the World, *being called by his Name*, Gen. iv. 26. And being expressly stiled the Children or *Sons of God*, Gen. vi. 1. *Essay*, p. 15, 16.

6. To give the Sons of God a more assured and lively Notion of what their Inheritance by Adoption was, God translated *Enoch*; thereby assuring good Men, that they should enjoy a future State of Happiness in Soul and Body. For *Enoch* was translated after being the first that prophesy'd, and after he had all along walked with God, as *Adam* had done in Innocence, who had convers'd with the *Shechinah* in the Garden, till Sin and Guilt made him afraid of him, depart from him, and hide himself. Good Men of that Age must have concluded by the Rules of Proportion, that though *Enoch's* eminent and distinguish'd Piety was rewarded with Immortality by Translation; yet that a lower Degree of Piety than his, if sincere, would meet with Immortality as its Reward, in some Way, and at some Time or another. *Essay*, p. 17.

7. There could not be a Proof of a more



wicked Disposition, than for any of the *Sons of God* to marry with the *Daughters of Men*, i. e. the Daughters of the Family of the Devil; not only as these Marriages were against God's Order, and the Interposition of his Providence, but as it was expressing the utmost Contempt of the Inheritance of God's Family; and as it was at the same Time a casting off all Fear of the peculiar Curse, that was the Inheritance of the Family of the Devil; and therefore, those of the Family of God, who made such Intermarriages, must thereby have become the Family of the Devil. *Essay*, p. 18.

8. *Noah*, being the *only righteous Person*, or the *only Person who walked with God*, and abstained from this impious Mixture, was the *only Person treated as a Son of God*, by the peculiar Protection God vouchsafed him and his Family from the total Destruction, which he sent on the avowed Family of the Devil. *Essay*, p. 18, 19.

9. *Noah* intimates, that the *Lord would be the God of Shem*, *Gen. ix. 26*. Or the Father of *Shem*, in a Way, in which he would not (at least immediately) be the Father of *Japheth*, the elder Brother, or of *Canaan*, the Son of *Ham*. All which is prophetically said, not of the Persons of *Shem*, *Japheth* or *Canaan*; but of their Descendants. *Essay*, p. 20.

10. Accordingly the Descendants of *Canaan* had great and peculiar Curses attending them,

them, in the Dispersion of *Babel*, the Destruction of the Cities of the Plain, the Extirpation of the Seven Nations, &c. *Essay*, p. 21.

11. On the other Hand, God expressly *blefs'd* Abraham, a Descendant of *Shem*, (and the only one who had walk'd before God, and kept himself free from Idolatry) *and became HIS GOD*: Which God had never expressly promis'd to be to any one before, since the Fall. *Essay*, p. 23, 24.

12. Hence it is, that God, and Father, or Terms that imply them, are Terms reciprocally us'd in the *Old Testament*; and join'd together in the *New*, *Gen.* iv. 26. vi. 2. *Psal.* lxxxix. 26. *Hosea* i. 9, 10. *John* xx. 17. *2 Cor.* vi. 16, 18. *Rev.* xxi. 7. So that to be a God, is in the Language of Scripture, to be a Father; at least in the patriarchal Period. And for God to be a Father to one, who is not created, or born, or begotten a Son of God, is to be a Father by Adoption; and to be a Father by Adoption, is to give an Inheritance in Title, if not in Possession; and the Inheritance that God gives as a Father, is Dominion, Bliss, Glory and Immortality. *Essay*, p. 16. Though it must be own'd, that after the Lord became the King of the *Jews* by Covenant, and afterwards the supreme King of *Christians*, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, *God* may signify King as well as Father; and which of these that Term signifies, must be determin'd by the Context. See *Psal.*

v. 2. lxxviii. 24. cxlv. 1. *John* xx. 17. 2 *Cor.* vi. 16, 18. *Rev.* xxi. 3. compared with v. 7.

13. Hence it is, that Christ proves the Resurrection of good Men (for about them is the Question) to the *Sadducees*, from *Moses calling the Lord the God of Abraham*, *Luke* xx. 37.

I shall only quote this Passage historically, or as a Proof of what the *Jewish* Notions were about this Matter, but not as holy Writ: since I am here treating with the Deists, who don't allow that there is any such Thing. In order to see the full Force of our *Saviour's* Argument, it must be observ'd,

(1.) That the Question the *Sadducees* moved is about the Resurrection of the Man, and not about the Existence of the Soul in a separate State; not only because the *Sadducees* are here described *as denying the Resurrection*, (v. 27.) but because the Argument they use to support their Opinion, relates to the Man, and not to the separate State of the Soul. It being an Argument drawn from Marriage, v. 28—34.

(2.) That the Question moved by the *Sadducees* is not about the Resurrection of good and bad Men, but of good Men only. For the Argument they bring against a Resurrection supposes a State of Happiness and Enjoyment at the Resurrection, which can only belong to the Just. For their Argument is, that there can be no Resurrection of good Men, because seven Brethren, who had one

Woman to Wife successively in this Life, could not all of them possibly have her to Wife together after the Resurrection.

(3.) That our Saviour's Argument to prove the Resurrection, *v. 37.* does not lie in these Words, *I AM the God of Abraham*, because they are not so quoted here. But *Moses CALLETH THE LORD THE GOD OF ABRAHAM.* And because though our Translators have rendered *Matth. xxii. 32. I am the God, &c.* yet that Word is not in the Original: But only [*εγω Θεος*] *I the God of Abraham.*

(4.) The Force of the Argument therefore lies in these Words, *the Lord is, or is called, THE GOD OF ABRAHAM:* That is, the Father of *Abraham*, viz. by Adoption: And that the Adoption of God is Immortality, and what accompanies Immortality. For Christ had said just before, that the *Children or Sons of God are Children or Sons of the Resurrection.* And he adds, *God is not the God [or the Father] of the Dead [i. e. of good Men that are Dead for ever, which was what the Sadducees meant by Dead] but of the Living [i. e. of such good Men as should live again]* which was the Point the *Sadducees* deny'd. For God can't give Immortality, &c. as an Inheritance, either in Title or Possession, to such as are irrecoverably dead; but to such only as shall be living. And without giving that Inheritance

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tance in Title or Possession, he can't be a Father by Adoption. And Christ immediately adds, *All*, that is, all good Men, such as *Abraham, &c. live* [or shall live] *with him* (as the Words may be rendered) *viz* in the other World. If it had not been understood among the *Jews*, that God and Father were the same Thing; and that being a God of any one, implied Adoption, or the Inheritance of Immortality, to every one that was not a Son by Creation, Birth or Generation, the *Sadducees* would never have been silenc'd by this Argument. But it is plain this was a Notion received among the *Jews*, since the *Sadducees* make no manner of Reply. And that it was so, farther appears from the *Jewish* Writings both before Christ and since. In the Book of *Wisdom*, ch. ii. 16, 20. it is said, *He pronounced the latter End of the just blessed, and boasts that he has God for his Father. Let us cut him off with a shameful Death. For if the just Man be the Son of God, he will receive him.* — And v. 22, 23. *They spake because they knew not the Mysteries of God; nor hoped for the Reward of Holiness, nor discerned the Recompence of the blameless Souls. For God made Man for Incorruption, and to be an Image of his own Immortality. And ch. iii. 1, 4, 7. The Souls of the Righteous are in the Hands of God, and their Hope is full of Immortality. In the Day of their Visitation they shall shine.*

And

And *ch. v. 1, 4, 5.* *Then shall the Righteous stand with great Boldness before the Face of them that afflicted them, and they shall say, we Fools counted his Life Madness, and his End to be without Honour, but now is he numbered among the Sons of God, and his Portion is with the Saints.* The seven Sons mentioned in *Maccabees* are still called *Children of the Stock of Abraham*, by *Josephus*. And as the Book of *Maccabees* still introduces them, declaring, that *God would raise them to Life eternal*, 2 *Macc. vii. 9, 23.* so *Josephus* likewise introduces *their Mother* comforting them with these Words of *Solomon*, *Wisdom is a Tree of Life to them that do her Will*; and those of *Ezekiel*, *Shall these dry Bones live?* and with the Words of *God*, in the Song of *Moses*, *I kill, and I make alive.* He also declares of these Martyrs, *That dying for God, they also lived with God, as did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the Patriarchs, and ran in the Way of Immortality.* He speaks of a *Reversence of all that observe the Law of Moses, though they die for it*; and adds, *That God hath granted them to receive a better Life in Reversion.* *Joseph. de Macc. p. 1101. l. F. p. 1100. D. p. 1090. A. p. 1097. D. Contra App. l. 2. p. 1076. A. B.*

The strongest Passages might be brought to this Purpose, from the Writings of the Apostles, if those we have here to do with would allow of their Authority.



## A D D E N D A.

I Will here subjoin what may farther serve to prove, That God adopted *Abraham* to the Inheritance of eternal Life, though it slipp'd me, when I wrote the foregoing *Essay*, and the Text from whence I draw my Proof, was suggested to me by a learned Friend, after I had sent the *Essay* to the Press. The Proof I intend to offer is from *Gen. xv. 6.* *And he [ Abraham ] believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for Righteousness.* *Abraham's* Belief in the Lord is always represented, both in the Old and the New Testament, as a Principle that influenced his whole Conduct; making him, at God's Command, quit his idolatrous Country and Friends, travel into a Country he did not know, and where he was not known; profess his Faith in the One true God, and teach his Family to fear and worship him, notwithstanding the Dangers it exposed him to, in a wick-

ed and idolatrous, as well as a strange Land; making him, moreover, submit to the painful Rite of Circumcision, put away *Hagar* and his Son *Ishmael*, and at last be ready to offer up his only legitimate Son *Isaac*, the Heir of the Promise. This is sufficiently understood.

However, such a Faith as this was not, strictly speaking, Righteousness (which is an entire, perfect and constant Conformity to the original Law of the great Father of our first Parents;) but it was what God now assured *Abraham*, *Adam's* Descendant by *Seth* and *Shem*, that he mercifully counted, or reckoned for Righteousness: Declaring this now as the gracious, and abated or secondary Rule of his Family here below, That he, who from a Belief of his Truth and Power, would regulate the Main of his Conduct, according to the Rule he had given him, should be counted Righteous; though he might, through the Suddenness of some great Surprize, and the Strength of his Appetites or Passions, sometimes deviate from it; as *Abraham* in some Instances did. Now we are sure, that the Reckoning or Judgment of God is just. For the Righteousness of a Man is a Conformity of the Temper and Actions of a Man to some Rule that he is under. And when the Judge, who has a competent Jurisdiction, pronounces that a Man has acted up to that Rule, that Man may then be properly said to be Righteous;



ous ; though the Rule by which he is judg'd, be a Rule of fit and proper Grace, Relaxation, and Favour, (from a Weakness and Inability to observe the first and original Rule) and not that first strict and original Rule it self.

Now it seems to have been the original Connexion and Constitution of Things, settled and framed by the wise Contriver and Disposer of all Things ; that Life (that is, Existence and Enjoyment or Happiness) should be the Consequence of Righteousness ; or of a Conformity to the Law or Rule Man was under : And that Death (that is a Cessation of Existence and Enjoyment or Happiness) should be the Consequence of Unrighteousness.

Thus, at least, it appears plainly, that in Fact it has been in all God's Dispensations. The Tree of Life, which was in the midst of the Garden of *Eden*, was a full Declaration, that if *Adam* was obedient or righteous, he should live. And he was expressly threaten'd, that if he was disobedient or unrighteous, he should die. That Threatning farther implied, and very strongly, that if he was not disobedient or unrighteous, he should not die, that is, that he should live.

By the Law of *Moses*, *Every one was cursed, that continued not in all Things written in the Law to do them*, Deut. xxviii. 26. Gal. iii. 10. *And the Soul that sinned was*

to die, Ezek. xviii. 4. See also 1 Sam. xii. 13. On the contrary, Obedience to the Law of *Moses* was the *Righteousness* of the Children of *Israel*, Deut. vi. 25. The Law farther says exprefly, *That he that follow'd what was altogether juft ſhould live*, Deut. xvi. 20. xxx. 6. And as God firft, the Prophet afterward ſays, of all God's Statutes and Judgments, that if *a Man do them, he ſhall live in them*, Lev. xviii. 5. Ezek. xx. 11, 19, 21. See *Luke* x. 25, 28. *Rom.* x. 5. See *Effay*, p. 35.

Thus it is plain Things have ſtood by the Law of *Moses* and of Innocence. But this original Connexion or Conſtitution ſeems more over founded in the natural and neceſſary Order of Things, which ſeems to be this; That if a reaſonable Being, which, as he is capable of a Rule, muſt be always under one, acts up to that Rule, and thereby answers the End of his Being, he ſhould go on to be, and enjoy: As on the other Hand, when it is plain, that he would not act up to that Rule, and answer the End of his Being, he ſhould ceaſe to be. Rightcouſneſs has a natural Tendency to Life and Happineſs, and would produce it, were it not for external Cauſes, that hinder it: And Unrightcouſneſs has a natural Tendency to Death, either by being contrary to our Health, to Peace with our Neighbours, and (both from that Conſideration, and immediately) to the Peace of our own Minds.

Agree-

Agreeably hereto the Scripture represents Things ; not only in the Law of *Moses*, when it tells us, that *Righteousness is our Life* ; That is, so naturally, so closely, so inseparably connected with Life, as that it may be said to be Life it self ; but in the Law of Christ, when it also tells us, that *The Wages of Sin is Death, whilst the Gift of God is eternal Life*, Rom. vi. 23. It farther adds, that *He that keepeth the Commandments of God hath a RIGHT to the Tree of Life*, Rev. xxii. 14. That *He that soweth to his Flesh shall of the Flesh reap Corruption, and he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap Life everlasting* ; as the natural Production of sowing to the one, or to the other, Gal. vi. 8. And lastly, it assures us, to this purpose, by a Similitude from animal Productions, as it did in the last Place by a Similitude taken from the encrease of Vegetables, That *Lust when it is conceived, bringeth forth Sin, and Sin when it is finished bringeth forth Death*, James i. 15.

All this is so exactly true, and in so exact a Proportion, that Christ the Righteous, who was not only perfectly Righteous, by the original Law, that Man was ever under ; but by a superior and extraordinary Law of Righteousness, (which from his extraordinary love of Righteousness, and his extraordinary hatred of Iniquity, he voluntarily put himself under, by virtue of which alone, he who

was

was perfectly righteous became subject to Death) had not only Life (in a few Hours after Death, without seeing Corruption) for himself, but in himself; that is, a Power to give it to all that shall be for the Main conform'd to him in the lower Rule of Righteousness, he was under; as much, as all die, who are conform'd to *Adam* in Sin and *Unrighteousness*, or in a Deviation from that lower Rule of Righteousness. So that as Death actually enter'd the World by *Adam's* Sin, Life enters by Christ, on his Obedience, <sup>to Death</sup> as the first Fruits of them that sleep. See *Rom. v. 12—21.*

In fine, as thus we see, that Righteousness and Life are in fact inseparably connected, in the three great Dispensations of God to Mankind, in the Reason of Things, and in several plain Assertions of Scripture, and in an exact Proportion to that Degree of Righteousness the righteous Person had; it follows, that when God declared to *Abraham*, that he counted his Faith for Righteousness, God declared, that *Abraham* should inherit Life. But indeed, there is this difference between inheriting Life by virtue of the strict original Rule, and inheriting it by virtue of the secondary and equitable Rule; that he that observes the original and strict Rule of Righteousness perfectly and constantly, shall enjoy Life without tasting Death and Corruption, as a Debt: Whereas, he that only conforms to the secondary and equi-

equitable Rule of Righteousness, yet yielding sometimes to the Law of Unrighteousness, he shall indeed taste of Death and Corruption for some Time, but shall still indefeasibly inherit Life, after being recovered from Death and Corruption, (though still by a well proportion'd Grace and Favour) and be sav'd from the second Death, or from Wrath to come. To which purpose see *Rom.* iv. 2—9.

Having added a Note, by way of Appendix, to the Dispensation of *Abraham*, I will here likewise subjoin my Thoughts, by whom the most High administer'd his earthly Kingdom. They should have come into the Body of the *Essay*, page 31. (after the Words, *Exod.* xxiv. 3, 12.) in the Words following.

But though God was the King of this People, yet he does not seem to have administer'd the Kingdom immediately himself, but by the *Word*: The most High acting in this, as in all other Instances, not immediately, but mediately, either by the Word, or by the Spirit, in all his different Operations, in the natural and moral World. The *Word* in this Dispensation is call'd *Jehovah*, the same, *who created the Heavens and the Earth*, (who is said to have created them,

Gen. i. and ii. 2, 3.) Gen. ii. 4. *Pfal.* xxxiii. 6, 9. *Heb.* i. 2. but as the Minister of the Father, or of *Elohim*; who conversed with our first Parents, Gen. ii. 16. iii. 9, 22. who APPEAR'D to *Noah*, (Gen. vi. 13. vii. 1, 16. viii. 15. ix. 1—18.) to *Abraham*, (Gen. xvii. 1, 2. and xviii. 1, 2, 33.) to *Jacob*, (Gen. xxviii. 13, 16. xxxii. 30. xxxv. 9, 13.) and to *Moses* at the Bush, (*Exod.* iii. 6, 7, 14.) Saying, *I am the God of Abraham, &c. I am that I am*; or, *I will be, that I will be*; or, who will give Being and Accomplishment to his Covenant and Promises. See *Ainsworth in loc.* Who went before the Children of *Israel* in a Pillar of Cloud and a Pillar of Fire, *Exod.* xii. 21. Who came down on *Mount Sinai*, *Exod.* xix. 18. and gave the Law to the Children of *Israel*, *Exod.* xx. 2. *Acts* vii. 38. *Heb.* xii. 25, 26. who said at first *he would send an Angel before them*, in whom *he would put his Name*, *Exod.* xxiii. 20, 23. And afterwards said, *he would DWELL among the Children of Israel*, and be their God, *Exod.* xxix. 45. But on the Idolatry of the golden Calf, said, *he would not go up himself*, *Exod.* xxxii. 34, 35. xxxiii. 2—12. And yet at last said, *he would go up*, on *Moses's* Intercession; *Exod.* xxx. 12, 17. and is then call'd *his* [or *Jehovah's*] *Presence*, or *the Angel of his Presence*, *Isa.* lxiii. 9. and afterwards, *The Angel of the*  
Co-

*Covenant*, (Mal. iii. 1. compared with *Matt.* xi. 10. *Mark* i. 2. where Jesus applies this to himself.) The *Angel of the Lord*, or of *Jehovah*, *Zech.* xii. 8. *Deut.* xxxiii. 13, 16. and sometimes only the *Angel*, as *Gen.* xlvi. 16. compar'd with *Gen.* xxviii. 13, 20—22. *Acts* vii. 35, 38. By the Presence of this Angel it was, that this People became *Jehovah's* People, *Exod.* xxxiii. 13. *Numb.* xi. 29. and was distinguished from all other Nations, *Exod.* xxxiii. 16. For other Nations had *Angels* of God presiding over them, as is not only intimated in *Daniel*, Chap. x. 13, 20. but by *Moses*, *Deut.* xxxii. 8, 9. when he says, That *when God 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 Angels*, (for so is the true Reading, as appears by the LXX, and by what follows,) *The Lord* [or *Jehovah's*] *Portion was his People, and Jacob was the Lot of his Inheritance.* And *ver.* 12. *The Lord* [or *Jehovah*] *alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him.* So that I take *Jehovah* to be the proper Name, Stile, and Title of the Word, acting as the God or King of *Israel*; though not in his own Name, but in the Name of the most High; *Exod.* iii. 6, 14. vi. 2, 3. xv. 11. xxiii. 21. *Deut.* xxxii. 9. *Judges* xi. 24. compared with *Fer.* xlvi. 7, 42. See Mr. *Jos. Mede's* Works,

page 667, 668. *Edit.* the Fourth. That this Angel, Minister or Messenger, should be the Word, seems but reasonable from so high a Prerogative, as being thus call'd by the Name of *Jehovah*, and acting in his Name and Stead.

What follows would have been in a Note on this Paragraph, if the Notes had been compleat.

I think we must all agree, with *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and most of the Fathers, that God, the Father of all Things, being a Spirit, or a Being intirely Incorporeal or Immaterial, must in his own Nature be Invisible to all bodily Eyes of what Kind or Rank soever; and that as he is Omnipresent, and fills all imaginable Space, and is He, in whom all the Works of his Hands *move and have their Being*, He can't, strictly and philosophically speaking, *come, stay or go, ascend or descend, appear or disappear*. When therefore any of these Things are predicated of the most High, they can only signify, that some Being or Beings more nearly allied to Him than we are, *come, stay, or go, &c.* particularly some Minister or Messenger, Ministers or Messengers of his, who are considered either



as his Retinue, or as the Revealers or Executioners of his Will and Pleasure. Farther, is it at all agreeable to the Rules of Analogy and Proportion, to suppose, that the first Cause and Father of all Things, who created all Things, and upholds all Things by the W O R D, who quickens all Things, and qualifies and enlightens his Prophets, and even his own Son by the S P I R I T, by whom He also begat Him in the Womb of the blessed Virgin, should Himself have ever spoke immediately to Mankind? To this purpose are those Scriptures that stile him the invisible God, *whom no Man hath seen or can see*, John i. 18. See *Colos. i. 15. 1 Tim. i. 17. vi. 15, 16. Heb. xi. 17.*

I think then, if the Scriptures were silent, and did not contradict what I am going to propose (as an Hypothesis that seems to me very probable) it might be left to any one to judge, which of the two Suppositions was most likely; either the late one, that God should have at first made, and always upheld the World by one Being; and made Appearances, and the great Revelations or Messages from himself to Mankind by another Being; though stiling himself *Jehovah*, and of whose Reward for this righteous Management we have no Account; and then send the last Message to Mankind by that Being in Flesh, by whom he at first made,  
and

and all along upheld the World: Or this, which for the Matter of it is the antient one, *viz.* that God should make all his Appearances, and great Revelations by the Word, by whom he at first made, and all along upheld the World, conducting all Things; and particularly the Affairs of the *Israelites* and their Ancestors, (among whom the great Scene of moral Providence lay) by him, as his chief Minister, Messenger or Angel, always acting in his Name and Stead; till by his own *extraordinary Love of Righteousness, and Hatred of Iniquity*, he had prepared and fitted Men and Things (particularly by his Management of the *Jewish* People) for the last Dispensation; when in Reward of this his righteous Managment ἐν μορῇ Θεῶ, and of His Condescension in being made in the Likeness of a Man [ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γερόμενος] and (instead of speaking with Thunders and Lightning, and the Sound of a Trumpet, from a Cloud of Glory) teaching Mankind familiarly the Mind and Will of the Father; and ministering to them in their Necessities and Infirmities, and at last submitting to Death, even the Death of the Cross, for their good, He should be advanced to be Lord and *Heir of all Things*, and consequently administer an universal Kingdom in his own Name, above all other Principalities, or all other, even the highest, Angels, who had formerly, in the Conduct of other Nations, been his Fel-

Fellows: They now being probably advanced and rewarded for their righteous Conduct in their respective Provinces, as *they triumph'd in him*, as their exalted Head and Lord. Let any one after coolly making this Comparison between the two Suppositions, see, whether he must not think the latter the more probable; and that not only from the bare Comparison, but from this farther Consideration, that upon this last Supposition, God will appear not only to have acted according to Rules of the strictest Justice, and most exact and beautiful Proportion, and with an Unity in all his Dispensations, of Creation and Providence, and that both over the natural and moral World; but likewise thereby set us the greatest Example, how we, by managing the Talents, that are at present given us, and particularly by all Acts of Humility, Condescension, and Self-denial, for the Good of others, may come to inherit the Kingdom prepared for us, and to *sit down at his right Hand; as he sat down at the Father's*. St. Paul runs into Thoughts of this kind, *Heb. i. 8, 9. Eph. iv. 1—13. Phil. ii. 1—14.*

That the most High sent his great Messages to the *Israelites*, and their Ancestors, by the Word, was the Opinion of the Fathers. But that would not be of great Consequence, if, in all this, the Scriptures did not seem plainly to go along with us; confirming this

this Notion, (*viz.* that the Angel who is call'd *Jehovah*, was the *Word*) (1.) By its being manifestly alluded to by the New Testament Writers (*John* i. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10—17. *Gal.* iv. 14. *Phil.* ii. 6. *Heb.* i. 8, 9. *Rev.* xxi. 2, 3. compared with *John* i. 14. *Exod.* xxix. 42, 43, 44, 45, 46. *Lev.* xxvi. 11, 12. and *Gen.* vi. 13. xvii. 1, 2. xviii. 1, 2, 33. xxviii. 13, 16. xxxii. 30. xxxv. 9, 13. *Exod.* iii. 6, 7, 14. By all which Places it should seem, that he who **A P P E A R E D** to the Ancestors of the *Israelites*, who said he would **D W E L L** with the *Israelites*, after the Covenant at *Horeb*, and set his Tabernacle among them, and would be **T H E I R G O D**, and take them for **H I S P E O P L E**; was the same with him, who **D W E L T**, or tabernacled among the *Jews*, when he took Flesh, that he should purify to himself a peculiar People; and who will tabernacle or **D W E L L** with Men again, at his second Coming, when he will take all Men, both the *Jewish* Nation, and all the Nations of the Earth, for his **P E O P L E**, and be **T H E I R G O D**. (2.) By its being likewise supposed by them, when they quote Texts out of the Old Testament relating to *Jehovah*, and apply them to *Christ*, as *John* xii. 41. quoted from *Isa.* vi. 1, 3, 5. *Rom.* x. 13. quoted from *Joel* ii. 32. And, (3.) By its being, to my Apprehension, expressly asserted both by the Writers of the Old Testament,

stament, (*Deut.* xxviii. 58. *Psal.* lxxviii 17, 18. compar'd with *Eph.* iv. 7 - 12. (For he that ascended is the same that descended on Mount *Sinai* as well as into the lower Parts of the Earth, and I believe St. *Paul's* Thought was occasion'd by that in the *Psalms*) *Jerem.* xxiii. 6. *Micb.* v. 2.) and also by the New Testament Writers, *Johu* i. 11. and viii. 56 (Where our Saviour asserts, that *Abraham saw his Day*, that is HIM, (as appears by the *Jews* Reply, *ver.* 57. and our Saviour's Rejoinder, *ver.* 58. and by the Sense of the Word *Day* in other Places, *Job* xviii. 20. *Luke* xvii. 22, 24, 30. *1 Cor.* iv. 3.) *1 Cor.* x. 4, 9. compar'd with *Exod.* xvii. 6. See also *Heb.* i. 2. xii. 25, 26. *Refuse not him that speaketh*, &c. where it is plain that it is the Voice of the same Person that *now speaks from Heaven*, *who formerly spoke on Earth*, viz. on *Mount Sinai*.

It will be necessary to speak particularly to this Text, because it has been lately apply'd to God the Father, by that most sagacious, judicious, and learned Commentator

\* This Proof that I have offer'd from *Johu* viii. 56. with the Texts which support the Sense that is here given to the Word *Day*, was mention'd to me by an ingenious and learned Man, who, on other Occasions, as well as this, has suggested several Things which have been of use to me, when he has known my Thoughts to be engag'd on particular Subjects.

Mr. *Peirce*, of whom the World was not worthy. But notwithstanding the Deference due to so great an Expositor, I think it is plain, that this Text relates to Christ, from the following Considerations; (1.) From the general Design of this Epistle, which is to prevent the *Hebrew* Believers from apostatizing from Christianity, on Account of the Persecutions they suffer'd. This runs through the whole Epistle, and therefore is most likely to be the Conclusion of the whole Argument, which ends with this Chapter. The 13<sup>th</sup> Chapter consisting of Salutations and Exhortations to several Duties, with which St. *Paul*, the Author of this Epistle, after he has concluded the Argument of every one of his Epistles, generally closes them. There was no Occasion for St. *Paul* to bid the *Hebrews* not refuse to hear God the Father, for they were not in Danger of apostatizing from Judaism as well as from Christianity, but from Christianity to Judaism.

(2.) From the immediate Context; which either is the beginning of this Chapter, in these Words, *Let us run with Patience the [Christian] Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Director and the Rewarder [ἀρχηγὸν ἡ τελειωτὴν] of our Faith: Or ver. 24. And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling, which speaketh better Things than the Blood of*

of *Abel*. Then follows, *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh*. Which soever of these Verses are the Context, (and indeed I think both are) it refers this Text to Christ, and not to God the Father.

(3.) The Argument of the Apostle lies in this, that the *Hebrews* should hear the Voice of the same Person that before spoke on Earth, but now speaks from Heaven; whose Voice only then shook the *Earth*, but now hath shaken *Heaven* also. So that the Argument is drawn from the Place from whence he speaks, and the Effect of his Voice from that Place. Now the Force of the Argument from the Place, I think, can be only this. "See that ye refuse not him that now speaketh, *viz.* the Son; for if they escaped not, who refused to hear *Jehovah*, the Word, speaking on Earth, when he spake but as an Angel, Minister, or Messenger of the Father, how much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from *Heaven*"; i. e. from him now become the Son, or the Heir and Lord of all Things, seated on the Right Hand of God in the Heavens, and speaking and acting in his own Name and Authority? From thence, (agreeable to his Argument, *chap. ii. ver. 2, 3.*) indeed, as he adds, his Voice formerly, when he spake on Earth, and acted but only barely as an Angel, Minister, and Messen-

ger of the Father, shook the Earth, *viz.* Mount *Sinai*; but now that he is the King of the Kingdom that cannot be shaken, has shaken not only the Earth, or Earthly Kingdoms, but Heaven, or the Heavenly, or Angelical Powers. See Mr. *Peirce's* admirable Note on *Heb.* xii. 26, 27.

If this relates to the Father, there is no Force in the Argument drawn here by the Apostle from the Place from whence he speaks. For whatever the Father should say wou'd be of equal Force, whether he says it by an Angel on Earth, or by an Angel from Heaven, his Authority being the same at all Times, and in all Places. Whereas every one easily sees, that if it be refer'd to Christ, the Argument has great Force; because the Word's speaking [or God's speaking by him] on Earth, is equivalent to its being said that he speaks [or, that God speaks by him] but in the Character of an Angel: Whereas saying that Christ speaks from Heaven, [or, that God speaks by him from Heaven] is equivalent to saying, that Christ speaks [or, that God speaks by him] as the Son, or the Heir and Lord of all Things: Which is the Argument as I observ'd before, *chap.* ii. *ver.* 2, 3.

Mr. *Peirce* seems to have been aware of this, and therefore says, that the Argument is taken here " from the Manner of Speaking, which was an earthly Manner; as shaking,

" king,



“ king the Earth, &c. but his speaking from  
 “ Heaven, implies his speaking by his Son,  
 “ who came from Heaven, and spoke of hea-  
 “ venly Things, according to *John* iii. 11, 12.  
 “ Or else from the Spirit of the Father sent  
 “ from Heaven, to which he inclines”. But  
 I see no Foundation for either of these In-  
 terpretations in the Text; and I think the  
 last is quite foreign from the whole Design  
 of this Epistle.

(4) It is added, *ver.* 28. that since they  
 had received a Kingdom that cannot be sha-  
 ken, that they should adhere to the Gospel,  
 whereby they might know how to serve God  
 acceptably, with Reverence and godly Fear:  
 [See Mr. *Peirce's* Note on this Verse] And  
 then says, *ver.* 29. *For our God is a consu-  
 ming Fire*; i. e. as *Jehovah* the King of the  
*Jews*, speaking on Earth in the Name of  
 the most High, was a consuming Fire to those  
 that would not serve acceptably under that  
 Dispensation; Christ, who is our God, [or  
*Immanuel*, God with us] or King in this  
 Kingdom, which cannot be shaken, is like-  
 wise a consuming Fire: Agreeably to all the  
 Declarations of Scripture, that *He shall be  
 revealed in FLAMING FIRE, taking Venge-  
 ance on all that know not God, and obey not  
 the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Thess.*  
*i. 7, 8.* and to an Expression in this Epistle,  
*viz. a fearful looking for of fiery Indignation  
 to devour the Adversaries, chap. x. 27.* If  
 this

this be the Sense of this Verse, every one sees that the whole Passage from *ver.* 25. must be refer'd to Christ, and not to the Father: And if this be not the Sense, I must own I cannot see the Beauty, Force, or Emphasis of this Assertion of the Author of this Epistle to the *Hebrews*. They did not want to be told, that the God of the *Jews* was a consuming Fire. Their History gave many Instances of it. But it has great Force and Beauty if it relate to Christ, in order to prevent *Hebrew*-Christians from apostatizing from Christianity, to put them in Mind, that Christ, the God and King of us Christians, will be a consuming Fire to rebellious and disobedient Christians, as *Jehovah* the King of the *Israelites* was to rebellious and disobedient *Jews*; and is the same Motive against Apostacy, that he had us'd *chap.* x. *ver.* 26, 27.

But after all I can say to support this Opinion, it is but a just Deference due to this incomparable Commentator, to consider the Arguments by which he supports the contrary. He endeavours to prove, that it is God the Father who is refer'd to here, by two Arguments drawn from the Prophecy of *Haggai*, whence this Passage is quoted by the *Author* of this Epistle. He says, that “ It is manifest, from *ver.* 26. that the Per-  
“ son speaking, is He whose Voice at Mount  
“ *Sinai* shook the Earth, and who had pro-

“ mised by the Prophet *Haggai*, that yet  
 “ once more I shall not only shake the  
 “ Earth, but the Heavens”. He adds, “ Now  
 “ if we consult that Prophet, *chap. ii. 6, 7.*  
 “ we can’t reasonably doubt, that God the  
 “ Father is the Person who there makes the  
 “ Promise. For not to insist upon his be-  
 “ ing call’d over and over *the Lord of Hosts*,  
 “ which Title appears peculiar to the Fa-  
 “ ther: He that speaketh there, is he that  
 “ promiseth, *That the Desire of all Nations*  
 “ *shall come.* And I suppose, all will grant,  
 “ that according to the Stile of the Old Te-  
 “ stament, the Father is the Person who  
 “ promises his People that Christ should  
 “ come.

I hope I shall be forgiven, if I differ from  
 this most able New Testament Critick, to  
 whom the World is so much obliged, and to  
 whom I am so greatly indebted. But I can-  
 not help thinking, that *Lord* [or *Jehowab*]  
 of Hosts in *Haggai*, and in the Old Testa-  
 ment, always signifies the *Word*; and from  
*Exod. iii.* the King of *Israel*, or of the Host  
 of *Israel*, speaking and acting in the Name  
 of the most High: I hope this will be for-  
 given me, the rather since I have, in the  
 main, so able an Old Testament Critick on  
 my Side, as the learned *Ainsworth*. [See his  
 Commentary on the *Pentateuch passim.*]

Indeed, I think, this is Mr. *Peirce*’s ori-  
 ginal Mistake, and that has led him here  
 out

out of the Way. He takes *Lord of Hosts* to denote the Father, and then he could not make good the Apostle's Quotation from *Haggai* (which on this Occasion, as on all others; he seems very intent at all Adventures to do for the Honour of the Christian Religion; tho' sometimes not very fortunately) without supposing the Author of this Epistle to refer here to the Father.

This learned Man adds, " That it is the same Person that promises, *That the Desire of all Nations shall come*, which must be the Father". But Mr. *Peirce* could not justly lay any Strefs upon this Reason, because he own'd there was another Reading, (which he did not disapprove) and which totally enervates this Argument; viz. *The Elect of all Nations shall come*: Which is the Reading of the LXX. Καὶ ἕξει ἐκλεκτὰ πάντων τῶν ἔθνων. They reading, as he supposes, *Chamudoth*, for *Chemeddath*, in their Copies. See his Note, chap. xii. ver. 26. But if *the Desire of all Nations shall come*, be the true Reading, why may not *Jehozab*, the Word, speaking not in his own Name, but in the Name of the most High, and consequently personating another, say, *And the Desire of all Nations shall come*; tho' it was himself? [See a like Manner of Speaking, *Exod.* xxiii. 20---24 ]

Thus I hope I have prov'd by several Texts of Scripture, and particularly by *Hebrews*

*brews* xii. 25, 26. (which I have so largely insisted on) that it was the *Word* who made all the great Appearances and Manifestations of God's Will to our first Parents, to the Patriarchs, and to the *Israelitish* People. But we must always carry it along with us, that he never acted or spake in his own Name, but in the Name of the most High, whom he personated as his Angel, acting as his chief Minister and Messenger, and by his Authority; without any Authority of his own, as he afterwards did, when he, by *Inheritance*, obtain'd a more excellent Name than the Angels, being appointed the Heir of all Things, *Heb.* i. 4. 2. He seems also to be call'd, *Michael the Arch-angel*, (perhaps for that Reason, viz. his being the greatest Minister or Messenger, God ever did, or could send) *Jude* 4. *Rev.* x. 7. 1. *1 Thess.* iv. 16. compar'd with *John* v. 25. See Mr. *Peirce's* Note on *Philippians*, ii. 9: He is also call'd the *Prince of God's People*, and the *Captain* [Prince] of *God's Host*. See *Josh.* v. 13, 14, 15. *Dan.* viii. 11. x. 13, 21. xii. 1. And likewise the *Prince of Princes*, *Dan.* viii. 25. That this Prince of the Host was *Jehocab* himself, who was the King of *Israel*, tho' acting in the Name of the most High, in the Text I quoted last, is plain, because the Sanctuary is called HIS; that is, the *Prince of the Hosts*, *Dan.* viii. 11.

I suppose, however, that this chief Minister, or Messenger (who had these various Names) was always attended with a Retinue, or Host of Angels, which made part of the Pillar of Cloud, and the Pillar of Fire, in which he appear'd. See *Psal.* lxxviii. 17. xviii. 9, 10. *civ.* 3, 4. But His [*Jehovah's*] Presence was distinct from his Retinue, or any of them : As appears, not only from the Thing it self, but from the Word *Schachan, habitavit*, whence the Word *Shechinah* comes, which is often us'd in the *Targum*, and by the *Rabbinical* Writers. For tho' the *Word* might be said to inhabit a Cloud of Glory, as well as to dwell among us in Flesh afterwards ; yet the Word can't, with the like Propriety, be said to have inhabited his Retinue. Besides, that the Presence of *Jehovah* was distinct from the Retinue of Angels, or any of them, will farther appear, from comparing *Exodus*, xxxiii. *verse* 2, 3. with *ver.* 12, 16. For *He*, or *his Presence*, is distinguish'd from the Angel, in all those Verses. And since the Angels are called *his Chariots*, as in the last quoted *Psalms*, sure *Jehovah* must be different from them ; as he must be from the Cherubs, the Heavens, or the Winds, who rideth *on the Cherub*, or *on the Heavens*, or *on the Wings of the Wind* by his Name *Jah*, *Psal.* lxxviii. 5. And it is moreover expressly said of this Retinue of Angels, that *the Lord is among them*

as [he was] in Sinai [when it was] in holiness, ver. 18. Now he that was among his Retinue, sure must be distinct from them.

Perhaps some will say to me, in Reply to what I have just now said, “ That the most High is said to dwell in Heaven, in Light and Glory, to be seated on his Throne, and to have Christ sitting on his Right Hand, &c. Yet you must agree, that these Things are not said of the most High literally, but figuratively; that is, that there are some peculiar Manifestations of his Will, his Wisdom, his Goodness, or his Power, made by some Minister or Ministers of His, to other Beings: And why may not you then allow, that all these, and such like Expressions in the Texts you have just quoted, may be us’d figuratively, and not literally of the *Word* under the Name of *Jehovah*? And then, how do you make it appear from these Texts that you have last quoted, that *Jehovah*, the *Word*, is distinct from his Retinue of Angels? If any one shall put this Question to me, I answer, that the Difference is this; That we must expound these Expressions figuratively, when they are predicated of the Omnipresent and Invisible Being, because every one sees, we cannot interpret them literally of him: But then we must not depart from the Letter, as all Interpreters allow, when

there is no Necessity : And therefore the Texts that speak of *Jehovah* the King of *Israel*, or the Word's, *coming, staying, or going, ascending, or descending ; appearing, or disappearing ;* all these must be interpreted literally of him, who is not invisible, but *the Image of the invisible God ; the Breaking forth of the Father's Glory, and the Express Image [or Representation] of his Person ;* who indeed *was in the beginning with God, and was God,* and yet was in the World, (tho' the World knew him not) and came unto his own, (tho' his own received him not) even before *he was made Flesh,* John i. 2, 10, 11, 14.

I must own, the acute, ingenious, and learned Dr. *Morgan* has urg'd an Objection against this Notion, with all the Force that I believe it is capable of receiving, in his *Preface to his Collection of Tracts.* I believe what he has said there, has shaken the Opinion of a great many, who were of the Sentiment I have advanc'd ; as I own it did mine, till I consider'd the Thing more distinctly. The Passage is too long to transcribe here, but I will endeavour to represent the full force of it. His Opinion, I think, is this ; “ That the Author of the “ Epistle to the *Hebrews* supposes, that the “ *Word* never spake before he was incarnate ; “ when he says, *Heb. i. 2. God, who—* “ *spake to our Fathers by the Prophets, hath* “ *spoken*



“ spoken to us in these last Days, by his  
 “ Son : And when he opposes the Word spo-  
 “ ken BY ANGELS to the Word spoken by  
 “ THE LORD, chap. ii. 2, 3. and also  
 “ when he asserts, ver. 5. That God hath  
 “ not put the World [or Age] to come, that  
 “ is the Kingdom that can't be shaken, (as  
 “ he expresses it, chap. xii. 28.) or the  
 “ Gospel Kingdom, to Angels ; but to the Son  
 “ of Man, ver. 6—10. It being there  
 “ strongly implied, that the former Age,  
 “ or the Jewish State, was in Subjection to  
 “ an Angel or Angels, and not to the Son of  
 “ Man. So that he thinks the Word had  
 “ not any Management over the Jewish  
 “ People till he became the Son of Man.”

This, I think (with what will be farther  
 observed presently) has all the Force of his  
 Argument, as I believe the Reader will  
 think, if he turns to that Preface to which I  
 refer him. And though that incomparable  
 Commentator] Mr. Peirce thinks that the  
*Logos*, or the Word, had the Management  
 of the Jewish People, and spoke to Joshua  
 as the Prince of the Host ; (See his Note on  
*Phil. ii. 9. (g) ;*) yet he thinks the Word  
 never spoke or appeared, unless in that In-  
 stance, or was ever sent on any Messages,  
 before He was incarnate : (See his Note,  
*Heb. i. 2. (d) ;*) Which however does not seem  
 a very probable Hypothesis. Now I have  
 the Happiness thus far to agree with these  
 excel-

excellent Writers, that the Son could not speak to the *Jews* before he was a *Prophet mighty in Word and Deed*: Yet I have endeavour'd to prove, that the *Word* did speak to them and their Ancestors, before He was made *Flesh*. The only true Solution of this Difficulty, which the Doctor and Mr. *Peirce* have urg'd so strongly, is, that the *Word*, before he was made *Flesh*, is not in the Stile of the Author of this Epistle, the *Son*, the *Lord*, or the *Son of Man*, but an *Angel*; being then consider'd as the Minister and Messenger of the Father, and acting in his Name and Stead; though he then was *the Brightness of the Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*. That he was not the *Son of Man*, before he took *Flesh* of the *Virgin*, will readily be allow'd me. That he was not the *Lord* too, I think will not be much disputed; because though call'd *Jehovah*, as I apprehend, (which our Translators, as well as the *Septuagint*, have render'd *Lord*, though wrongfully, since they should always have us'd *Jehovah* as a proper Name, as the learned *Ainsworth* does every where in his Translation of the *Pentateuch*) yet he did not act in his own Name, but in the Name of the most High: And *Peter* makes this the Sum or Conclufion of his first and long Discourse after *Christ's Ascension*, *Acts* ii. 36. *That all the House of Israel should know assuredly, that*  
 God

*God hath [viz. now] made that same Jesus, [approved of God among you as a Prophet, ver. 23.] whom ye have crucified, both LORD and Christ. See also Acts v. 30, 31. and Phil. ii. 11. I think this will be much the more readily allow'd, if it be consider'd, that Lord generally, if not always, signifies Mediator, when it is predicated of Christ in the New Testament; and then every one sees, that it is not likely that the Word before he was incarnate, should be ever stiled the Lord.*

I am sensible it will be more earnestly contended, that he was the *Son*, and that he was not an *Angel* in the Stile of this Epistle: For I suppose it will not be denied, that he is call'd an Angel, *Mal. iii. 1.* compar'd with *Mat. xi. 10. Mark i. 2. Luke i. 76. vii. 27.* But to be sure, he may be call'd an Angel, in the Stile of this Epistle, if he then was a Minister, and Messenger of the Father; without having a Kingdom of his own, or a Kingdom, which he was to administer in his own Name. For that is the plain Description of an *Angel* in this Epistle, *chap. i. 7. and 14. Are they not all MINISTERS SENT FORTH for the good, &c?* And every one knows that *Angel* signifies Messenger in the *Greek* and *Hebrew*. And indeed, the Scripture does not describe Beings so much by their metaphysical Nature, as by their Excellencies,

Attributes, Characters and Offices. And it is in this Sense alone, that I understand the Word to be called an Angel, or an Archangel; and not on Account of his Nature, which is to be sure very different from, and vastly superior to, the Nature of the angelick Rank and Order.

And that the *Word* was not the Son, in the Stile of the Author of this Epistle, before his Incarnation, notwithstanding that he was *then the Brightness of the Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*, Heb. i. 2. is plain from the following Considerations, (1.) That the Description he here gives of the Son did not then agree to him. The Description he gives of the Son, is *the Heir of all Things*. Now indeed the *Jews* were his own, or his own People, before He was incarnate, *John* i. 11. But the *Gentiles*, tho' promised Him as his Inheritance, *Psal.* ii. 7. were not given actually into his Possession till after his Resurrection. Then *Jesus* was indeed DECLARED to be the Son of God, according to the Spirit of Holiness, *Rom.* i. 4. For then it was declared in Words as well as in Fact, that *all Power was given him in Heaven and in Earth*, *Mat.* xxviii. 18. (That is in a Stile usual to the Prophets, and to Christ the great Prophet, &c. that all Power would soon and certainly be given him: Just as he says immediately after to his Apostles, *Go, and teach all Nations*; though He

He afterwards *bids them stay at Jerufalem, till they were endued with Power from on High*, Luke xxiv. 49.) Thus *Jefus* was declared to be the Son of God at his Resurrection, according to *Pfal. ii. 7. Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee*: which is always apply'd by *St. Paul* to *Christ's Resurrection*; but he was not actually invested with the Right of Sonship, or with the Inheritance, to which he was begotten from the Dead, till his Ascension: When, as *St. Peter* says, *He was raised to David's Throne*, Acts ii. 30. or *exalted by the right Hand of God, to sit on God's own right Hand, till all his Enemies were made his Footstool*: And when, as *St. Peter* adds, *Jefus* was not only made *Lord* [or *Mediator*] but *CHRIST* [or *King*] Acts ii. 33—37. Hence it is, that upon *Christ's Exaltation*, we are said to be, not only *Heirs of God, but JOINT HEIRS WITH JESUS CHRIST*: We being to be *delivered from the Bondage of Corruption into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God*; and *God having predestinated us to be conformed to the Image of his dear Son*: Namely, that as we suffer with Him, we should be glorified with Him, or reign with Him in Glory, Rom. viii. 17, 21, 30. 2 Tim. ii. 12.

(2.) The Author of this Epistle says, *ver. 4. That Christ is made so much better than the Angels, in as much as he hath by Inheritance*

obtained [or as he hath inherited] a more excellent Name than they. [viz. that of a Son, and consequently the Dominion and Authority of a Son.] Now Inheritance always enters into the Notion of Sonship: As the Inheritance of *Jehovah* was the Jewish People, *Deut. xxxii. 9.* so the Inheritance of *Christ* is the Christian People, (*Eph. i. 11, 12.* In whom also we are inherited, [*ἐκληρωθήμεν*] viz. by *Christ*; see also *2 Pet. ii. 9.*) or his Church (which he purchased with his own Blood, *Acts xx. 28.*) or his Kingdom, and the Power to which he is advanc'd in order to manage it. See *Eph. i. 20—23. iv. 9, 10. Heb. ii. 9, 10. xii. 2.* And we learn from *Phil. ii. 9.* that it was because, though he was in the Form [or Appearance] of God, that he emptied himself, and took upon him the Form [or Appearance] of a Servant [or Minister, viz. of the Circumcision, *Rom. xv. 8.*] and the Likeness of Man, and that he humbled himself by becoming obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross, that God hath given Him a NAME above every Name, that every Tongue should confess that *Christ* is Lord.

(3.) He is described as the first Begotten, WHEN HE IS BROUGHT INTO THE WORLD, *Heb. i. 6.* If this means his Birth, it will be agreeable to what the Angel *Gabriel* told the *Virgin*, *Luke i. 35.* The Power of the Highest shall come upon thee,

and the Holy Ghost shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy Thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. Or if it means his Resurrection, as is most likely, from God's being said, to bring him again [*παλι*] into the World, as Mr. Peirce thinks, it is agreeable to the Texts that speak of his Resurrection, under the Notion of God's begetting him from the Dead. Or if it relates to his Coming again the second Time into the World, as Mr. *Jos. Mede*, and some other of the Millenary Writers think, it is agreeable to those Texts, which speak of his Coming again with the Angels as obeying his Commands, *Mat. xxiv. 30, 31.* and with all other inconceivable Power, Pomp and Glory. And in any of these Senses he could not be the Son, in the Stile of this Epistle, before He was incarnate.

(4.) One of the Texts which is quoted to prove him the Son, is from *Psal. ii. 7. I thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten Thee.* Now *St. Paul*, when he quotes this Text, always applies it to the Resurrection of Christ; see *Acts xiii. 33. Heb. v. 5.*

(5.) Another Text which is quoted to prove him the Son, is from *Psal. xlv. 6, 7. But unto the Son He saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever: A Sceptre of Righteousness is the Sceptre of thy Kingdom. Thou hast loved Righteousness and hated Iniquity: Therefore, O God, Thy God hath anointed*

*thee with the Oil of Gladness above thy Fellows.* Now this evidently belongs to his anointing after his Ascension, because it is quoted after *Psal. ii. 7.* which is always applied by *St. Paul* to Christ's Resurrection; as has been just observ'd. Besides, tho' *Jesus* was anointed as a Prophet (or as a Teacher, and a Worker of Miracles) in the Days of his Flesh, *Acts x. 38*; yet he was not anointed as a Priest and a King, till after his Ascension, *when it pleased the Father, that in Him all Fulness should dwell; receiving the Spirit of the Father,* and thereby being anointed for the Administration of that greater Kingdom, that He was to receive beyond his Fellows. Or when, in other Words of Scripture, by the eternal Spirit, *He offered himself unto God in the Heavens,* *Heb. iv. 15. viii. 4. ix. 24—28.* and was consecrated an high Priest by the Word of an Oath for ever, after the Order of Melchizedeck, *chap. vii. 16, 28.* But to whichsoever of these two Anointings of *Jesus* it belongs (and the Scriptures speak of no more) it will equally serve our present purpose.

If, as these excellent Writers add, it be ask'd, "How the Reasoning of the Author of this Epistle will stand upon this Hypothesis, because his Argument, for a greater Attention to the Gospel than the Law, is founded on the greater Authority of the  
" Per-



“ Person that spoke the Salvation of the  
 “ Gospel, than of the Person that spoke the  
 “ Law ? ” I answer, that I agree, that the  
 Authority of the Person that spoke the Gos-  
 pel is greater than the Authority of the Per-  
 son that spoke the Law ; but not from the  
 greater Authority of a greater Person : (For  
 the Word, before He took Flesh, and after  
 He took Flesh, is the same Person) But only  
 from the greater Authority that results from  
 the higher Character of the same Person :  
 In as much as the Word, by taking the  
 Body that God had prepar’d for him, in  
 which He became obedient to Death, and  
 rising again from the Dead, and ascending  
 to the right Hand of Power (or admini-  
 string all Power in his own Name) is be-  
 come the Son in the Stile of this Epistle:  
 Which is a far higher Character, than that  
 of the Word, before He took Flesh, speaking  
 only as the Minister and Messenger of the  
 Father, in the Father’s Name : And conse-  
 quently in the Character of an *Angel* or  
*Archangel* : And it is as good Reasoning  
 in the Author of this Epistle, to say, “ Give  
 “ greater Attention to the Message delivered  
 “ by the same Person advanced to a much  
 “ higher Character : ” as to say, “ Give  
 “ greater Attention to the Message deli-  
 “ vered by an higher Person ; ” as we  
 should all of us agree in any like case.  
 There is no doubt but the *Poets* have paid

a much greater Attention and Regard to what has been said to them by the King's Son, the *Electoral Prince of Saxony*, since he was the *King of Poland's* prime Minister, than they did before.

I will here likewise add some Thoughts, which, if they had been printed in their proper Place, which is just after Corollary the Xth, should have made Corollary the XIth.

It is very obvious, That all I have said of the Means [Mean] of Religion in the foregoing Corollaries, and the Main of what I have said about them in the foregoing Essay, relates to the great internal Mean of Religion; that is to say, the Motive that God has ever propos'd to Mankind to induce them to be Religious: Having said little more of the *great external Mean of Religion* (or if you please of the great Mean of *Providence*) than what was sometimes proper to carry on the Thread of the Discourse, or at least is contained in some incidental Passages of it. But it may not be improper here, to define what I understand by the *great external Mean of Religion* [or Providence] the better to distinguish it from the *internal*; and to shew, how the Former has kept pace with the Latter, and run through God's several Dispensations. By the great  
exter-

external Mean of Religion or Providence then I understand, the Method which God has taken with Mankind to prevent their Inattention to this great internal Mean of Religion, or the Motive that was proposed to them, in order to induce them to be Religious. And to what purpose could that Motive have serv'd, if a Method had not been taken, to prevent an Inattention to it, and an intire Dissipation of Thought, among the vain or vicious Pleasures of Life? What I point at is the Separation, which God by various Means brought about, between his own Children and Subjects, and the Children and Subjects of the Devil: Lest by the natural Course of Things, they should have drawn off the Thoughts of God's Children and Subjects from their Inheritance in a future Life, through the foolish and wicked Amusements of the present Life; if they had not endeavour'd it studiously, and on purpose; as it can't be suppos'd but they would.

This external Mean runs visibly through all God's Dispensations, in a wise and beautiful Manner, and has been perfectly adjusted to the Circumstances of Mankind, from the first to the last of them; as I have shewn in some Instances in this Essay; whilst I have omitted several others, in order to preserve the Unity of the internal Mean the better. I will there-

therefore now represent the great external Mean in one short view, by only just mentioning the Instances, where it plainly appears: As I think it will be readily allowed it does, in the Separation of the Families of *Cain* and *Seth*: — In drowning the old World, when against all God's Methods and Warnings, the Sons of God would mingle and make Affinity with the Daughters of Men: — In preserving *Noah*, the only righteous Man of that World, who had paid Obedience to God's Commands in <sup>that</sup> particular Law, as well as in others, to which his Obedience to that particular Command naturally led: — In the Confusion of Languages at *Babel*, and the Dispersion or Separation that ensued: — In God's calling *Abraham* from among his idolatrous Relations and Friends in *Urr* of the *Chaldees*: — In directing him to a separate and solitary Life in *Canaan*; where, to the last, he had no Possession besides a Field to bury in; and where he took all the Precautions imaginable against any manner of Alliance between his Family and the Inhabitants of the Land; as *Isaac* and *Jacob* did afterwards: — In directing *Isaac* and *Jacob* to lead the same manner of Life that *Abraham* had done before: — And (when the Famine forced *Jacob* and his Family to go into *Egypt*) in directing *Joseph* (who

knew

knew that the constant Course of God's Providence, as well as the Nature of the Thing, called for a like Separation) to procure *Goshen* for their Residence: A Country where they might live separate from the *Egyptians*, and follow a Trade (*viz.* of Cattle) which render'd them odious to each other: — In carrying them out of *Egypt* after they had caught its Idolatry in the Brick-kilns of that Country: — In plaguing *Egypt*, when the *Egyptians* would hinder them from going into the Wilderness to worship *Jehovah* their God, as he had commanded them; and would entice them by their Magicians to the Worship of the Devil: — In carrying the Children of *Israel* into the Wilderness, when they were become too numerous to live as a separate Family; and so keeping them at the greatest Distance from other People, by means of the Place, as well as by erecting them into an earthly Kingdom, under Himself, as their King, as also by the Laws he there gave them; particularly those of Circumcision, Sabbaths, other Feasts and Fasts, Sacrifices, one Altar, Vows, Food, Cloaths, Dress, Pollutions and Purifications, quite different from the Rites of the Heathen, if not opposite to them; all which Methods were manifestly intended to prevent any Affinity with the Heathen, and even the Conversation, Mirth

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and Jollity that leads to it: — In keeping this People in the Wilderness, till the Race that had been tainted with *Egyptian* Idolatry was quite extinct; and till a new Race was sprung up, that had not been infected: A Race, that had been kept separate from all other People; that knew no God, but the God of *Israel*; and had all along liv'd on his miraculous Care and Bounty: — In ordering them to destroy all the Inhabitants of *Canaan*, that they might not mingle with them, serve their Gods, and learn their Manners: — In keeping them all along a distinct and separate People, when they were settled in the Land of Promise: — In sending divers Judgments on them, when they or their Kings made Affinity with other Nations, and worihip'd their Gods: — In ordering them to separate themselves from the strange Wives they had married in their *Babylonish* Captivity: — In preserving them a separate People wheresoever they were scattered: [See to this purpose Dr. *Thomas Burnet's Demonstration of true Religion*, Vol. II. p. 110—210:] — And last of all, in the small separate Society of Disciples, which Jesus gathered in his Lifetime; and the like Societies which his Apostles gathered after his Ascension; when it was visible, that neither God's single Family, nor his earthly Kingdom, would reclaim the  
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the World from Idolatry, to the Worship of Himself; nor keep up Virtue in any great Degree in the Body of Men, to which His Family and the Theocracy were confined: And when yet at the same Time God had by that single Family and Theocracy sufficiently prepared Men and Things for the Appearance of Jesus in the Flesh; to the Intent, that instead of God's having only one People and Nation, he might take to Himself a People out of all the idolatrous Countries of the World by Christ, and then give them to him, as his Church, Kingdom and Inheritance: By the Means of which separate Societies (though in a peaceable and orderly Manner) God's People were still to be kept a distinct and separate Body from the Idolaters, the Atheists, the Scepticks, and the Vicious in all those Countries, to avoid *being unequally yoked with them, and to keep themselves a peculiar People to him, and his Christ, zealous of good Works.* This stricter Separation of Christians was the more necessary in the first Beginnings of Christianity, when instead of any such Thing, as a Christian Nation in the World, a few Christians liv'd every where, among nothing but bigotted superstitious *Jews* or impious *Pagans*.

By thus explaining my Meaning about the great external Mean of Religion, every one will easily see, how it is *distinguish'd* from

the internal Mean of Religion. This is the Motive to the Religion of the End; that is removing what would prevent that Motive's being present to the Mind; and consequently from having any force on it: This is furnishing the strongest Persuasive to Piety and Virtue; that is taking away the greatest Temptation against them: This is a Method to cure the Plague of the Heart; that is to prevent fresh Infection: This is Revelation; that is Providence. Thus they differ; and this is the Relation they bear to each other.

But on the other hand, in this they *agree*; that as the internal Mean of Religion is one, so is the external Mean of Religion one also. For as the first is the Motive to every Thing that is good, so the last is a Separation from the Bad. They also agree in another Particular; that as the one internal Mean of Religion was differently exhibited and ascertain'd in different Ages and Dispensations, so was the one great external Mean of Religion differently accomplish'd in them: And finally, that as the one internal Mean of Religion, differently exhibited and ascertain'd in different Ages, was yet, in those different Exhibitions and Securities under the different Dispensations, beautifully proportion'd to the Circumstances of Mankind, and to each other; so the one great external Mean of Religion differently accomplish'd, was yet well adjusted in that different



Accomplishment to the different Circumstances of Mankind, in those Dispensations; at the same Time, that every later Method of Accomplishment bore a just Proportion to those which went before. All which may serve to shew still more fully, the great Unity of the main Plot, and the great Simplicity, and beautiful and well proportion'd Variety of the chief under-Plots of the great *Drama* of moral Providence, in the several Ages of the World: And is at the same Time but agreeable to the Methods of God's Providence over the natural World; where the wisest Designs are always compassed by the most proper and simple Means; all bearing the most beautiful Symmetry and Proportion to each other.

There have been many other external Means of Religion or Providence, which God has often used to prevent a Distraction of Mens Thoughts, and to procure their Attention to the internal Mean of Religion. They are to be met with in several Parts of the Bible, and some of them up and down in several Parts of this Essay. All God's Mercies and Judgments, Prophecies and Miracles, may be rank'd under this Head. But they being Occasional and Various, are not proper for our present Consideration.

There are several Mistakes by reason of the Author's Distance from the Press. Those that are the more considerable the Reader is desired to correct by the following TABLE of Errata.

P R E F A C E.

P.	L.		
18	22	Compounds	read <i>Compends</i>
28	pen.	<i>Candor</i>	read <i>Relations</i>

E S S A Y.

3	6	dele <i>and</i>	
	7	dele <i>elective</i>	
6	pen.	<i>all Men</i>	read <i>Angels,</i>
10	2	dele <i>by Nature or</i>	
16	23	dele <i>Nature or</i>	
18	12	dele <i>express</i>	
19	29	xii. 8. xvi.	read ix. 10, 11.
22	11	<i>Spencer's Notion</i>	read <i>if a Notion quoted and countenanced by Spencer</i>
23	13	after <i>Gen. xvii. 7.</i>	insert xxiv. 42, 48.
28	7	after <i>celestial</i>	insert <i>powerful,</i>
32	26	<i>before Hand</i>	read <i>before they actually became his People</i>
73	14	after <i>the Latter</i>	insert <i>took Place.</i>
85	5	after <i>Person</i>	insert <i>and who upholds all Things by the Word of his Power?</i>
126	12	<i>by his Obedience</i>	read <i>(on his Obedience to Death),</i>
121	14	after <i>Testament</i>	insert <i>as a steady Trust in God, on the greatest Trials, which it self is an high Virtue, and</i>
131	16	Heb. vi. 15, 16.	read Heb. xi. 27.
146	5	<i>this</i>	read <i>these</i>
158	13	<i>in particular Laws</i>	read <i>in that particular Law,</i>











