

PRIMITIVE
Not in 4/17/18
TRINITARIANISM,

EXAMINED

15777 AND

DEFENDED,

BY ELDER ELIJAH BAILEY,

OF THE

METHODIST REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA.

www.CreationismOnline.com

“His goings forth were of old, from everlasting.”

Micah v. 2.

“This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

John xvii. 3.

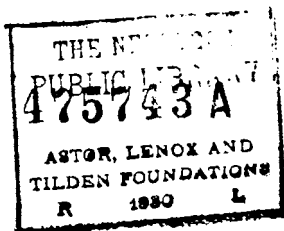


BENNINGTON:

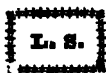
PRINTED BY DARIUS CLARK.

1820.





DISTRICT OF VERMONT, TO WIT:



BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the thirtieth day of September, in the fifty-first year of the Independence of the United States of America, DARIUS CLARK, of the said District, hath deposited in this office, the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

“ Primitive Trinitarianism, examined and defended, by Elder Elijah Bailey, of the Methodist Reformed Church in America. ‘ His goings forth were of old, from everlasting.’ Micah v. 2. ‘ This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.’ John xvii. 3.”

In conformity to the act of Congress of the United States, entitled “ An act, for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned.”

JESSE GOVE,
Clerk of the District of Vermont.

A true copy of record, examined and sealed by

J. GOVE, Clerk.



PREFACE.

It may be supposed by the reader, that a sufficient number of volumes have been written on this subject already. But when in the course of experience, we find that learned, ingenious, and artful men, in every age, devise new methods of attacking this doctrine, which every reflecting and christian mind will esteem most dear and sacred, we who are lovers of the doctrine, and whose hopes and faith of eternal life and happiness are founded upon it, ought to be diligent in repelling adversary attacks, and vigilant in devising, in some sense, new methods of precaution and defence.

We are greatly mistaken, if Doctor Clarke and Mr. Millard, are not adversaries of this character. Their attack, in our estimate is somewhat new, and artful. After as much research as our means and opportunity would permit, we have not been able to learn from any authority, ancient or modern, that the positions of opposition, which they have taken, has been before taken by any divine, in their exact manner and form, in any period of time, previous to the latter part of the last century.

We do not set ourselves up as infallible judges, nor would we darken counsel. We do, howev-

entertain hopes, that the charitable christian reader, when he has given our little work a candid perusal, will be somewhat assisted in deciding for himself; and if not greatly edified, we trust he will find nothing, which will impeach our motives. If we are the humble means of awakening the reader to meditations upon this divine doctrine, and to a comparison of our views, with the sacred scriptures, and the writings of the Fathers, and the creeds of churches, we are fully persuaded, our labors will not have been vain and useless. And we have no doubt, such a course of reflection and examination will improve and edify.

Our object is not controversy, it is to seek gospel truth for ourselves, to declare it one to another as we understand it, and to call others to Bible examination and inquiry. If thereby, our call to others, in any degree, confirms the weak in faith, establishes the wavering, or disencumbers the affections of the double-minded—and if it awakens in any the spirit of love and inquiry after a more perfect knowledge of God, through the medium of his revelation to our fallen race, our labors will not be entirely unavailable, and transitory. “The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without dissimulation.” Our great motive is to guard against errors, temptations, doubtings, and stumblings in the heavenly race which is set before us; and our prayerful desire is to gather up our thoughts and affections, so that the reader, as well as ourselves, may be led to contemplate, and diligently search for those truths and wonders of redeeming love, “which things angels desire to look into.” Our

design is, likewise, "That the trial of our faith, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the revelation of Jesus Christ," even to the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls. And while we are sojourners upon earth, that our faith may be firm and sincere, and appear "a divine evidence of things not seen, wrought in the soul by the immediate power of the Holy Ghost, and a means of holiness." That our faith in our Lord may be steadfast, and outwardly fruitful, affording budding evidences of *His* being the "fountain of spiritual life in the soul of believers," flowing out and exhibiting itself through us in "fruits of faith, hope, love and patience." And while we are daily feeding upon, and striving to possess more and more the holiness and happiness of the gospel, may we "grow in grace," and may our "labour be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless."

"Beloved, keep yourselves from idols"—
 "From all worship of false gods, from all worship of images, or of *any creature*, and from every inward idol."

*To our Brethren of the Reformed Methodist
Church.*

HAVING been regularly appointed in your behalf, as a Committee to examine, prepare, and approve if suitable, a work upon the subject of the Trinity; we, in pursuance of this our appointment, have examined the labours of Brother ELIJAH BAILEY, on the proposed topic, and do recommend and approve the same.

In doing this, we think we have performed our duty to you with that care this important gospel theme demanded. We are aware, that every human work, has its short-comings, and its errors, we therefore, dare not pretend there are none in this work, yet we trust the errors are not many and flagrant, and we are not availed of any, touching points of doctrine. As it is, we warmly recommend it to your attentive and prayerful reading; hoping it may be edifying in those everlasting and divine truths, which to "know aright is life eternal."

In the prayerful hope, we may all grow in grace, and in the knowledge, of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

"Peace be with you all that are in Christ."

EBENEZER DAVIS, }
JONAH STEARNS, } *Committee.*

TRINITARIANISM EXAMINED AND DEFENDED.



CHAPTER I.

Introductory remarks—distinction between Trinitarian and Unitarian doctrines—of the plural expression Elohim—the words *us* and *our* as spoken by God himself—Moses' declarations—the Jews understood them in a trinitarian light—the improbability of Moses leading the people into idolatry under his special commission from Jehovah to lead them from it.

“BELOVED,” saith Jude, “when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.” And the apostle Paul informs us, that “faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.” Consequently a right knowledge of our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, are points of the first magnitude, and ought to be the first concern to every creature bound to the bar of God. And God hath in infinite mercy, condescended to make early discoveries of himself to mankind—for “the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth his handy-work.” And, unquestionably, God made as early discoveries of himself to man in his primeval state, by his Divine Spirit, in regard to the perfections of his nature, the mode of his ex-

istence, and the glory of his attributes. But when man apostatized from God by sin, and his mind became darkened, and his affections became alienated from Him, it became necessary in due time for God to make a more perfect revelation of himself, his mind, and will to man, which he hath done in his written Word, commonly called the scriptures of the old and new testament, and which is our only rule of faith and practice.

Therefore—when we take a view of the revelation which God hath made of himself to the children of men, in creation and providence, in his written Word, and by his Divine Spirit, we are under the highest obligation to acknowledge, that there is one supreme, eternal, self-existent, and independent being—who exists by no cause than himself—and that this being is a spirit, whom we call God—and that he possesses, what we call infinite attributes, such as power, wisdom, justice, goodness and truth. So far we are all Unitarians. And when we look at the existence of God, and the glory of his perfections displayed in creation and providence alone, we are in this all Unitarians. For, saith St. James, “thou believest there is one God; thou dost well.” But as to the further displays of his glorious perfections, the mode of his existence, and the wonders he hath wrought for man’s redemption, in these we may differ; these points ought to be decided by the revelation which God hath made of himself, in the sacred oracles which he hath given us for our rule of faith and practice.

Moses, the oldest writer of this sacred book, we think has given us the strongest intimations, if not amounting to a firm declaration, that in this divine and eternal fountain, whom we call God,

there exists more subsistencies, or persons, than *one*. The word, Elohim, which Moses uses twenty times in the first and second chapters of Genesis, from which we translate the word God, this word Elohim, we think we may rely upon it, is in the plural, and not in the singular number. The very learned doctor Adam Clark, in his commentary on this chapter, informs us, that the christians are not the only people that acknowledge the doctrine of the Trinity, so called; but that the Jews had the same view of the word Elohim, above cited; for, saith he, "an eminent Jewish Rabbin, Simeon Ben Joachi, in his comment on the sixth section of Leviticus, has these remarkable words—"come and see the mystery of the word, Elohim; there are three degrees, and each degree by itself alone, and yet notwithstanding they are all *one*, and joined together in one, and are not divided from each other." And we have further proof of the word Elohim, being in the plural, if we look at the twenty-second verse of the third chapter; when man had unhappily eaten of the forbidden fruit, and consequently apostatized from God, the "Lord God" said, "behold the man is become as one of *us*;" and also, in the first chapter and twenty-sixth verse, "and God said," that is, Elohim said, "let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness, and let them have dominion," &c.

There is one thing to be observed on this subject, which deserves in connection our highest attention, which is, the then situation of the world at large, and especially the nations that were round about the Jews, at the time that Moses wrote this book. The Egyptians, for instance, the people whom God had just chastised with the most se-

were judgments, for their gross idolatries and impieties. And, the Canaanitish nations, who were, (as it were) on their right hand and on their left hand, were sunk into the most degraded state that human nature ever was debased, the Sodomites scarcely excepted. The origin of this debasement, and one of the most fatal causes of this degeneracy, undoubtedly was, the loss of the knowledge of the true God; consequently there never was, perhaps, a time when the knowledge of the true God was more necessary. Under these existing circumstances, that a learned man like Moses, a chosen vessel, divinely commissioned, and who "conversed with God face to face," as a man talketh with a friend, should indite and propagate a false doctrine, we consider is hardly conceivable; that expressly delegated, as he was, to lead God's peculiar people out from idolatry into a knowledge of the true God, that he should have laid as dangerous a foundation for idolatry as we could possibly imagine, by intimating to us, that in the divine nature there is more than one subsistence or persons, when it was not a fact, is a conclusion, which we think should not gain ready belief. To believe that God exists in a very different mode from what he really does, and especially to believe that God is more than one person, when in reality he is but one, must at least be idolatry. But we have further intimations of this doctrine in the writings of Moses, as also, in all the writings of the old testament.

CHAPTER II.

Of the first promise of the Messiah—the presumption that he must be more than a created being, drawn from the beauty, perfections and excellency of man's primeval capacity, state and condition, and physical creation generally—from man's apostacy—the judgment rendered and sentence proclaimed, by the "Judge of all the earth"—the hope and promise of pardon through a Messiah he then gave, and subsequently caused to be promulgated—confirmation to Abraham and other patriarchs, to Moses and other prophets, even to the time of the Messiah's advent and incarnation, and the covenant, and the selection of a family, a tribe, a nation out of which he was to spring.

THE first original promise given to man after the fall, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, appears to mean something more than a mere man, or created being; a little reflection upon the condition of man before and after the fall, and the agency or what the serpent or satan had done in relation to the general transgression, and the consolatory remedy and mercy which would seem to be needed, strengthens the conclusion that something more was intended in this revealed purpose and promise, than mere creature agency in the fulfilment.

When we take a view of creation, the beauty, the harmony, the wisdom, and the order in which it was created and fitted up in its primeval state, the days of man's innocency; and consider the elements subjected to the most perfect harmony, and all the animal and vegetable creation adorning the lower world, and for man's convenience and happiness, we find much to instruct us in the

knowledge of the true God, and his pleasure and will. In reference to the particular point in consideration, and the general subject of our inquiry, if we contemplate our beginning and first estate, its purpose, its character, and the talents bestowed, and the authority confided, we cannot but receive edification. In the beginning "God said let us make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God, created he him, male and female created he them." If we consider more minutely the wonderful structure of man as to his body, his erect form, his exact proportion, his comely figure, his divine face, his majestic appearance: If we mark the variety of his senses and members, how suited to each other, to his condition and place on the earth, and his state and rank in relation to the creatures which God made, and over which he gave to him dominion; and if we meditate upon the admirable contrivance and usefulness of each constituent part, and its peculiar function and office, and the wonderful union and harmony of relations of all these parts, which in the mass constitute the whole physical man, we find inexhaustible means of instruction as to the power, wisdom, goodness, and perfections of God; the infinite obligations we are under to him, and his purposes in this exhibition of himself to every individual of the human family. If, however, we dismiss the consideration of this material portion of our existence, its primitive usefulness, its harmony, and its beauties, and turn our attention to the nobler part, the im-

material spirit of man in its state of innocency and degeneracy; a soul in a body, a mind in matter, an intelligent principle, a power that perceives, thinks, reasons, judges, approves, condemns, wills, desires, loves, hates, hopes, fears, and rejoices. A power and susceptibility of intelligence that pervades the earth, encompasses the heavens, measures the sun, counts the number of orbs it lights in its system, kens other suns, and other systems, and ascends above the stars. A power and intelligence that rises from this stretch of its contemplation of created things, to the Divine Creator. And through the medium of the manifold revelations of our God, to behold his beauty, admire his infinite excellency, to feel his love, taste its ravishing pleasures, and imitate in finite efforts his goodness and perfections; susceptible, and to be made conscious of the soul's immortality, and made conscious itself, was created with a capacity, through the righteousness of him that was sent, to behold and enjoy the glory of its God, as the great fountain and sum of happiness, throughout the interminable ages, and boundless realms of eternity. We say, we must conclude the creator must be more than a mere creature. And if we look to the state of things and the condition, capacity, and provision made for man in the time of his innocency, the time of his apostacy, and the plan of his redemption, we find every incentive to seek that knowledge which edifies, and nothing can be more to our edification, than to see if the scriptures do not say that Christ is the creator and finisher of these things. We discover there is much to do, and much to lose and gain, and that it is a duty to hold on to every minute of time for improvement and for divine blessing. Intensely desiring from the lights of scripture to know more

and more of the divine mode of existence, and purposes and promises to us ward, as connected with the power, justice, mercy, long suffering, loving kindness, and redemption glory of the divine subsistences, as the "way, the truth, and the life." And from this beauty and excellency of creation generally, and the elevated gifts and capacities, powers, intelligence and innocency committed to man at his creation, we are led to turn our attention to a more melancholy scene, the fallen state of man; and to contemplate, in reference to the subject in hand, the change which man's disobedience has wrought, and the way, manner, and how often the Saviour would have gathered the human family under the wings of his infinite mercy.

The sacred history informs us that man did eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which God had said, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The goodness and glory of all creation is now changed. Man has subjected himself to guilt, horror, wretchedness, misery, and despair, and feels as a guilty wretch—his God is no longer his delight, and he now views with anguish and dread the Being in which he once had the greatest confidence, and in whom centered his greatest comforts. He now discovers his nakedness and poverty; and when the Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day, and said to the man Adam, "where art thou?" alas! he was hidden among the trees of the garden, for he had discovered that he was naked, and fled from the presence of the Lord. When they appear to answer to their crimes: unto the woman the Lord saith, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto

Adam, he said, because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and eaten," &c. "cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: Thorns also, and thistles, shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

If we reflect upon the perfections, beauty, and spontaneous fertility of the primitive creation, the excellency of the endowments, dignity and comforts given to man, and the condescension and love of God manifest therein, the magnitude of the crime man committed, and the judgment and curse pronounced upon him and this lower world as a consequence of man's disobedience, by the Judge of all the earth, we are led to conclude, that a Being to make an atonement for sin, to redeem man from the sentence of the law so solemnly declared, and to repair from the fall, the ruins of a world, must be more than a created being.

The first intimations which God hath been pleased to give of his kind designs towards us in providing a Saviour to redeem us from our state of apostacy, are to be found in the special promises recorded in Genesis. The first we shall notice is found in the 3d chapter, 15th verse, "and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The next we find in the 22d chapter, and 18th verse, "and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." And likewise, the 49th chapter, 10th verse, "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet. un-

til Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." On these three general promises, stand all the other promises of the coming of the Messiah, and the glories of his kingdom. And no doubt, Moses, although a divine prophet himself, had reference to these general promises, when he informed the children of Israel, that "a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever. He shall say unto you, and it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."

Now for us to have right views of the three general promises, and likewise of the prophet last named and spoken of, is a subject of the first interest and magnitude as to the Christian Religion. On this foundation rests the chief corner stone of all our hopes of eternal salvation. And as this subject is so weighty and important, God has been pleased to superadd to these promises and intimations of his love towards us, confirmations in various degrees and in repeated ways, subsequently to the promises and before the coming of the Messiah. He selected first a family, then a nation from all the families and nations of the earth. He raised up unto them prophets, which spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, whom he employed in teaching and explaining the wonderful way of redemption which was to be accomplished by the Messiah, until the fullness of time in which the Son of God made his appearance on the earth, until he spoke by his incarnate Son, the whole way and plan of redemption.

Abraham, the father of this favored family and nation, is called the friend of God. And to him

was one of these ancient and general promises made. The Lord frequently appeared to him, and conversed with him, and entered into covenant with him, and gave him the covenant of circumcision and promised to be a God unto him, and his seed after him, and from the fruit of his loins should the Messiah spring. Notwithstanding the scriptures have given us so clear a declaration of the divinity and dignity of the Messiah, yet various are the opinions of christians on this subject.

CHAPTER III.

Of the sects in relation to this point of doctrines—proposition of trinitarian doctrines—Evidences of sonship found in the old testament cited—and a general reference to the abundant testimony on this point in the new testament.

THE different sects of christians at the present day are generally denominated, or called, by the names of Trinitarians, Arians and Socinians, and sometimes only divided into two classes, namely, Trinitarians and Unitarians.

Primitive Trinitarianism, must be acknowledged, we think, to be a belief in God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

Arianism, is the doctrine of Arius, who rose in the latter part of the third century of christianity, and flourished in the fourth century. Arius was of Alexandria in Egypt; a man remarkable for quickness of apprehension, and a great orator. He appeared in the Great Council at Nice, in the defence of his doctrine. This Nicean Council, or Synod, was, no doubt, the most important ever held in the christian world, since the Council held at Jerusalem in the Apostolic age. The doctrine of Arius consisted in what may be called Unitarianism, that is, he believed in one God the Creator. And, that Jesus Christ was not of the substance of the Father, but was created by God the Father; was the first creature that God created; that he was of angelic nature; and, that he was at the head of creation. Some affirm he was the instrument by which God created the world.

Socinianism, is the doctrine of Socinius, who was an Italian. He lived in the days of the Reformation from Popery, in the fifteenth century. Socinius believed in one God, and that Jesus Christ was a mere man, supernaturally endowed of God; that the spirit of God was given him without measure; and, that the fullness of the godhead dwelt in him bodily. This doctrine it appears was revived by Socinius from some Judaizing teachers of an earlier date. This doctrine has been revived and defended by Dr. Priestly in the last century. The same doctrine has been defended by many in our country in the present century.

In these questions of doctrine, the great and important and most necessary points to be determined are whether God has an own proper Son, produced, or proceeding from his own eternal nature and substance—and, whether this Son has taken human nature upon him, and is thereby made under the Divine Law given to Adam in Paradise, which law demanded perfect obedience under the penalty of death. Should it be found on examination that God has no such Son, or that he never took on him our nature, or was never made under this law—it follows, of course, that we have to trust in a created being for an atonement for sin, and in a finite Mediator with God. Therefore—we shall first examine, whether God has a Son, or not. This ought to be determined by the Scriptures, if we pretend to make them the rule of our faith and practice.

In the old testament we find the term Son but rarely used. David uses the term twice in the 2d Psalm, verse 7th “I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son;

this day have I begotten thee." And, again 1 *Itl* and 12th verses, "Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Again in Daniel, chapter 3, verses 24, 25—"Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." And Isaiah saith, chapter 9, verse 6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder," &c. Agur, and a few more in the Old Testament have used the like expressions. Turning our attention to the New Testament, we find the expressions occur too often to make quotation of chapter and verse necessary. We think that Christ is called the Son of God not less than forty times in the New Testament. That Christ is the Son of God in some sense, we presume will be acknowledged by all christians.

CHAPTER IV.

Observations upon the pre-existence, dignity, and divinity of the Son;—Authors own opinion; Sabellianism, or the doctrine of a trinity of offices, and one person in the Godhead, and modern notions upon it, briefly stated and considered.

THE pre-existent state of the Son, and the dignity of his nature are points of great magnitude to be determined. First, we shall state as our own opinion, that Jesus Christ did exist in the bosom of the Father, before the world was, or time began—and that he is of the substance of the Father—the very and eternal God—of one nature with him—sharing with him in the throne of his glory, and partaking with him of the fullness of his attributes—that God created the worlds by him; that the worlds are now governed by him—and, that Christ shall judge the quick and the dead at the last day.

One of the most important points to be considered in discussing the positions assumed is, so to defend the personality of the father and Son as not to make them two separate and independent Gods, or totally distinct one from the other.

Tritheists, or the worshippers of three Gods, who lay a foundation for the worshipping of many gods, is to be critically guarded against. On the other hand, should we so confound or unite the personality of the Father and Son, as the Sabellians did in the third century, so as to make but one person, the doctrine will appear not only absurd but dangerous. Sabellius contended, that

God was but one person—that he who is in heaven is the father of all things—that he descended into the virgin, and became a child, and was born of her as a son; and, that having accomplished the mystery of our salvation, he diffused himself on the apostles in tongues of fire, and then was denominated or called the Holy Ghost. This appears to be a trinity of offices and not of persons. And, although this doctrine was condemned by the church at that day, we have experienced a species of the same doctrine in this our age, springing up amongst us from men who appear over-zealous to defend the doctrine of the Trinity as they call it, and the Deity of Son. They contend that Jesus Christ is the Eternal Father, and that the Father and the Son, are one without distinction. As one expressed it, when Christ was on earth, heaven was destitute of a God. Another stated, that if he should say, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, he should blaspheme. The scriptures usually cited in support of this doctrine, are found in Isaiah, chapter 9, verse 6, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God; the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”

The passage quoted, has reference, no doubt, to the Son in his divine nature, being very God, and that he is, the really Father of the Universe as Creator. John and Paul both affirm, that God created all things by Jesus Christ.

The next passages quoted in defence of this doctrinal point, of trinity of offices, are found in John—“I and my Father are one.” “Make them one, as we are one,” &c.

These passages, no doubt, have reference to

their councils in the plan of redemption, and their being one as to their substance and nature, as well as to their wills and affections. But not in one person; for Christ prayed at the same time to his Father, to make his disciples one as they were one. We think none would contend that he prayed to his own person; or, that he prayed his eleven disciples might be amalgamated and cemented together so as to make but one person.

CHAPTER V.

Inquiry as to the pre-existence, divinity, and proper Sonship of Christ, continued.

IN the further discussion of this subject, in regard to the pre-existence of Christ, the divinity of his nature, and proper Sonship, we will look to the scriptures as the man of our counsel. The first passage we notice we shall find recorded in St. John, chap. 1st, verses 1, 2, 3, 4: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." And that the word, here spoken of, is the Son of God, is evident from the 14th verse of the same chapter—"And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." Let us take particular notice of the word *his*, a personal pronoun, undoubtedly referring to the *person* or *character*, spoken of in the four first verses.

In the beginning, viz. when creation began, he existed with God; that is in the bosom of the Father. The same point is confirmed by Paul in his Epistle to the Colossians, chapter 1, verse 17, "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." And if the Son exists with, consequently in some sense, distinct from the Father in personality. "And the Word was God," in his

nature, that is, God of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, the Eternal of the Eternal, and the Invisible of him that is Invisible. It is objected by the Socinians and Arians, that "the Word," here quoted as applying to Christ, and as to his person, refers to the attributes of God as they were given to Christ, viz. power and wisdom. Here let it be remarked, that the attributes of God are not begotten, but "the Word" is said to be begotten, and we behold his glory, as Paul expresseth it, Colossians, chapter 1, verse 15, "the first born of every creature." From this passage last cited, it clearly appears that they cannot have reference to the Father, as he is no where said to be begotten or born. Secondly, they cannot have reference to the human nature of Jesus Christ, for we are assured that, that was not the "first born of every creature."

We may gain a further knowledge on this important point, by considering the apostle Paul's declaration on this subject, recorded in the 1st chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews, and to the Colossians. We shall first remark on his epistle to the Hebrews, chapter first—"God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the Fathers by the prophets, bath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Here we may remark, that it appears the apostle determined to make an obvious and peculiar difference, between the two characters speaking to the human family, notwithstanding he observes God spake to us by each of them. The last character is called a Son; we may safely conclude that he is a son by nature, and not by creation, or adoption, for the following reasons,

Saith the apostle, "God hath appointed him heir of all things." This appointment, it is thought cannot refer to the human nature of Jesus Christ; that, abstractly considered, cannot fill and occupy an appointment of that nature, extent and description, as it is evident, that something like Omnipotence and Omnipresence would be necessary in order to sway, occupy and enjoy an inheritance so vast, so amazing and boundless. We have also, further evidence that this heir, is the proper Son of God, sharing with him all his glorious attributes in the fullest sense we can imagine—that is, we consider the union of the Father and Son as inseparable; not, that the Son receives these attributes as delegated to him, but that in the Son they are inherent in himself. That these attributes dwell inherently in the Son appears evident. The apostle saith, "by whom also he made the worlds." The creating power, as really and absolutely belongs to God, and to God alone, as any other attribute we can ascribe to him.

We find the same ideas abundantly supported and confirmed by the same apostle in his Epistle to the Colossians, chapter 1, verses 14 and 15—"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature." That Christ is the Son of God, is evident. The great apostle mentions the name of Son very particularly in the verse preceding. He says he "is the image of the invisible God;" and the apostle could not be so inconsistent as to say or mean, that the Father was the image of himself. The apostle affirms he is the first born of every creature;" this expression cannot apply to the Father

nor to the human nature of the Son, but must refer to the Divine nature of the Son only. To this character, viz. the Son, the apostle ascribes the whole work of creation, which we may find in the 16th verse: "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him." The apostle confirms the above statement, by saying in the following verses—"And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." And that this is the Son of God, our Redeemer, is further evident, verses 18 and 19; "And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence; for it pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell." St. Stephen, bears testimony that the person last described is he that was with the Israelites in the wilderness.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the testimony of Stephen in respect to the Sonship and Divinity of Christ—the cause of his giving testimony—and an examination and application of his references to the evidences of the old testament, and Jacob's testimony.

HAVING examined briefly some of the testimony given by the apostles on the important subject of our Lord's Sonship, and real divinity, and having come to the faithful testimony of Stephen, it is purposed to follow him to the old testament, and see what further information may be gained upon this weighty subject, from that fund of knowledge.

The cause of Stephen's testimony gives weight to his evidence, and is the reason of examining it. Stephen was appointed by the church to an important station, and set apart in the most solemn manner, by the imposition of the hands of the apostles and by prayer. Being filled with the Holy Ghost, he did great signs and wonders in the name of Jesus Christ, insomuch as to excite the attention and admiration of the wise and the learned.

We find in the Acts of the apostles, chapter 6, verses 8, 9 and 10, that Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. "Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyreneans, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia, and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and

the spirit by which he spake." These men being defeated in their arguments, stirred up the people and brought Stephen before the great national Council, and alleged two things against him:—First, speaking of blasphemy against the holy place. Second, speaking against the law, or customs which Moses delivered.

These charges were endeavored to be supported by the inferences of witnesses of what they heard him say, viz. "that Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us." They might have heard him say, Jesus would destroy that place, and change the customs which Moses delivered them, yet this was not speaking blasphemy against the holy place, or the law.

On the high priest's putting to Stephen the question, "are these things so?" Stephen answered to the accusation, and took the opportunity to disclose his faith at large—by examining his testimony, in conjunction with that which the apostles, prophets and patriarchs generally gave, we hope to shew that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his Divine Nature, and consequently very God, and that he is the God of Israel; that he was styled their king in his pre-existent state; and that by and through him are made all divine communications of and from the Father, to all intelligent beings, whether in creation, providence or redemption. There is one thing more it is well to premise and consider, before we close this digression, and enter upon the testimony, viz. It is said in John, chapter 1, verse 18, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Paul and Moses likewise bare tes-

timony to the same fact, that God the Father in his own proper person, no man hath seen, or can see and live, and that the Son in his own proper person hath appeared at sundry times in divers manners, to the patriarchs, prophets and apostles. We pass now to the examination of the testimony and authority of scripture in this matter, which if we credit, establishes the doctrine urged.

In attending to the facts and faith declared by Stephen in his defence before the great Jewish Council, we find he said, Acts, chapter 7, "Men, brethren, and Fathers, hearken; the God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred," &c. Verse 6, "And God spake on this wise, that his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and intreat them evil four hundred years." Verse 7, "And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God; and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place." Verse 8, "And he gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob," &c. Stephen then summarily relates of Joseph's being sold into Egypt, and the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt, &c. he then observes, verse 17, "But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham," &c. Stephen proceeds on to speak of the birth of Moses, his learning, and his standing up in defence of his brethren, expecting his brethren would understand that God had called him for the purpose of delivering them

from their state of bondage, but they understood not. He relates, that Moses fled to Midian; and proceeds to verse 30; "And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight; and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. Then said the Lord to him, put off thy shoes from thy feet; for the place where thou standest is holy ground." We come now to cite the 38th verse; "This is he that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers who received the lively oracles to give unto us." Verse 39th, "To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turn back again into Egypt." Again, verse 44; "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen."

From a moment's review of Stephen's testimony, it may be ascertained whether or not any thing can be drawn to favour and illustrate the doctrine we have under consideration, namely, our Lord's Divinity and proper Sonship in his pre-existent state.

Stephen states, that God appeared to Abraham and gave him command to leave his native country and kindred. And, that God appeared "in a flame of fire in a bush" in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, by the name of "the God of Abraham, and

the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And that they "had the tabernacle of witness." It is thought that none will doubt, but what the character spoken of as making his appearance, was the real God of Israel, in his proper person. Whether it was the Father in his own person, or the Son, is the important point for us to decide. It is thought we have the greatest reason to believe, that the manifestations spoken of, are in the person of the Son; not only from the declaration of Stephen made before the Council, but we find that the same character is sometimes called the Angel of the Council, and sometimes the God of Israel, and we cannot learn from scripture, that the Father ever made his appearance personally—and much less as an Angel or Messenger sent. An instance of this character appearing as an Angel is found in Genesis, 28th chapter, verses from the 10th to the 14th inclusive: "And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillow, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Examine a little farther, and we find that God ap-

peared again unto Jacob, see Genesis, chapter 35; "And God said unto Jacob, arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there; and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau, thy brother." A third time, verse 9, "God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him." And, verse 10, "And God said unto him, thy name is Jacob, thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name;" &c. And verse 11; "And God said unto him, I am God Almighty," &c.

Again, in Genesis, 32d chapter, when Jacob was in his greatest trouble, being about to meet his brother Esau, having sent his wives and all he possessed over the ford Jabbok, we find, verse 24, "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." And verse 29; "And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? and he blessed him there." And in verse 30; "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

And again, Genesis, chapter 48, verses 15 & 16, "And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads;" &c. Having examined this testimony of Jacob, on this important point, we will remark that Jacob understood this character to be the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God that had fed him all his life long. He informs us that the same being, declared himself to be

“God Almighty.” He calls him an Angel, **and** asks this angel to bless the lads, or the sons of Joseph. And styles him a man, when speaking of him as wrestling “until the breaking of the day.” It is considered, the conclusion we are under the necessity of drawing from Jacob’s testimony, is, that the person which made these divine appearances at sundry times to this patriarch, and fed him all his life long, and redeemed him from all evil, was a character no way inferior to God the Father in point of dignity of nature; and that the same character, possessed the fullness of the attributes of God, notwithstanding he appeared at one time as an angel, and at another time as a man. It must be blasphemy in the highest degree, for any being in heaven, or on earth, to assume to himself the names, titles, character, or attributes of the Almighty God, which he hath exclusively claimed to himself alone. Or for any being in heaven or on earth to prefix and ascribe these to any other being. We therefore arrive at the conclusion from the information so far gained, and the character of the evidences, and the divers and miraculous manner of its verification, that the son intended to reveal, and that the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, were authorized to testify of it, and to write down, that “the Word was God,” in an absolute sense; and that we cannot be justified in dishonouring them by saying they opened their “mouths in blasphemy,” and declared those things which were not true. No doubt it will be asked by opponents of the doctrine, why this character if so dignified in nature, should make his appearance in a station so low as an Angel, or in the character of a man? It may in answer, be said, there is no impropriety in his thus making his ap-

pearance to the ancient patriarchs, when we see him esteemed as a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," for man's redemption. Indeed, from what is revealed, it appears perfectly consistent that the Redeemer of mankind, should sometimes make his appearance to man in the glory of his godhead, so far as it was possible for that to be revealed to man in their present state. And that at other times for him to appear as an angel, or messenger, or even as man, is consistent and illustrative, since he was to be united to the seed of Abraham for our redemption; that we might on the one hand, have some view of the dignity of his nature, and on the other, of his great and surpassing love, meekness and condescension in the glorious work of man's redemption.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the testimony of Moses, and concurrent evidences.

HAVING gained a little information, from Stephen's and Jacob's testimony, and concurrent passages cited, upon the subject under consideration, and especially upon two points, viz. that Jacob considered the character who made his appearance to him, to be the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, as well as the God of Israel. And Jacob's affirmance, that he declared himself to be God Almighty. Leaving therefore, the testimony of Jacob, we will attend to the testimony of Moses, and see if he does not affirm these same facts, and learn what further information he gives.

From Moses, the great prophet, and mediator of the Jewish covenant, we learn, as recorded in Exodus, chapter 3—that as Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, “the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said,

I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." Verses 13, 14 and 15—"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, what is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

Moses, in order to enter upon his mission and obey the command of God, took his leave of Jethro his father-in-law; finds his brother Aaron coming to meet him; and they proceed together and visit the children of Israel. And being joyfully received by them, they repair to Pharaoh and do their important errand, viz. That the God of the Hebrews had appeared unto them, and commanded them, to go into the wilderness and offer sacrifice. Pharaoh professes to know nothing about the God of the Hebrews; charges them with idleness; and lays heavier tasks upon them, by not allowing the people straw, and yet demanding of them former tale of brick, which made their bondage and servitude exceeding grievous. And their officers were beaten by their task-masters, and the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh for

redress, and he rebuked and accused them of being idle, and refused relief; and as they came forth from Pharaoh, seeing they were in evil case, they met Moses and Aaron who stood in the way, and made bitter complaints that they had made their burdens heavier, and caused their savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh. In this deplorable state, Moses returned unto the Lord, and the Lord said unto Moses, "Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land."

Exodus, chap. 6, verse 2—"And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord." In verse 3—"And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." This appears to have given Moses fresh courage to proceed in the great work God had designed.

It is acknowledged by the learned, that the name JEHOVAH is a name that no other words can fully explain, or define. This is a name which the Almighty God claims exclusively to himself, as his peculiar, undoubted proper name. Men of the profoundest learning have attempted to explain this incommunicable name Jehovah, so far as to say it signifies essence, or existence, or bringing into effect; and it contains other inexplainable ideas, they say, and whatsoever else may be deduced from the definition given, as revealed by him to be signified thereby.

This same Jehovah or God Almighty attends Moses and the children of Israel in their sojournings. He appears "in a pillar of cloud by day, and

a pillar of fire by night," till they came to Mount Sinai. It may be profitable here to stop a time, and recall and review a portion of the evidence of Stephen. Acts, chap. 7, verses 37, 38— "This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear. This is he that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers who received the lively oracles to give unto us." There can be no doubt if Stephen be accredited, but this same Jehovah who attends Moses and the children of Israel, is that prophet which Moses spoke of, and which the Lord God, he says, would raise up unto them out of their brethren—and "this is he," that is the person or character that was in the church in the wilderness *with* the angel, &c.. Stephen, it is evident in the words "this is he," refers to the Lord Jesus Christ in his pre-existent state, who is the prophet Moses spoke of, who was to be raised up unto them *out* of their brethren, who was in the church in the wilderness *with* the angel, and consequently could not be the Angel. This same character to which Stephen refers in the words "this is he," is not Moses, but is him that spake to Moses in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers who received the lively oracles to give unto us. And to show that the character Stephen referred to was not the angel, nor Moses, but the Lord Jesus Christ, we may plainly discover by going on with Stephen in his testimony. In verse 44, he saith, "Our fathers had a tabernacle of witness in the the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he

should make it according to the fashion that he had seen." Stephen proceeds in his testimony by declaring that this tabernacle was by "our fathers that came after" brought into the promised land, and Solomon built an house for the God of Jacob.

In order for us to reap some advantage from this tabernacle of witness given to Moses in the wilderness, and to prove that this was our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who dwelt in this tabernacle by his sacred presence, before he tabernacled in the flesh, we shall soon have recourse to sundry passages of scripture in the old and new testament. And in order that we may receive the most full and clear views of the intention of the inspired writers, it will become necessary to quote at length the passages which afford this testimony; but before we enter upon this portion of the subject, which is deferred to the next chapter, the attention of the reader is once more called to the consideration of the point, that all Divine Revelations and communications from the Father, are made by and through the Son. It is asserted in John, chap. 1, verse 18—"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." This declaration is confirmed by our Lord, for saith the Lord, "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he who is of God, he hath seen the Father." Our Lord's testimony is explained by John, who tells us in the text last cited, who this character is "who is of God," viz. "The only begotten son who is in the bosom of the Father," he hath seen the Father. "He hath declared him," in a two-fold sense. 1st. by revealing his Father's

will to us, and 2d, by revealing his own glory to us, he being the image of his Father's glory, and the essence and substance of his eternal nature. The declaration of Paul confirms the same fact. I. Timothy, chap. 1, verse 17, "The king eternal, immortal, invisible," &c. Again, chap. 6, verse 16, "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." Yet Moses informs us respecting the fearful presence of God that appeared upon Mount Sinai, and afterwards dwelt in the tabernacle, who styled himself the God of Israel. Exodus, 19th chap. verses 19, 20, 21, "And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount: and Moses went up. And the Lord said unto Moses, go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish." Moses is again called to the mount, Exodus, 24th chap. verses 9, 10, 11, "Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of Heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink." And Moses is again called up into the mount, Exodus, 34th chap. verses 5, 6, "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord

passed by before him, and proclaimed, **The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.**" Here Moses not only receives in charge and to deliver to the children of Israel the ten commandments written on tables of stone, but a long code of ordinances and commands, for their rule of obedience until our Lord came in the flesh, as writes the apostle to the Galatians, chap. 3, verse 19, "Wherefore then serveth the law? it was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made."

CHAPTER VIII.

The testimony of Moses in continuation, and the Tabernacle of Witness.

ON Mount Sinai, and at the time of God's covenant there made, mentioned in the conclusion of the last chapter, it appears that the Lord commanded Moses to make the tabernacle of witness; or as it is termed the beauty and glory of the holy, and most holy place, which neither tongue can utter, or pencil paint, or pen describe. And this even, is not the centre of the beauty, nor the height of the glory, that filled with light and perfection the holy of holies. For it was prepared under divine direction, and under the promise and intent of its being the temporary abode, witness, and mercy-seat, of the presence of the Son of God, the Creator, finisher and governor of the universe, and the Saviour of the human family; until, he should come in the tabernacle of flesh, to prepare the way for the more transcendent, and ravishing glories, of the Divine plan of Redemption. To have a clearer view, and to behold this Tabernacle of witness, in the most communicable and sublime manner that has or can be given of it, we shall follow Moses, the Mediator of the Jewish covenant, through the description he gives of its dedication, as recorded in Exodus, chapter 40, beginning at the 33d verse, and to the 38th inclusive. "And he reared up

E

the court round about the Tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate; so Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up.—For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.” This 40th chapter concludes the book of Exodus, however, in the first chapter of Leviticus, verse 1, and 2, we find, “The Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, speak unto the children of Israel,” &c. And again, Numbers 7th chapter, verse 89, “And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with Him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubims.” In the same book, chapter 9, 15th and 16th verses, “And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning. So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night.” And again, we find in the same book, chapter 12, verses 4 to 9 inclusive, “And the Lord spake

suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, come out ye three unto the Tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord, will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed." And again in 16th chapter, verse 19, is a history of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and the result—"And Korah gathered all the congregation &c. unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the congregation. And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, separate yourselves from among the congregation, that I may consume them in a moment. And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh." &c.

And again, when Moses besought the Lord to shew him his glory—no doubt the meaning is, he sought to behold him without the intervention of the cloud, and the Lord showed Moses a Rock to hide in, and the Lord promised to let all his glory pass by, and to put Moses in the cleft of the Rock, and to cover him with his hand while he passed by, and to take away his hand, and that he

might see his back parts: and let it be remembered that the Lord said to Moses, "my face shall not be seen," "for there shall no man see me and live." By this Moses and all are to know, that without the intervention of a veil or cloud, no man is able to behold the face and full glory of God.

CHAPTER IX.

Testimony of Abraham, the father of the faithful, as to the character of Christ.

WE are now to consider, in connexion with what has before been cited and considered, the relations and weight of Abraham's testimony, and see what amount of information we may receive from it, and place to account, in reference to the character of Jesus Christ. Abraham as to veracity is undoubted, and he was eminently informed and enlightened upon the subject. He is considered the father of the faithful, and distinguished as the friend of God. We find in Genesis 17th chapter, and three first verses, "And when Abraham was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abraham, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abraham fell on his face: and God talked with him," &c. And let it be remembered, the Lord at this time, appeared unto Abraham, and declared his name Almighty God—and that Abraham, the most honored of men, and the father of many kings, fell upon his face, and God then talked with him, and renewed the covenant. Again Genesis 18th chapter, "And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre, and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; and he lift up his eyes and looked, and,

lo, three men stood by him : and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground. And said, My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee from thy servant. Let a little water, I pray you be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree ; and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts ; after that ye shall pass on : for therefore are ye come to your servant.— And they said, so do as thou hast said. And Abraham hasted into the tent unto Sarah, and said, make ready quickly, three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man ; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them ; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.” And after an interesting and eventful discourse, which is related, “the men rose up from thence, and looked towards Sodom ; and Abraham went with them, to bring them on the way.” The destruction of Sodom was then revealed to Abraham, because in him the nations of the earth were to be blessed, because “he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment ;” it is evident that when they four were on the way to Sodom, that one of the three spake to the other two, and the one that spoke was the Lord, who said, “Shall I hide from Abraham, that thing which I do ;” and he said to Abraham, “because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now,” &c. “And the men turned their faces from

thence, and went towards Sodom; but Abraham stood yet before the Lord." And there was no appearance of any other character in this conversation than Abraham and the three men mentioned. And the first verse saith "the Lord appeared to" Abraham. And Abraham spake to, and besought the Lord to save the righteous of these cities, and we find in verse 23, and the following verses of this chapter. "And Abraham drew near, and said, wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" and at the close of the 25th verse, he says, "shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" and in verse 33, "And the Lord went his way as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place." That is, "the Lord went his way" to Sodom. We shall find one manifestation more of this character to Abraham, in the 22d chapter, verse 15, 16—"And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord," &c. We may remark here on this subject—this same character informed Moses that he had appeared to Abraham, by the name of the *Almighty God*, and that his proper name was *Jehovah*; and from the burning bush he gave to Moses, his name, *I am that I am*.—And unto Abraham he makes his appearance as *Lord* and *God*, and makes a covenant with him, and promises to be a God unto him, and his seed after him. We are informed by Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, speaking of the same character saith, "when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee."—

“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath.” And that Paul refers to the passage just mentioned and quoted from Genesis, is evident, for it is the only passage we find, in which God confirmed any promise made to Abraham, by an oath. We shall do well to reflect a few moments on the character now under consideration.

At one time he appears a Lord, at another as God, and at another as an Angel. And Moses confirms his appearing to Abraham by the name of God Almighty. Paul informs us that he swore by himself, because he could swear by no greater. And yet we find the same character making his appearance to Abraham in the form of a man, and conversing with him in a familiar manner, on all the important subjects of the covenant previously made between them, and Abraham acknowledging him to be judge of all the earth.

CHAPTER X.

Testimony of Joshua—and the evidences of Christ, in his pre-existent state, receiving and demanding Divine Homage.

WE shall find it profitable in relation to our inquiry, to examine and attend to the testimony of Joshua. In the book of Joshua, 5th chapter, and three last verses, "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lift up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said to him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship, and said unto him, what saith my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."

A few remarks on this testimony will be important. Whenever this character appears, either in the form of an Angel, in the form of a man, or in the name of God Almighty, he either receives or demands Divine homage, adoration and worship, and which it is evident the highest order in heaven always rejected.

When the angel appeared to John, and disclosed to him the wonders contained in the book of the Apocalypse, and showed him the things to come, John says, "I fell down to worship before

the feet of the Angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, see thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant" &c. "worship God." This "captain of the Lord's host," demands of Joshua Divine honors by commanding him to loose his shoes from off his feet, declaring the place where he stood, was holy.

It is proper, perhaps here to cite one passage recorded in Malachi, 3d chapter, "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in." Here we find this character is called "the messenger of the covenant," and at other times the "angel of God's presence," and some times "a son given" as in the 9th chapter of Isaiah, verse 6, "Unto us a son is given"—"and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." And sometimes he is called the "shepherd of Israel," and various other names, characters, or titles he bears in Scripture: and each of them are either descriptive of his nature, character, office, or station he sustains.

One objection which may be brought against these evidences and arguments, may be here anticipated. Namely—These manifestations were all visionary, and not real. To this objection we may answer several ways, to the satisfaction, we are persuaded, of every candid mind. Let us in reference to this objection, look back to the time, when Aaron and Miriam withstood Moses, and the cloudy pillar descended, and covered the tabernacle, and the Lord appeared and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and said to Aaron and Mi-

riam, "if there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches." Visions or dreams, generally show something in the way of figure, or in an emblematical way. In the case quoted from the book of Numbers, the Lord hath declared that he spake to Moses mouth to mouth, even apparently. Again, we have nothing in Scripture to warrant the falling down and worshipping a vision, or any thing we may imagine is emblematical of God. This character has spoken vocally and apparently to the patriarchs and prophets at divers times, and demanded divine honors and worship, of Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua and others, and sundry of the prophets. And walked in the garden in the cool of the day, and called our first parents, and conversed with them respecting the transgression, and promised them that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. And this same character published not only the good news of the Redemption to Adam, but he showed to Adam and Cain that he was the "Judge of all the earth"—by telling the former, "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;" and unto the latter, "a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth;" and by setting "a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him."

CHAPTER XI.

Further views of the tabernacle of Witness. Beginning with the martyr Stephen's view.

It will perhaps be profitable to recur to the tabernacle of witness, and to note well the testimony of Stephen and others in respect to the manifestations, elucidating the doctrine we have under examination. In Acts 7th chapter, and 44th and 45th verses we find it recorded, "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen: which also our fathers which came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers unto the days of David." Stephen, with great propriety, calls this the Tabernacle of witness, for here was a standing miracle of the truth which Moses delivered. The ten commandments given to Moses, and written on tables of stone upon the Mount, were deposited in the compartment of this tabernacle, designated the "ark of the covenant, in the most holy place;" and Aaron's rod, that "budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds, and the golden pot that contained the manna were there deposited, as a memorial," and as "a shadow of good things to come." And Stephen tells us, that "our fathers that came after, brought in with Jesus," that is Joshua, "into the possession of the Gentiles,"

that is, unto the land afterwards called Judea.— This Tabernacle was erected first in Shiloh, after the children of Israel had gained possession of the promised land; and in the days of David they took the city of Jerusalem from the Jebusites. And here it should be remembered, the Lord commanded Moses, that the ark of the covenant should be placed in the city which he should choose, to put his name there. And after this, David gathered all the children of Israel together, with the priests and Levites in their station in which the Lord had appointed them, and went down and brought the tabernacle to Jerusalem; and placed it in that part of the city called Zion. And David beheld the glory of the Lord, and the cloudy pillar, which had accompanied the children of Israel through the Red Sea, and after that abode on the mount Sinai, and after that abode on the tabernacle, and followed the tabernacle to Shiloh, and till that time, when the Tabernacle was removed to Zion. David, on beholding this glory, danced before the ark with all his might, and said the Lord has gone up to Zion. The last cited text gives some light on the subject. We discover wisdom and goodness in God, in adopting this method to inform and confirm the human family, in the being of a God, the truth of divine revelation, and gradually leading them into the plan of redemption, and especially into the true knowledge of the Saviour of mankind, before he came in the flesh. Surely this Tabernacle may properly be called the “tabernacle of witness,” because it stood as a present witness, a standing miracle of the wisdom and goodness of God, not only in its formation, but especially for the long continuance of the Sche-

chinah, or Divine Glory, which shone with light of transcendant lustre from the mercy seat, from between the cherubims. This glory was sometimes so bright, it filled the outer-court and the whole temple. This divine, effulgent glory, continued not only to the days of David and Solomon, but long after, even down to a little period, before the Lord sold his people into the hands of the Babylonians.

One or two displays of this Divine Glory, which in particular was more than the usual displays of it, while it attended the tabernacle and temple we shall notice. The first will be found recorded in the 2d of Chronicles. In order, however, to give the reader the fullest view of this tabernacle of witness, we transcribe the 5th chapter at large, and part of the following one.

“Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of the Lord was finished: and Solomon brought in all the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.

“Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion.

“Wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king in the feast which was in the seventh month.

“And all the elders of Israel came; and the Levites took up the ark.

“And they brought up the ark, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy ves-

sels that were in the tabernacle; these did the priests and the Levites bring up.

“Also king Solomon, and the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

“And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, to the oracle of the house, into the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims :

“For the cherubims spread forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

“And they drew out the staves of the ark, that the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle; but they were not seen without. And there it is unto this day.

“There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

“And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place; (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course :

“Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals, and psalteries, and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them a hundred and twenty priests, sounding with trumpets;)

“It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trump-

ets, and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good ; for his mercy endureth forever : that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord ;

“ So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud : for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.

“ Then said Solomon, The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.

“ But I have built a house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever.”

And in the 41st verse of chapter 6, “ Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place, thou, and the ark of thy strength : let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let the saints rejoice in goodness.

And in the same chapter, verse 18, “ But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth ? Behold, heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee ; how much less this house which I have built !”

And in chapter 7, “ Now, when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices ; and the glory of the Lord filled the house.

“ And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord’s house.

“ And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord,” &c.

Having quoted the most leading and prominent manifestations of God’s presence, and the displays of his glory in the temple and tabernacle, yet it

is deemed proper further to illustrate our views, by superadding a few more references. "And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him," &c. "If I shut up heaven that there be no rain," &c. and the people "shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways" he promised, "mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place."

One more remarkable display of this divine person in this place, above the common glory that attended the tabernacle of witness is recorded in Isaiah, 6th chapter, it happened a little before the divine presence left the temple, which was near the Babylonish captivity—it is as follows—"I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims:" &c. And it is said in the 3d and 4th verses, "And one cried unto another, and said, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke."

And again, Psalms 80, verse 1, which is a psalm of Asaph—"Give ear, O shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth." The Lord is gone up to Zion—the Lord is great in Zion—the Lord dwelleth in Zion—and how beautiful are the gates in Zion—and how excellent is thy tabernacle—is the constant language of David.

We will now pause for a few moments, and consider if any thing can be collected from the above cited texts, in favour of the proper deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

First—It is thought it will not be contended by any that the character which appeared to Abraham by the name of the Almighty God, and that appeared to Moses by the name of Jehovah, and by the name of, I am that I am, which came down upon Mount Sinai, and made his personal appearance to the whole nation of Israel, and to Isaiah in the temple, we say it is thought none can contend that this was a created being. 2dly, we have already endeavoured to shew the inconsistency of supposing this character to be the Father, if not the Father, it must be the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some great divines, have, however, supposed, that Stephen had reference to Moses, when he said, "this is he which was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers." Moses and Aaron were, it is true, the general spokesmen to the people—yet it is equally true that the Lord spake to the whole congregation. For instance, when the Lord came down on mount Sinai, Moses called unto the Lord, and the Lord answered him with a voice in the presence of the congregation. And again at the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, the Lord appeared in the tabernacle and the Lord spake, &c. And at each of these times the whole congregation were present; and, as St. Paul saith, God at sundry times spake to our fathers. This same apostle wished his Corinthian brethren not to be ignorant that all their fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and all drank of that spiritual rock, that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. And this great apostle saith, that Moses esteemed "the

reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." St. Paul's testimony decides the point, that "this is he which was in the church in the wilderness." And we may safely add, this is he that abode in the cloudy pillar, and descended on mount Sinai, and afterwards abode in the tabernacle and in the temple. And well might Stephen say, "the fathers had the tabernacle of witness."

In this, and the glory that attended it from the presence of the Lord, four hundred years: the whole tribes of Israel coming to worship according to their appointed feasts, must have had as clear a view, and witness of the truths that Moses had delivered to them, as if they had all been eye witnesses of every fact which had transpired in all the journey of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan—and even more confirmation. Had any of the children of Israel, dwellers in the land of Canaan, been eye-witnesses of the miracles wrought in the wilderness, it would not have been that real rational weight of evidence, it now was to them and the succeeding generations. The reasons are obvious—Moses did not finish the whole book till just before he left the world—and a doubt might arise whether there was not something in that book, either designedly or accidentally wrong—had it not have been, that he finished it just before his death, sprinkled it with blood, and delivered it with solemn care, and charge, that nothing should be added to it, or diminished from it; and this, as well as the two tables of stone, were by command, to be kept as a memorial, and as a law, until Christ should come in the flesh, and as an entire book. The tabernacle gave commanding evidence of the truth it

contained. The Shechinah, or Divine glory of the Lord, for many hundreds of years gave witness of the truth of the facts—and the miracles of the lamps burning with celestial fire, and fire coming down from heaven to consume the sacrifices might be superadded as astonishing corroborative testimony. These witnesses, and their irresistible testimony continued until about the time that some of the ten tribes were scattered among the different nations of the earth, and the law was translated into other tongues.

In all this it is at once discovered, that the Jews had the most convincing, permanent and rational evidence of the origin and truth of their institutions. Doubting minds will ask how all this can amount to satisfactory evidence to us?

The only answer required is—that no testimony could be more satisfactory, than these standing miracles, continued for so many hundreds of years, before an entire people, composing the oldest and most learned nation in the world, till the book, of which they testify, was translated into other tongues, and dispersed among other nations. It would not be venturing much to say, that it would be impossible the five books of Moses, could be forged, counterfeited, or materially altered, or in any sense untrue; and if so, it must be admitted that these five books, are substantial pillars of christian faith. It is apprehended that writers who have impiously called Moses the “old rogue,” have not reflected upon the unbroken chain of miraculous testimony, with which the verity of the historical account of Moses stands confirmed. We have said, and not lightly that it is inconceivable, and not of much hazard in us, to say it is not possible for God to have sancti-

fied the Mosaic books by such standing miracles, unless the facts contained in them, were substantially true.

Although we are abundantly satisfied that the evidence cited is sufficient to establish their validity and authority; it is thought it may be well, as the truth of the doctrine we are labouring, rests very considerably on Mosaic support, to briefly remark, that there is much subsequent and rational testimony for us. The nation of the Jews, and their lost tribes, and dispersion amongst all nations, remains a monument, a living and continued witness, not only of the truths contained in the writings of Moses, but likewise of the truths contained in the books of the Jewish prophets; for except the ten tribes they remain as foretold, a distinct people unto this day; witnessing to all people of the truths of the threatenings of God against that people, contained in the last book of Moses, and in the books of the prophets; which threatenings were on condition of their disobedience.

If the premises and facts above stated, can be relied upon, we have a true history of the creation of the world, and all things contained in it, and that God created man in his own image, and placed him in the garden, eastward in Eden, and all things that transpired at that period respecting man are correctly handed down to us. And in that spot, and at that period, we have one of the first and most substantial promises of a savior, to bruise the serpent's head.

CHAPTER XII.

Of our Lord's Divinity, and pre-existent personal existence, &c.

NOTWITHSTANDING the evidences which may be derived from the scriptures in favour of our Lord's real divinity in his pre-existent state, many have doubted whether he had any personal existence, until he came in the flesh.

Others have doubted whether he possessed a nature superior to that of an angelic, or super-angelic kind.

Neither ought we to wonder, for John tells us "the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not." And we may be sure in all cases, that light comprehends darkness, but darkness never comprehends light. It is astonishing, to see that darkness hath prevailed in every age, notwithstanding all the displays of divine light and power, which God has made under the law and gospel.

Stephen informs us why this thing existed—he saith, "ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." And these words were very well applied, and always will apply for three reasons—1st, It is a natural consequence in all cases, when the enlightened and softening influences of the Holy Ghost are resisted, that darkness and hardness of heart follows; for it is by the enlightening influence of

the divine spirit, that we behold and know the things of God. 2d, And it is equally as true that it is the softening influence of the divine spirit, and that alone, that can soften and change the obdurate heart. 3dly, Stephen referred to an astonishing instance of that kind, of their fathers in the wilderness, "they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifices unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the hosts of heaven; and it is written in the book of the prophets." "Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your God Remphan, figures which ye made, to worship them; and I will carry you away beyond Babylon."

How astonishing is it to behold a nation, running into idolatry, when the glory of God was visible in a miraculous manner, even to the natural eye. The glory of God had not yet left the Mount, and they had heard the trumpet of God with their own ears; and no doubt they heard the voice of God, which spake to Moses; and before Moses came down from the mount, they had made a golden calf in imitation of Apis the Egyptian god, and were worshipping the works of their own hands, and were proclaiming, these are the gods that brought us up out of Egypt.

It did not end here—they "took up the tabernacle of Moloch" which was a small portable chapel in which was the image of their God.—Moloch was the planet Mars, which they worshipped under a human shape. Remphan, that is, Saturn, they represented by a star; And these they worshipped. These three species of idolatry continued and increased in that nation till they worshipped the whole host of heaven, that is, the

sun, moon, and stars. And God gave them into the hands of their enemies. God was faithful to his covenant at that period. He raised up to them a number of the most eminent prophets, to proclaim the judgments of God against them, on condition of their continuing in their rebellion and idolatry. But when they became totally incorrigible, although the Lord professed to be married unto them, he told them they had gone after other lovers, and had committed lewdness ; and he would divorce them, and put them away ; which he really did, by giving them up to worship the host of heaven, and sold them into the hands of their enemies, and withdrew his glorious presence from the Temple, with all the popular miracles which attended it.

Notwithstanding, the prophet acknowledges, and we also, that Christ's bodily presence gave the second temple such glory as Solomon's temple had not ; even with its silver, and gold, and tokens of his presence in the first temple. The Jews, acknowledge that the first temple had five signs of the divine presence, which were wanting in the second ; namely, the *Urim* and *Thummim*, by which the high priest was miraculously instructed in the will of God ; the *Ark of the covenant*, containing the two tables of stone on which the law was written, "and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables ;" the *fire upon the altar*, which came down from heaven ; the *Shekinah*, or visible display of the divine glory ; and the *spirit of prophecy*.

Paul, speaking of the tabernacle, gives us to understand, in his epistle to the Hebrews, chap-9 and 10, that we may still reap a further advantage by it ; he informs us the law was a " shadow

of good things to come ;” but we will still attend to the declaration of Stephen. He charges the Council with being stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, and resisting the Holy Ghost, as we have stated before. They had not only all the means of grace above stated, but had seen the accomplishment of the prophecies, and Christ had really come in the flesh. Had done among them the works that no other ever did ; and not only so, but they were eye witness of the glory which then at his mock trial, glowed in the countenance of the prisoner at the bar, for all the Council beheld his face as an angel of God.

When we return in our thoughts, and review the last subject under consideration, and behold the blindness, insensibility, and hardness of heart, envy and malice, which reign in a soul which has resisted the Holy Ghost—we are under the necessity of acknowledging with the pious Mr. Fletcher, that death and the grave will give way to the power of God before superstition and unbelief. And the words of Pope, in this matter, are perhaps more faithfully exemplified and verified, than perhaps under any other temperament of the human heart, viz :

“ A man convinc’d against his will,
Is of the same opinion still.”

And we may well adopt the language of Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom, that if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one should arise from the dead.

There is one thing more we will attend to from the old testament, and this is, that Christ was esteemed king of the Jews in his pre-existent state.

G

We shall find that Peter in his sermon on record in the acts of the apostles, chapter 3, verse 24, saith, "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." It will be necessary for us here to notice two things, first, Peter spoke freely of the days of refreshing which were to take place under the reign of the Messiah. And in the second place, the day of vengeance which should follow these days of refreshing; namely, "it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." We find in the first book of Samuel, that the children of Israel came to Samuel and besought him that they might have a king over them, and the thing displeased the Lord, and the Lord said to Samuel, "they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."—Again, Samuel saith to the people of Israel, "the Lord your God was your king." "And the Lord sent thunder and rain," in the day of wheat harvest, in token of his displeasure at the conduct of the Israelites, for their rejecting him as their king, and asking a king, to be like all other nations around and about them. These passages, and such as are connected with this subject, it is evident, were referred to by Peter. And that the Messiah is spoken of as a king, is evident by almost all the other prophets. It, however, may be said that the other prophets speak of the Messiah's kingdom, as a kingdom which was to come. By consulting the writings of David, it is thought we may have the clearest evidence, that the royal psalmist, had a clear faith in the Messiah then existing, and that he sustained the

office of a king—he saith, “I saw the Lord on my right hand that I should not be moved.”—Again he saith, “the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” And our Lord has reference to these passages, when he proposes these important questions to the Jews, viz: “What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?” The Jews in answer, “say unto him, The son of David.” Our Lord “saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies my footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?—And no man was able to answer him a word.”—Were we to pursue the same point through the writings of David and the prophets, it is thought hundreds of passages might be brought to prove the facts already stated, as to the pre-existing dignity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and his proper sonship, and that he was esteemed the king of the Jews.

is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." And it is by this living faith in the son of God we overcome the wicked one. John further informs, "and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even *our faith*."

Again, John, 1st chapter, "Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith unto him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile !

"Nathaniel saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me ? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Phillip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.

"Nathaniel answereth and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the son of God ; thou art the king of Israel."

And Jesus being asked whether he was a king, he answered in the affirmative, "to this end was I born." But still declares that his kingdom is not of this world.

Again, we find our Lord conversed with his disciples on these weighty points, just before he takes his leave of them to go to his Father, in which are comprised some, and probably the most sublime truths he ever disclosed to them.— At one time he introduced the subject by telling them he was going away, which raised their anxiety to go with him. He informs them that they could not follow him ; and Peter proposeth to be willing to lay down his life for his sake.— Then, in order to lead their minds a little further into the subject, and to prepare their minds for the full reception of this sublime truth, he tells them, "I am the way and the truth, and the life."

And when their minds were fully prepared for this solemn truth, he tells them plainly, John

true character, namely, that he is "the Christ, the son of the living God." We are authorised to remark, that this is not only a true testimony, or witness, but that it is evidence of the first importance in the christian religion: for saith our Lord, "upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The Romish church, however, have claimed this assertion of our Lord to Peter, as the foundation and principal support of one of their first principles of church government, and supremacy; namely, That our Lord promised to build his church upon that Rock, meaning Peter as the rock: and consequently gave him, and his successors, "the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

Protestant divines have generally supposed that the Lord had reference to himself; taking a view of the whole subject, it is difficult to suppose that either of them are fully right. All, however, must acknowledge, that Jesus Christ is the Rock of ages, and the chief corner stone of the christian's hope. It is also evident there is something more intended in our Lord's expression, "on this rock will I build my church." We understand it to mean as much as if our Lord had said, Peter, what you have now in faith expressed, respecting my name, nature, and character, is no less than an evangelic faith in the rock of ages, or the son of God—and upon this foundation, this evangelic faith, will I build my christian church, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This faith is the key to heaven.

And it is impossible the "gates of hell" should prevail against it. John hath recorded, "greater

is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." And it is by this living faith in the son of God we overcome the wicked one. John further informs, "and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even *our faith*."

Again, John, 1st chapter, "Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith unto him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile !

"Nathaniel saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me ? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Phillip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.

"Nathaniel answereth and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the son of God ; thou art the king of Israel."

And Jesus being asked whether he was a king, he answered in the affirmative, "to this end was I born." But still declares that his kingdom is not of this world.

Again, we find our Lord conversed with his disciples on these weighty points, just before he takes his leave of them to go to his Father, in which are comprised some, and probably the most sublime truths he ever disclosed to them.— At one time he introduced the subject by telling them he was going away, which raised their anxiety to go with him. He informs them that they could not follow him ; and Peter proposeth to be willing to lay down his life for his sake.— Then, in order to lead their minds a little further into the subject, and to prepare their minds for the full reception of this sublime truth, he tells them, "I am the way and the truth, and the life."

And when their minds were fully prepared for this solemn truth, he tells them plainly, John

chapter 16, 28th verse, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." "His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb." It is plain and obvious in what manner we are to render these words of our Lord, the meaning is plain, that he passed from the substance of the Father as a real son, and had left the realms of glory, and had now come into the world; and was about to leave the world, and go again to his Father in the realms of glory.

His disciples drew another conclusion from these premises, which is, "Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe thou camest forth from God."

Again, John 14th chap. verse 6. "I am the way, and the truth and the life." 10th chapter, 17 and 18 verses—"Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my father." In chapter 5, verses from 25 to 30, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice; and shall come forth; they that have done good, to

the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Many are the concurrent passages, which might be cited; yet multiplying quotations to a great amount, may have a tendency to weary the mind, more than to convince the conscience.

We will now draw our inferences from, and make our application of the texts above cited. That Jesus Christ did come forth from the Father, and that he hath the Godhead in himself naturally and inherently, as the only begotten, and the proper Son of the Father, we consider an irresistible inference. He might and did say to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life." And the beloved disciple bears testimony, "This is the true God and eternal life."

By reviewing this subject, it will be found it may swell to an immense size. Were we to follow the writings of David, Solomon, and the prophets, and then add what is written in the New Testament, it will augment this chapter much beyond what was intended in the whole work. It is hoped, therefore, the reader will excuse the leaving untouched, hundreds of texts which might be brought in confirmation of the pre-existent dignity of our Lord, his coming in the flesh, and the offices he sustained from love to the human family. These texts, omitted, are really significant, and full of meaning, and are calculated to lead the reflecting mind either to that state and station which he filled before he came in the flesh, or after he came in the flesh, or after his ascension to glory. We think it proper, therefore, to mention a few of the names or titles which our Lord sustained and bore, by

way of text, without going into any lengthy explanation of them.

He is called the Almighty God, the everlasting father, the Prince of peace, wonderful, counsellor, a king, a prince, a son, a shield, the bright and morning star, the angel of the covenant, the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit, the image of the invisible God, the only begotten son of God, the first born of every creature, a creator, a ruler, a judge, a prophet, a priest, a mediator, a redeemer. The Shiloh, the root, and the offspring of David. The chief corner stone, the elect, and precious; a spring, a well of water, the fountain of life. I am that I am, the God of Israel, the God of the Hebrews, the Lord of Sabaoth, and the Word of God. A branch, a stream, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the lion of the tribe of Judah; a man, the son of man, the son of David, the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, and the shepherd of Israel. Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Immanuel, and perhaps fifty characters and titles more, that we have not mentioned; and mysterious as it may seem to the reader, one line of truths will teach that every name, title, and appellation he bears or claims, is really significant. They signify something in his human, or divine nature, or point us to one or another of his offices which he sustains in creation, providence, government or redemption.

CHAPTER XIV.

General remarks on the real deity of the Son, from the views we have given.—Remarks on Sabellianism, Arianism, and Socinianism.

WE have taken up a few pages to exhibit our views upon the pre-existence and dignity of the Son of God, and to defend the real deity of the Son, yet, when we examine the extent of this doctrine, and the greatness of the subject, we can truly say, we have just touched upon it only. We shall, however, leave our mode of pursuing it, presuming the mode pursued will appear something new to many, as we have not found any who have followed the exact mode herein adopted.

It is now thought suitable to make some remarks on what we have written—and some connected and concise remarks on Sabellianism, Arianism, and Socinianism.

It will be borne in recollection, we are inquiring who this character can be which in the old and new testaments, we find assuming many names and titles. We have endeavoured already to show, he cannot be a created being. We have also, concluded, it would be quite as inconsistent for the Father, to make appearance in the manner we find this character hath done, as for any created being to do it.

For the Father to leave the throne of glory and to walk in the garden ; to appear in the form

of a man, and converse in a familiar manner with Abraham, and to eat and drink with him; again to Joshua with a sword in his hand, and converse with him on the subject and plan of taking Jericho; again to Manoah in the form of a man of God, or as an Angel; to discover his dignity to Moses at sundry times, and in divers manners, once in a flame of fire in a bush, at another time standing on a rock, Moses was commanded to smite; we say, for the Father to appear, in this manner, would be contrary to every scriptural analogy of faith.

It would interpose much difficulty in the way of a man of sound sense, reflection, and scriptural reading to believe it. And to us, it would be quite inconsistent, to suppose the Father appeared for the redemption of a nation from a state of bondage, and to give the law on Mount Sinai, and to appear in the tabernacle, seeing it is every where revealed, the Lord Jesus was to make his appearance for the redemption of the human race at large; and seeing it would be an errand far inferior to that accomplished by the Son of God, our Saviour.

We contemplate the Arian and Socinian plan, with wonder and astonishment. That our opponents should adopt the doctrine, that God the Father should make his appearance as an angel or messenger, appears to us surprising for two reasons, viz. 1st. The errand was far inferior, as we have hinted, to the errand of our Lord and Saviour, who came forth of his Father into the world to redeem mankind. 2d. Should the Father make his appearance as an angel, or envoy, we would ask, who sent him? for an angel or envoy signifies a messenger sent

Many, when they begin to make the Scriptures their study, have but little or no idea of going to the old testament for information on this subject. Some will acknowledge, that when they had but superficially entered into their scriptural studies, and professed to know more about common law, than about the Gospel, that they thought Stephen might be a very good man, but tho't he answered very inconsistently and remotely to the indictment preferred against him; but, that having taking more minute and comprehensive views, and having since found his key, and the force of his allusions, they feel as ready to acknowledge, that of all the portions of divinity, recorded in the scriptures, there is none which exceeds what he delivered; both in point as relates to the accusation, and in force, in regard to his justification, and correctness in doctrine: and we will add, that is more illustrative of the subject in hand.

We are aware of an objection which will, and has been raised against the doctrine, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature, and as such, none inferior to the Father. The objection made is, that if Jesus Christ be truly God in his nature, would it not be as inconsistent for the son to make his appearance in the form of an angel, or that of a man, as it would for the Father to make his appearance in the same way, or in the same character? We answer no, it would not. And we are constrained to say, that if we would lay aside that heat and spirit which generally arises from uncharitableness, bigotry, and controversy, we may see the difference. Yea, we are persuaded, that in the midst of controversy, when the spirits are ever so

warm, let every man ask himself the following propositions or questions, and he would be convinced it was not as natural and consistent when he heard them sound in his own ears—Namely, the Son so loved the world that he gave his own father that begot him, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life? And, again, He that spared not his only Father, but freely delivered him for us all, will he not also give us all things? And the same might be said respecting the Holy Ghost. How would it appear and sound to us, to say, that the Holy Ghost sent either of the other persons in the divine nature, that is, the Father, or Son?

Every candid reader, feels the mantling blush, at such ideas being spread on paper, or sounding from the tongue, they appear so self contradictory to reason, to scripture, and nature. Exhibiting the ideas, seems to call for an apology, even after looking to God in the most solemn manner, for direction in this important question; unless it is done from a sense of duty, and in the hope, that candid and considerate Arians and Socinians, will hereby, at least, see some propriety in the Father's sending his Son into the world, and the impropriety of the Son's sending his Father into the world; admitting the Father has an only begotten Son.

We have, however, a further reason for exhibiting these last mentioned ideas. It is found, among some orders of christians, who appear to be exceeding zealous to defend the doctrine of the Trinity, as we call it, and the Deity of the Son, that their minds revolt, to hear one word said in favor of the Father's filling a station or

office above the Son. This class of believers, were we accurately and scripturally to defend the real God-head of the Son, and ever so perfectly, would be out upon us with denunciations, and accusations, that we do not make the Son equal with the Father; and that we were leaning towards Arianism!

Before the accusing and condemning spirit of any class of christians should utter any thing about leaning towards Arianism, we think it suitable, they should understand themselves, or understand what Arianism is.

Arius believed, That Jesus Christ was a created being, which God the Father created, out of nothing; and that he was of an Angelic nature, and the first creature that God the Father created. But if it be true that God the Father hath an only Son, *created*, which he calls his only begotten Son, there is an infinite difference between them, not only in degree, but in nature.

We think that every philosopher will be willing to acknowledge, that there are two things in the universe, in which there is an infinite distinction or disproportion, viz. Between the uncreated substance of God, and all created things.—And between entity, and non-entity—or in other words, between beings of creation and non-creation. In either of these cases, one is infinitely above the other, and infinitely distinct from each other: Consequently it is impossible in the nature of things, if we believe in the only begotten Son of God, and believe that he is from the uncreated substance of the Father, it is, we say impossible, to lean towards Arianism. There may be, however, different species of Arianism, of which we know nothing.

Not only so, but we think, that to maintain and defend the proper sonship of our Lord, (and his eternal generation so called) is the only way to defend the proper deity of our Savior and Mediator. This appears to be the ground that the Apostles and their successors have taken for more than three hundred years after our Lord sent forth the disciples to preach the gospel to all nations. It is equally true, that all the reformed churches, so called, which have arisen to any degree of eminence, for the last three centuries, have adopted the same doctrine, clearly and explicitly in their articles of faith: and most generally so clearly and explicitly, that it seems morally impossible, for any man of common reading and ability to misunderstand them; or to construe them differently. From the plain import of the language they have used, there is no ambiguity.

In defining these first principles of christianity, we are to acknowledge, that there has been some in every age of christianity, who have differed from the principles above stated, even in the Apostolic age. And of these, him and his followers, who adopted the doctrine, now called, Socinianism. And in the second century Sabelius arose who maintained a doctrine very different, from the doctrine of the Trinity, so called; or proper paternity of the Father, and the proper correlative or filiation of the Son. Sabelius maintained, if we mistake not, that God acted as Father in creation, and Son in Redemption, and Holy Ghost in being poured out on the day of Pentacost. This amounts to a trinity of offices, and not to a trinity of persons, therefore it destroys the idea of Father and Son in the Trin-

ity. This doctrine is acknowledged by historians to be condemned by the churches of that age.

The doctrine of Arianism, propagated by Arius in the third century, which denies the proper paternity of the Father, and of consequence, the proper divine relation of the Son. This doctrine was condemned by the great council at Nice in the year 325.

But what is most astonishing and mysterious to us, is, that many professing trinitarians of the present day, deny, what some of the most eminent fathers of the reformation called a procession: Or in other terms, that the Son proceeded from the Father, and the Holy Ghost, proceeded from the Father and Son. They think that the eternal relation of the Son, is a doctrine which cannot be defended by scripture. They therefore contend that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God, in his divine nature, but in his human nature. And they frequently deny that the human and divine were so united, that a sense of feeling was communicated from one nature to the other; and that also, that the divine nature was not made under the law, which was broken by our first parents.

There are a few things which are peculiar to these people in general. Perhaps no class of believers are so bitterly opposed to the Arians and Socinians, yet none, come so near them in doctrine. They make much pretension to orthodoxy, and contend that the doctrine of the Trinity, is the only catholic faith, which was known or preached in the three first centuries, and defended by the Nicæan Council, in the 4th century. This we believe, that the doctrine of the Trinity, so call-

ed, was the real doctrine preached by the Apostles, and defended by the Council held at the city of Nice in the year 325. And it is still further evident, that this Council considered, their decision was in opposition to the doctrine of Arianism.

It will, no doubt, be asked, wherein this modern kind of trinitarianism, approaches so near the doctrine of Arius and Socinius? The answer is, in points of atonement made for sin: and in point, of a Mediator with God: and in exhibiting God's love to man, in the gift of his Son, to redeem lost men from their state of wretchedness and misery.

CHAPTER XV.

The subject continued. The atonement, &c. Further remarks on Arianism, and the views of Doct. Watts.

WE remark first upon atonement. It appears strikingly evident, that if man failed in point of obedience to that divine law which God was pleased to place him under, in his primeval state, that sin must require an atonement of an infinite nature.

Sin, did not consist in the non-performance of that law only, but in wilful disobedience to a known law, acknowledged to be such by the very character that broke it. And the magnitude of the offence, must at least, in some sense, be measured and considered, in proportion to the dignity and glory of the character offended.—Every act of disobedience against such a character, must be to the dishonour, and against the dignity of the character so offended. It is thought every rule of justice, with which we are acquainted, will defend this mode of reasoning. We are aware, however, that our opponents have contended, that a finite being is not capable of commuting a sin of an infinite magnitude. And, we are willing to acknowledge it. For finite beings cannot extend their powers, or influence, beyond their capacity; and their powers and capacity are very contracted and limited in comparison to the Supreme Being. And if that sin, committed by our first parents, was infinite in point

of magnitude, there could be but sin in the universe. And, if sin in general could amount to an infinity in point of magnitude, it is not seen, but by that rule of reasoning, it must destroy all good from the universe.

Notwithstanding, we can in all sincerity, subscribe to the above statements, still our opponents have not removed the difficulty. Consequently, we shall contend, that an atonement of an infinite nature, is necessary for sin. For the law alluded to was holy, and just, and good, and given by the Supreme Being, to a creature in his primeval state ; when his body was sound in all its proportion of parts, and his soul in all its powers ; and the offence was to the dishonor, and against an infinite, holy, wise, and just God ; and this law thus broken, could never be repaired by man, by future obedience ; of course guilt must eternally remain, in the very nature of things ; and punishment, must run parallel with the guilt.

We have another reason to offer for our belief in the atonement's being infinite in its nature.— It is a serious doubt, whether an atonement of a finite nature, can be offered by a finite being to God. We acknowledge God to be the only self-existent being in the universe ; therefore all created beings angelic or human, are created by his power, and fashioned by his skill, and preserved by his grace, and mercy ; therefore, must owe to him their best performances in their primeval state, and are unable to perform works of supererogation, or works intrinsically holy, or over and above the obligation that they are naturally under to their Creator.

And if it be correct, that every creature which God hath made, are under the highest obligations to their God, to perform all the acts of obedience, which they can render to him, in their most exalted rank and station, which God hath assigned them in their primeval state—and if the nature of sin be as above stated, where in the universe shall we go to find a substitute, to stand in the place of man, to repair the injury done by man, to God's divine law; and which was to the honor of his declarative glory; if God hath not an only Son?

If this Son was not so united to humanity, as to make but one person, and made under the identical law, broken by man—we say, where shall we find a substitute? or where find a character to fulfil that law? or to offer to God an oblation for sin, and a sacrifice for the redemption of man? We are free to acknowledge we cannot tell.

The Father to become subject to his own law, and to render obedience to a law given to a mere creature, and offer an oblation to himself; we say, this appears to be absurd: if not very ridiculous, and blasphemous. For a just claimant to relinquish his claim, under a pretence of justice, by paying the demand in and by himself, certainly savors of absurdity in the very nature of things.

We now propose to make further remarks on Arianism. We have stated already a few things respecting Arius, and his system of doctrine, from whence he was, and at what period he arose.—Although many have adopted his system since the commencement of the fourth century, which is called by some historians the Arian era, or age.

If we compare Arianism with scripture, we find some insurmountable difficulties in its course.— If we can understand any thing from plain language, the Son, so often spoken of, in the New-Testament, was begotten, and not created. That he was with the father in all the works of creation. Not only so, but that, as some divines have been pleased to term it, he was the real operator in creation—not operator as to forming, but as Creator. And if any attributes are essential to real deity, it is most certain that the attributes of power and wisdom to create, belong to God exclusively.

Whether an atonement can be made by a creature, for another which has failed in point of obedience remains a serious doubt. It is possible, if not probable, that some writers have not done justice to the doctrines of Arius, and to neither his followers, their piety and virtues. We are conscious, that we ought to do justice to our opponents as far as in us lieth. The doctrine of Arius, may be considered far preferable to the doctrine of Socinius. And in our view Arius has followed the line of truth further than Socinius; for Arius acknowledges, what we call the pre-existence of Jesus Christ; that is, that he existed before he came in the flesh; and that he was the first and noblest of all God's creatures, and placed at the head of the universe.

We think the pious and venerable Doct. Watts has offered some arguments in favor of that sentiment, beyond every argument we have heard advanced, or thought could be advanced in favor of that system. We now proceed to bring forward some of the Doctor's most powerful arguments, which, it is considered, he advanced in

favor of that sentiment ; and then find out wherein the Doctor's mistake lay, and compare it with what is deemed the genuine sentiment of the apostles, of Moses, and the prophets. It would be well to add, in this place, that the Doctor did not profess to be, on this important point, an Arian, strictly speaking ; neither do we allude to these statements, to mar the character of that very venerable and useful man, to whom, under God, the church of Christ are much indebted, for some of his most excellent performances ; and we trust, he is sharing a long reward in glory, for his works of faith, and labors of love ; and may the same spirit, which is so visible in all his works, govern our hearts, and dictate to the pen that indites. Nor are the ideas of the Doctor brought forward to aid the Arian system, but for the purpose of yielding all the concessions we can in conscience to that system of doctrine, and to see more clearly wherein the flaw of its arguments consists.

The Doctor takes up about 400 pages in endeavoring to show that the human soul of Jesus Christ, existed before the coming of Christ in the flesh, and then states, in similar terms with Arius, that the human soul of Jesus Christ, probably was the first being, and the most noble and excellent being that God ever created ; and the being in whom the God-head resided, and was manifested in a peculiar manner. He then proceeds to speak of the quality, and faculties of this character in his pre-existent state, as well as in his state of glorification after his ascension. If we are not mistaken, he discovered something like omnipresence, to be a necessary qualification, for our Mediator's process, in order to know

all his subjects, and all their wants, and to hear all their petitions, to enable him to present them to his Father. And on these points he brings forward a metaphor or comparison of the human soul of Jesus Christ, and likens it to a glass bowl, placed in the centre of a room, on which every thing within that compass would reflect. That the God-head, he says, resided in the human soul of Jesus Christ in a peculiar manner, and to support and illustrate these ideas, he introduces some arguments from natural philosophy, and from reason, which are to this amount—we can not tell how far an infinite wise God can extend the powers, wisdom, knowledge, senses, and faculties of a created being; and how many other faculties and senses may be added to a character of this description, is impossible for us to decide. He mentions some animal faculties. The blood-hound, for instance, as possessing the sense of smelling in a degree far superior to the human species; and then observes, that if Cyrus could know every man in all his vast army, and the places from whence they were, why could not the human soul of Jesus Christ, know all these things? These, however, ingenious, are far from being satisfactory and conclusive upon this subject.

It is possible, we have not been acquainted with the authors which are most approved of, amongst the Arians, but we may, without adventuring much, conclude, that it is impossible any arguments drawn from human reason or philosophy, can be advanced more substantial, in favor of the Arian system, than the arguments advanced by the Doctor. Should we admit on the principles of philosophy and reason, that an infinite-

ly wise and powerful God, could create a being, and place him at the head of the universe, and extend his powers and faculties, ten thousand times ten thousand, beyond what we, or the Doctor, ever imagined; and add a hundred senses of which we have no knowledge, still the work is imperfect, and the position unsatisfactory; and we feel constrained to object to this system, as accounting for the mysteries of redeeming grace, or as an explanation of the Gospel texts in this matter; they are not to be determined by human reason alone, nor by any philosophical principles, except divine philosophy revealed by the Word. The question is not, what God can do, but what God has done; and this must be decided by the Record which God hath given us of his Son.

If the Doctor is incorrect, in his views on this subject, it will be profitable for us to spend a few moments in enquiring for the stumbling-block, over which the Doctor seems, at least to us, to have stumbled. It is an admonition also, to us to be cautious of the same danger. The first difficulty and mistake, we think the Doctor labored under, was, in imagining all souls were created at once, or were created before their bodies were prepared for them. We do not undertake to say, that he has stated this expressly, but we are under the necessity of drawing this inference from his views. For if the soul is generated with the body, as we have reason to believe it is; and as is universally believed, by philosophers and divines, at the present day; and that Jesus Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, from the blessed virgin, we say, if this is the case, then Jesus Christ must possess two human souls, one created before the foundation of the world, and the other, from the seed of Abraham, that is, from

the virgin; and it is thought, the Doctor, never would contend for this last position, or that this was the case.

We have a reason, for the belief that this was the Doctor's view, viz. In one of his poems, he says,

“And in some unknown moment join'd,
“The finish'd members to the mind;”

which intimates, that he thought the soul or spirit, was added after the members or body was completed. And this same difficulty, Mr. Worcester appears to labor under, as to the true humanity of Jesus Christ, for he expresses it in his works, as bible news, and acknowledges it was a point he had not fully digested.

The next difficulty, which it appears the Doctor labored under, notwithstanding his extensive studies and learning, was that he did not diligently compare the old and new testament together, on this point, although he might have done it on other points.

By perusing his works critically, and we are sure impartially, it is found the Doctor followed something of the same line which we have followed in some part of this work, namely, an examination of the manifestations made to the patriarchs and prophets, by our Lord Jesus Christ in his pre-existent state. And the whole difficulty which appears to have rested on his mind, was to know who this character could be, who sometimes appeared in such dignity and glory, and demanded, and received homage and worship; appearing sometimes as an Angel, and messenger, or in the form of a man. The Doctor observed on these points, that it seemed, there was something in this character, that did not ap-

pear like the real Deity, or the real God-head ; but in all this, he did not deny the doctrine of the Trinity, but would observe, notwithstanding, the doctrine of the trinity ; or words to that amount ; and concluded, it must be the human soul of Jesus Christ, in which the God-head dwelt. This seems to have comprised all the Doctor's labors upon this subject, and he seems to have stopped at this idea, without any sufficient comment or enquiry, whether or not, this personage was actually one of the characters which 'compose the trinity.

CHAPTER XVI.

Christ's manifestations to the patriarchs and prophets in his pre-existent state, and to his Apostles after his resurrection and ascension.

We think, had the Doctor with equal spirit and diligence compared these passages of the old testament, with the new, and especially with Stephen's exposition before the Council of the Jews, the first chapter of John's gospel, the first chapters of Paul's Epistles to the Hebrews and Colossians, we cannot but conclude that the Doctor would have discovered, that the character which had made his appearance "at sundry times and in divers manners," was one of the characters, which composed the Trinity, that is, the Son of God, and not the human soul of Jesus Christ.— And, had the Doctor then considered, that he who was rich, had already agreed to become poor, that we, "through his poverty might be rich," and was about to take on himself the seed of Abraham, as the apostle expresses it; had the Doctor deeply considered this, it is thought he would have seen the consistency of our Lord's making his appearance at certain times, in the glory of that God-head. As he did when he appeared in the cloudy pillar, and on Mount Sina, where "there was under his feet, as it were a paved work of a sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness;" and with the sound of a trumpet, and in flaming fire, in order to de-

liver such a body of divinity as was contained in the divine law graven by him upon the two tables, and in such a public manner to give sanction and authority to the same. As he did to Isaiah in the temple, chapter 6, "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke."

Thus it appears, when it was necessary, on such important occasions and to deliver such sublime messages, our Lord did appear in some measure in the glory of his God-head, in order to give sanction to the message delivered; and it is nothing inconsistent. When he appears to Abraham, or Manoah, to communicate the promise of a son, although an errand worthy of redeeming love, he appears as an angel, or man, or man of God. Had the Doctor thoroughly weighed all these points, in his great wisdom, being assisted by his deep piety and candor, we think he would have believed, and been in sentiment with us, that this character, was the proper Son of God, in his pre-existent dignity.

It may be observed, that the appearance of our Lord, at sundry times to the apostles, after he came in the flesh, was somewhat like his ancient appearances to the patriarchs and prophets, in the two respects above stated. His first appearance after the resurrection, was to Mary Magda-

len, in a common habit, no doubt, for she supposed him to be the gardner, and said "unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away."— But when he spake in his usual voice and accent, and "saith unto her, Mary," she knew him.— And again on the same day, as some of his disciples went "to a village called Emmaus," he appeared as a traveller on his journey. And at another time to Saul of Tarsus, in his native glory and splendor, accompanied with uncreated light above the brightness of the sun in its meridian light and effulgence. And to John on the Isle of Patmos in a similar state of dignity and glory, and "he had in his right hand seven stars," and he walked in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, and opened a door in heaven, and showed John the throne of God, and some things, which it was impossible for man to utter.

We may discover in all this a perfect consistency. There can be nothing inconsistent, in supposing that he that hath created the intelligent powers of man, can reveal himself to man, in that mode or form, which he in his infinite wisdom, and pleasure, seeth fit; and we for ourselves, consider we can see much wisdom in our Lord's manifestations of himself to the children of men, "at sundry times, and in divers manners," as we have cited.

We think every christian will see as perfect consistency in our Lord's manifestations to his chosen, after his coming in the flesh, as in his ancient manifestations to the patriarchs.

Look for a moment at the two made to Mary, and the disciples, as they went to Emmaus. Notwithstanding all the information and instruction

they had received from our Lord and the scriptures, it is strikingly evident, their minds were beclouded and dark, on this important point of our Lord's resurrection; and needed instructions for their confirmation on this point of the prophecies, that related to the resurrection of our Lord. And their minds were perfectly ripe for such instruction, consequently, nothing could be more consistent, and fit, than for our Lord to make his appearance to them in a similar form, in which they had known and conversed with him, before his crucifixion—and that their eyes should be holden from recognition of him, until he had opened to them the scriptures, which related to that point, that they might have a rational understanding of that fact, which then labored in their minds, and was about to be called in question by the sharp-sighted, and keen avidity of their enemies. The time required it.

It is an experimental fact, that no person is in a proper situation to receive instruction, till they are convinced of the need of such instruction; and generally not, until the mind becomes perfectly deliberate. Therefore, if our Lord had made his appearance, in these cases in the glory of the God-head, it would have been morally impossible, for them to have received such instructions, as were strictly necessary, on so dear and interesting points. Had he appeared in the resplendant glory of the God-head, in that case, there could be little doubt, but their minds must have been agitated, with terror, or joy, or probably with a mixture of both, even to that degree, in which their understanding and memory, could not have been in proper exercise.

But in the evening as they sat at meat with him, and the time had fully arrived for our Lord to sanction the conversation and instructions, he had given them, "he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

Should we now spend a few thoughts, on the manifestations of our Lord to Paul and John, after our Lord's ascension to glory, it is probable we shall derive some further advantage from them. Paul informs us, that he journeyed, verily thinking, he "ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." And by authority of the chief priests, imprisoned, put to death, punished in every synagogue his followers, compelled them to blaspheme, and persecuted them even unto strange cities. As in Acts, chapter 26.

"Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the high priests,

"At mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me, and them which journeyed with me.

"And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying, in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

Here let it be remarked that Paul had been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and instructed in the scriptures; but was so zealous for the traditions of the fathers, which had so blinded

and prejudiced his mind, that probably nothing short of such a manifestation, would convince his mind, disclose to him his error, and discover to him his duty. And even in this case, our Lord sent him to Damascus for further instruction, "and he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." And all this was necessary to arrest him in his course, and for his information, and to prepare him for a chosen vessel.

It is profitable to remark here also, that extraordinary manifestations and revelations, are, and always were necessary, when no other means are provided, or can be obtained. This comment may, however, be objected to, in relation to this trial of Paul, on the principle, that Paul had all the necessary means of grace, and information, that the nature of the case could possibly require. Our Lord is, however, far the best judge in this case; none but him can tell the force of education, the stubbornness of prejudice, and the strength of bigotry, assisted by slanders and falsehoods.— These comments are not intended to draw in question, how far this apostle could be innocent or excuseable, in these prejudices; but there is one thing we may rely upon, that our Lord who knows all hearts and circumstances, saw fit to arrest this suddenly constituted apostle in the manner he did, for his own glory, and for the good of the church.

Our digression to this point, is to reason and see, if it is rationally possible to reclaim a heated, raging and proud bigot like Saul of Tarsus; not merely the man who trusts in the tradition of his fathers, who contends for modes and forms, but a bigot of the "strictest sect," that is above all

teaching, except that teaching which is immediately from heaven.

A very little consideration of the circumstances in which Paul stood, and the temper and disposition he was in, brings us to the safe conclusion, that nothing short of such a display of the Glory of Christ, as our Lord pleased to manifest, could destroy every root of Jewish bigotry in him, with all his prepossessions, enraged prejudices, and vindictive superstition; and transform him to an amiable and gentle christian apostle. And probably, nothing short, of that humbling sentence from our Lord, to Paul, "arise and go into the city, (Damascus) and it shall be told thee what thou must do," and receive instruction from Ananias; could destroy from a mind constituted as his was, the strong tendencies and inclinations to christian bigotry; for a man may be as great a bigot in the christian as in the Jewish religion.

This displanting from his mind all inclination to bigotry, was an essential qualification for the apostolic part assigned him to act, the propagation of the gospel, and healing of schisms in the primitive churches. We find him most ably and eloquently admonishing, and exhorting to charity, and complaining of the errors and contentions of his Corinthian brethren, for their saying "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided?"

The apostle, in christian love and mildness, withheld from them, and has not told us, which he esteemed most bigotted in their manner, way or form of doctrine. And this is illustrative and edifying in the present day of schisms; for now every one saith, I am of Martin Luther, and I of John Calvin, and I of James Arminius, and I of

George Fox, and I of John Wesley ; and we have no doubt, each of these churches will be willing to own, with shame and sorrow, that they can each produce their bigots. But if we are not greatly beguiled and blinded, we have found the greatest bigots, to be of those, who profess to stand alone, and will be taught by none, but Christ.— And whatever they do, cry aloud they are taught of God, the bible their only book, and that they follow Christ in all things. This stamp of characters, are generally as ready now, as in apostolic days, to take the judgment seat, and cry out bigotry, superstition, and formality ; and probably will accuse of ignorance and darkness, and Popery, and running after the traditions and teachings of men. We find bigots in all periods “wiser in their own conceit, than seven men who can render a reason.” In experimental knowledge in things of God and godliness, the bigot and schismatic’s rule, to try the experience of God’s children, and his dispensations of providence and grace, is, not to admit of an experience going beyond theirs, and to reject every experience that does not come up to their views.

Under these views of evils and errors to be avoided, then and now, the manner of the conversion of Paul, and the wisdom, mercy and goodness of our Lord’s manifestations to him, is not only a living rebuke of an uncharitable, and anti-christian temper and disposition, but by the revelation of his glorious presence, he at once destroyed his Jewish superstition and bigotry ; and by his humbling command to an arrogant scholar of Gamaliel, to go to a despised christian, and probably a layman, for instruction in the knowledge of his duty to God and man, he disposed him to that

humility and meekness, which exemplifies the christian doctrine and character. And this command was probably as humiliating a sentence to Paul, as the searcher of all hearts could pronounce, and its effects show a triumph over the opposition of human wisdom, and disposed the Apostle "to preach the gospel, but not with the (artificial) wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."

In returning to the general point in question, we cannot hesitate to ascribe much wisdom in our Lord's manifestations to John in the Isle of Patmos. John had experienced a long acquaintance with our Lord in the days of his flesh, he was the disciple Jesus loved, and was well acquainted with his lowliness, meekness and patience. John of course needed no instructions on these points. But in this manifesto of the heir of all things, or compendium of things to come, it was proper Christ should appear in the glories of his character; and it was needful to the apostle that he should be instructed, from the manifestations of the dignity and glory of the Redeemer's nature and God-head. This was also necessary to give sanction and weight to this important book of revelation of things which must come to pass, which he commanded the apostle to write and send to the seven churches of Asia; containing many things which ought to be transmitted to all the churches; and which are, and will be, applicable to all the churches in the whole world, until he shall come in the clouds of heaven. It is a deep, and comprehensive prophecy reaching from that period to the general judgment, and the commencement of the new heavens and the new earth, and perhaps some parts of it will not be ac-

complished but in eternity. Therefore to give the most profound sanction to such sublime, weighty, and all important truths as are contained in this revelation, we may suppress all wonder, that our Lord should make his appearance in some sense in the glory of the God-head.

CHAPTER XVII.

Examination of the proper Sonship of our Lord, continued.

WE have in the preceding chapter in relation to the subject under inquiry, confined ourselves mostly to the comparison of the manifestations of our Lord, to the patriarchs and prophets, with his manifestations to the apostles after his resurrection and ascension—hoping thereby to advance in our inquiry, who this character can be, if not the proper Son of God in his pre-existent state of dignity and glory. We shall now proceed in a particular examination as to the proper Sonship of our Lord, in his pre-existent state, and search for the testimony touching the Sonship, and review several passages in the new testament, to see whether this doctrine will bear the test of scripture.

When fairly compared with the sacred text, and that without any forced construction, it shall be found to bear the examination, it will be our undoubted duty to hold to it, as one of the most sacred principles of the christian doctrine, and if not, to reject it. And in any event, the sooner we can arrive at a conviction of the truth of this momentous point, the better it is for us; who should strive for the demonstration which proceeds from the Holy Spirit, and works on the conscience with convincing light and persuasive eloquence. Our Lord, saith, "this is life, that

K

they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Although it is argued by some, that these are not points which so immediately concern us at the present day, if we believe in a Saviour which is able to save our souls from everlasting death. This is in some sense true; yet it is equally as true, we know not how to place implicit confidence in him, in which we have no clear knowledge. And the clearer our knowledge is on this point, the stronger and more unwavering will be our confidence in him. And the more entirely, and confidently we are prepared to worship and love him, and know and feel the love of God in the gift of his son, for the redemption of a lost world, the more sound and steadfast will be our faith. Every means of grace, therefore, which God in infinite kindness hath placed before us, to acquire knowledge, ought to be industriously and cautiously improved to the glory of God, and the salvation of our own souls.

The apostles, frequently bring forward this point, with a note of attention and admiration, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We think it plain that the apostles, one and all, agree in defending the proper Sonship of Jesus Christ, as the only substantial ground to defend his real deity, and proper God-head; or in other words, that he is really and inherently God in his nature.

We are greatly mistaken, if the fathers of the three first centuries, did not follow exactly this rule of the Apostles. The important Council or Synod held at the city of Nice, A. D. 325, we

understand to have done the same. This Council was composed of 318 bishops, and about as many presbyters, and we consider it to be esteemed one of the most important christian Councils held in the christian world since the destruction of the city of Jerusalem.

And we are equally certain that the fathers of the Reformation from popery, for the three centuries last past, have been enabled by the grace of God, and the peculiar and peaceful lights of the spirit of God, to follow them in this luminous and golden path.

We shall in our further inquiries, consider, the declarations of the apostles—the views of the fathers which sealed their testimony with their own blood, and died as martyrs for the cause of the christian religion—the Nicene creed, or the decisions of that council—the articles of faith of the reformed churches, and the views of leading characters, or christian lights, since the days of the reformation.

Before we proceed to the proposed examination, it will be well to offer the reasons, which lead us to resort to the three last mentioned sources of information. It will be acknowledged by almost all christians, that if correct information can be gained upon this point, it is to be found in the New Testament, which is the standard of Christian faith and practice. In the three first hundred years of christianity, this point was often called in question, not only among christians, but when persecution abounded, and the leaders in christian churches were arraigned at the bar, and compelled to answer to the point now in question, viz. what they believed respecting Jesus of Nazareth. Thus the opportunity was not only given

to state the proofs and principles of their belief ; but the circumstances of persecution under which they were placed, were calculated to give veracity to their relation, and validity to the doctrine they advanced, if it is admitted they were christians ; as by adhering to their belief, under trials, difficulties, and great worldly hazard, and against opposing temptations, no motives could have biassed them, but a firmness, and love of truth according to the lights they possessed. It is imagined, also, that they had more correct and unadulterated views in general on this subject at that time than afterwards existed, when worldly considerations and motives seem to have had more influence. In that day there were a few exceptions, however ; even in the apostles times, there were a few dissented from the general body of christians on this point of christian faith.

In respect to our resort to the fathers of the reformation, for aid on this subject : In the christian world, especially in this portion of the vineyard, their opinions have been greatly regarded, and they were unquestionably men of sound judgment, men of learning, men of benevolent motives and deep piety. We do not intend, here to expatiate on the merit or demerit of that dependence which mankind are prone to place on precedents. Some, who may read these our views, may not possess that independence of mind, that others have ; and may not have that information, on this profound and weighty subject, which would lead them to esteem themselves competent judges of this matter, without the opinion and judgment of the fathers. We therefore superadd their views, to lessen the diffidence of this class, and to increase the charity of all.

We now proceed to examine and re-examine a few passages from the scriptures of the new testament, on the point of Jesus Christ's being the son of God in his divine nature. We say a few passages, for were we to take up the New Testament averments on this subject, at large, it must swell this little work of notes on the doctrine of the Trinity, far beyond what we are now able to attend to.

In John, chapter 1, he commences his evangelical labours by saying "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

John in this speaks of our Lord, as existing with God, that is, with the Father in the beginning, meaning, without doubt, at the time when creation or things began to be or exist; and if with him, in some sense distinct; otherwise there must be an impropriety or looseness in the Apostle's language. He tells us, "the Word was God;" these declarations put together, seem to prove conclusively, the personality of the Son, and what the Son is inherently in his nature. "The Word was God," it was something more than wisdom, energy, or active force, as some Unitarians have termed the spirit of God. Wisdom, energy, or active force alone are not God, although we place them as the attributes of God, yet they are nowhere defined Christ. We have therefore wondered when we have heard the expressions used to define the character of Christ. It may be asked, has not the apostle Paul set this example? We

answer, no. The apostle uses these expressions; 1st Cor. 1st chapter, verse 30—"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption," &c. And in another place the apostle speaks in similar terms. It appears very evident, the apostle never intended to use these expressions, to define the whole character of our Lord.

The apostle tells us the "world was made by him," here he applies to the Word a personal pronoun, evidently intended to show the personality of the Word. We may remark, that the Word is called God in a real, and not in a relative sense; for at the time of which the apostle speaks, it was anterior to created existences, and there was nothing created over which he could preside; and therefore he could not, in that relative sense, be styled God, in which kings, judges, and rulers, are sometimes, styled gods in scripture, in relation, and on account of their having power and dominion, and subjects under them. But it cannot be said that Christ was styled God in that sense.

Another important point is proposed in this subject, not whether the Word was really God in its, or his, nature, but whether this Word at that period spoken of by John, was properly the Son of God in his pre-existent state, that is before he came in the flesh, or took on him the seed of Abraham. If we follow the reasoning of the apostle closely to the 14th and 18th verses, we may gain some evidence, that the Word spoken of by John, which was with God in the beginning, and was God, that this was the Son of God in his divine nature, as the *only* begotten Son of the Fa-

then. It will be found in the 14th verse "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." This, in point of time, took place after our Lord came in the flesh. And no doubt the apostle here refers to that glory, which was revealed on the Mount, when he was transfigured before them, when, as Peter expresseth it, "And there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son," &c.

We wish our readers to take particular notice of these words, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." We will ask, is this the glory of the human nature of Jesus Christ, which the apostle saw revealed in our Saviour? Or was it the Divine nature of Christ, which the apostle saw beam forth in such transcendent lustre? If we should conclude, that this glory hath reference to the divine nature, it proves to a demonstration, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his Divine nature. And if it was the human nature, which the apostle has reference to, it proves of course, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his human nature, only; for here let it be remembered, that the apostle says, "we beheld his glory," and this glory, appeared to them, like the glory "of the only begotten Son." Not only so, but the declaration was, "this is my beloved Son," &c.

Again, the apostle's expressions are, "*we beheld*;" of course the apostle could not refer to the glory which he saw revealed in, and by Christ, after his glorification, which the apostle was afterwards favored with in the Isle of Patmos; for we have no information in the book of any persons being in company with the apostle at that period.

But it is thought strikingly evident, that the apostle was alone; although it is quite possible there might be others on the same Isle, at the same time. Could it be shown that the manifestation which the apostle referred to, was after Jesus Christ was glorified, all must in frankness, own, it might be argued with more force and propriety, that John had reference to the manhood of our Lord. But it is thought it is impossible to make this appear; the reverse very obviously appears.

There is further evidence, showing that John referred to that period of time, in which our Lord was transfigured on the Mount. When we compare this passage in John, with the passages found in 2d Epistle of Peter, 1st chapter, and verses 16 and 17, where Peter saith, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here it should be remembered, that Peter, James, and John, were the three disciples, selected from the twelve, and favoured with this glorious manifestation, and transfiguration, of our Lord, on the Mount, when Moses and Elias talked with him there, "and his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them." And they were overshadowed by a bright cloud. When we compare their language, and the drift of their subjects, together, we must be convinced they both refer to one point of time:

We shall now turn our attention to the 1st chapter of the apostle to the Hellenist Hebrews, to see what further information we may obtain from the Great Apostle. He introduces this epistle, to the then learned nation, in this very impressive manner—"God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high."

Let it be borne in mind, that the apostle saith, that God "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

These declarations of the great apostle appear so clear that had we not seen a different comment on them, we should not have supposed they could have been misunderstood by a common reader, in three particular points—1st, That Jesus Christ is truly and properly the Son of God in his divine nature. 2d, That there is a clear and distinct personality between the Father and the Son. And 3d, That God the Father created the worlds, by him and for him the Son, in a peculiar manner.

We might here remark with the apostle, and a learned expositor, "as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name"—because he is the Son of God, he inherits that name, in right whereof he inherits all things. His inheriting that name is more ancient than *all worlds*," &c.—
"He was in the world, and the world was made

by him, and the world knew him not: He came to his own, and his own received him not."

It is said by one noted character who preaches the doctrine of the Trinity in the new method, that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God in his divine, but in his human nature. We say he contends that the apostle speaks first of the human nature, which he calls the Son, and then rises to the divine when he speaks of the worlds being made by him. But as we have already stated, if we had not seen this comment on this passage, we could not have imagined that any common reader could misunderstand the apostle on this subject.

But should we admit for a moment, that the last mentioned comment is correct, viz. That the apostle did refer to the human nature of Jesus Christ, when he speaks of the Son; who can he have reference to, in the third verse, where he says, "who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person?" Can the apostle possibly mean that the human nature is the brightness of the Father's glory? We think it impossible, the great apostle, should talk in this manner. Can we imagine the apostle intended we should understand, that he meant, "God the Father was the brightness of his own glory, and the express image of his own person"? We think the latter appears equally as absurd as the former.

There are two expressions, or sentences, in particular in this verse, which we ought to weigh with candour and attention—1st, "The brightness of his glory" which seems to intimate, that there was nothing inferior in point of dignity and glory found in the Son, which was not found in the Father. 2d, The same idea, is strengthened, extend-

ed, and confirmed, viz. "the express image of his person"—from this we understand, that whatever dignity, glory, substance, virtue, essence and attributes, which, inherently dwell in the Father, the same was seen and found in the person of the Son, in the most full, perfect and absolute manner. So that he who hath ever seen the Son, hath seen the Father. For his image is express; his substance is not created, but is of the Father's substance, essence, and nature in the most perfect and absolute sense. And let it be further observed, this same character is said to have "purged our sins," and as the apostles elsewhere express it, with his own blood. He "sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high."

In connection with these ideas, we will now consider the 8th verse of the same chapter. "But unto the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness, is the sceptre of thy kingdom." The apostle in this and the preceding texts, exhibits to us in the clearest terms, a complete and perfect distinction in point of personality, between the Father and Son. Although, our Lord informs his disciples, that after the coming of the Comforter, they should know, that he was in the Father, and the Father in him, and in the same discourse our Lord told them, he that had seen him, had seen the Father, and that he and his Father were one. Yet it is equally true our Lord expresses himself throughout his whole discourse, in such a manner as not at all to contradict the assertion of the apostle, in this question. Our Lord tells his disciples, that he "came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." And various ex-

pressions of the same kind and nature occur in that feeling and important discourse, which plainly shows to us, that our Lord never intended to destroy the idea of a clear distinction between the Father and the Son in point of personality.

Trinitarians, who have indulged too much fear, in keeping up a clear distinction of persons, between the person of the Father, and the person of the Son, have relied much for their support in our Lord's words, which we find in his prayer, at the conclusion of this discourse, recorded in John, in the 17th chapter, "keep through thine own name, those which thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are;" and again, "that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee;" In each of these expressions of our Lord, we can clearly discover a distinction of persons, and union of nature. For it is evident, in the first expressions, we find a petition put up by our Lord to his Father, to keep his disciples, in a peculiar manner from the temptations, that were about to await them, through the scenes they were about to pass through; and the petition recognises two persons or more. Should it be contended it was the human nature which prayed to the divine, we would ask, have we nothing but a human petition to rely upon, for the accomplishment of so important an event, as keeping our souls, in the hour of temptation? Not only so, but another expression of our Lord, in his last discourse to his disciples, is worthy of our notice, in this question, which is, "for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Here let it be asked, did the humanity of Jesus Christ, presume to say, that it would send the Holy Ghost, or

Comforter? it appears very forcibly that this would be assuming that station and dignity for the Manhood, we should feel hardly authorized in presuming. Let us further enquire into the meaning of our Lord, in this petition put up by him to his Father for his disciples—"make them one as we are;" we think it cannot be possibly imagined, that our Lord would have us understand, that he prayed to his father to destroy the personality that existed between his disciples, and thereby cement them together, so as to make them but one person. And yet if the doctrine is correct, which is so frequently taught of late, that Jesus Christ in his divine nature is the Eternal Father, we know of no other construction which we can put upon our Lord's prayer. It will not be forgotten, that he prayed that they all might be one, as they were, consequently if the oneness he referred to in this prayer, had reference to personality, we cannot imagine what explanation of this petition can be found but the one already advanced; but should the real meaning of our Lord, be wished for in this prayer, we are nothing loth, to give the opinion we have imbibed and cherished on this subject, namely, that his disciples might be sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and purified in their natures, that in this sense, their natures might be one, as the nature of the Father and Son were one; and consequently, that their wills, affections, counsels, and deliberations, might be one, in perfect union and harmony, even as he and his Father were one, in all these respects, that the world might know that the Father had sent him. And that they might be a perfect specimen of genuine

L

christianity. And, that the rising generations, might behold the wonders of redeeming love, and the rich displays of divine grace, which the Father had made to a fallen world, in the gift of his Son, and the abundant out-pourings of his Divine Spirit, upon his infant church. And, which would exhibit to the nations yet unborn, a true sample of christianity in its purity. We think we find these ideas, supported by the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, 2d chapter, and verses from the 6th to the 10th inclusive, which are—"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.—For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

If the foregoing statements, are just, we may consider we have brought to view, by our Lord, in this last discourse to his disciples, weighty and important considerations, to all christians in every age of the world. 1st. An irreproachable criterion, by which we may truly and properly understand, the dignity of his character, and glory of his nature. 2dly. Whereby there is a clear distinction between the Father and the Son, in point of personality. 3dly. Whereby we may have right views of the Union that exists with the Father and the Son.

We are persuaded our Lord has given us as clear and distinct views and understanding of

these inestimable points of this doctrine, as can be communicated to man, in our present state of darkness, and ignorance. And we ought to be therewith content, until we see the dignity of his character, and glory of his nature displayed, when we shall behold and see him as he is, without a veil. Yet so far as our Lord hath been pleased to condescend, to reveal this most sublime part of the gospel to us, it ought not to be passed over, unnoticed; and it is our lawful right and glorious privilege, as well as our indispensable duty to gain as correct and clear views of these points as possible, in our present state of existence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A few general remarks on the propriety of our Trinitarian enquiries. Concluding remarks on the three points last stated, in preceding chapter.

We made the concluding remarks of the preceding chapter, before entering upon a more particular consideration of the three points last stated, for the following reasons. 1st. Doubts have been expressed by some, whether we have a lawful right to enquire into the nature, dignity, and character of our Lord, as we have attempted to do in this work. 2d. And very many more have doubted, whether it belongs to us to enquire after the personality, that exists between the Father and the Son. 3d. We may find still more, which have their scruples, whether we are not enquiring after matters not revealed, when we enquire, as to the Union which exists in respect of the Father and Son.

In answer to these queries and doubts, we would observe, that the Lord hath given us the text, for comment and practice, he saith, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. We think also, we have a sound reason for calling into enquiry, the personality of Father and Son; for if there is not a clear distinction, discoverable from the light and authority of scripture, existing between the Father and Son, we must irresistably settle down into Arianism,

Socinianism, or Sabellianism; and if there is this distinction, manifest from scripture authority, we are under the highest, most solemn, and indispensable requisitions of duty, to find it out, disclose it, and observe it; and to reject these other doctrines, as cunningly devised fables and abominations. There appears to be no other alternative; it is the true doctrine, or these.

These three points, which we arrived at in the preceding chapter, viz. The dignity of Christ's character, and the glories of his nature—the clear distinction between the Father and the Son in point of personality—and the union that exists of the Father and Son, are so indissolubly twain and connected, that no divine ought to touch the one, without bringing into view the union of the whole, as far as his ability and opportunity will admit; for it is sure to leave a flaw in the system, a breach in our wall of confidence, and defence, and an assailable point for the common adversary of souls.

The anxious reader, may now enquire, why shall we be under the fatal necessity of falling into Arianism, Socinianism, or Sabellianism, if we do not keep up a clear distinction, between the Father and the Son in point of *personality*? We answer, that to our understanding, that if there is no distinction in this last mentioned point, then it results there is but one person in the God-head. And if this is fact that there is but one person in the God-head; where shall we go to find a Mediator, between the Father and fallen man? Where are we to look for an uncreated advocate to plead our heirship to a heavenly inheritance by adoption? We say should

this prove to be the case, in whom are we to place our mediatorial confidence? We are free to acknowledge, if this is so, we cannot direct the reader, nor any fallen son and daughter of Adam, to a better one, than described by Arius, that is, one of an Angelic nature, and the first being that God created out of nothing, and underrived from and untied to humanity. Or, we shall have to trust our souls in the hands of a mediator of the Socinian description, that is, a mere man, supernaturally endowed with the divine spirit. Or, else we have to go back to the second century, and take up with the doctrine of Sabellius, which amounts to nothing more than a trinity of offices; or, as it is stated by some authors, that Sabellius compared the God-head to the sun, as having different qualities; and when God acted as Creator, he is called the Father, when he acted as Redeemer, he is called Son, and when his divine spirit was poured out, he is called the Holy Ghost.

We think these four systems, Trinitarian, Arian, Socinian and Sabellian, comprise all the elementary principles which have been taught as the christian religion; although it should perhaps be mentioned that there may be different mixtures of these systems, and in some respects, these species of doctrine may be blended. There must be one true, as we consider; all cannot be true, and those not true, are not of God, but are the errors, inventions and speculations of men, and like their authors, fallible and feeble, deceitful and delusive.

A reason for enquiring into the *Union*, which exists of the Father and the Son, is—if there doth not exist a real union of the Father and Son,

which in its nature is different from the union of any two distinct beings, then of course we shall, and do worship, by worshipping both, two distinct Gods, which is called Ditheism. Of this union, there can be no analogy, except the christian union with Christ; or any similitude, with any created thing or being, except the new birth, of course must be revealed in scripture and nowhere else, and here we have directed and bounded our enquires.

This last point has been brought against the doctrine of the Trinity, and the real divinity of the Son, as one of the most weighty objections which could be found by our most sharp sighted opponents in every age of christianity. If therefore we have not, or do not, establish this personality, and union and oneness, in God-like nature, by the same evidence, they and we believe has conclusively shown man's need of a Savior, why then we must fail in our conclusions; but if this same revelation, believed true, testifies of these things we ought to enquire into it, and believe. Consequently, as our Lord came to reveal to us himself, as the "way, and the truth, and the life," we think we may plainly discover a propriety in his disclosing to his disciples, the dignity of his character, and the glory and union of his nature with the Father, as well as the distinction which existed between his Father and himself in point of personality. The latter, no professed christians, contend about; but the *union*, they strenuously contest.

We flatter ourselves that the reasons mentioned, will satisfy any candid mind, and convince them of the necessity of looking into, and searching the scriptures, in respect to the union that

exists, of the Father and the Son, and the personality that exists between them, as well as to enquire into the dignity of the nature that constitutes the character of our Saviour.

Our opponents, will no doubt ask us to give a further description of the union that exists in respect of the Father and the Son. This we are free to do, so far as the scriptures will warrant, and all ought therewith to be content.

For further delineation of this union, agreeable to our views, we present again the passage, recorded in John, chapter 14, verse 20.—“At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” The direct inference is, that this was not so profound a mystery but what the Apostles were to know these two facts, that is, “at that day,” referring to the coming of the Comforter, and the full baptism of the Holy Ghost, they were to know that the Father dwelt in the Son, and the Son in the Father.—In the last clauses of the foregoing cited passage, there is much to afford light and knowledge as to the first clause; viz. “and ye in me, and I in you”—as we explain it—when they should know more perfectly that they dwelt in the Son, and the Son in them, then should they know that the Son was in the Father, and the Father in the Son.

When we experimentally know a fact to exist in us, we know that a similar fact may exist, in a case of somewhat of the same nature. Although we may not know the exact mode how the fact does exist, still we are not authorized to deny its existence, or doubt its existence because its modes are anomalous; and especially when the existence is evidenced by him who is

the "way and the truth." This is one of the glorious and consoling mysteries which has been revealed, not to Jews only, but to Gentiles also; and as Paul contends that a knowledge of this mystery was known, "which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

And this is one of the golden privileges which is not confined to the apostolic age, but a common privilege of all God's children, under the full dispensation of the gospel, is to know Christ in us, "the hope of glory." In order to give additional light and knowledge into the union that exists of the Father and the Son, and the holy and divine spirit, which dwells in some degree in every child of God. Our Lord expresses it, when the Comforter is come, "he will guide you into all truth." Take this expression in the most limited sense, we may conclude our Lord would have us understand, that the divine spirit would guide them so far into these sublime truths, which they did not fully understand, as was strictly necessary for their edification, comfort, and salvation.

If the foregoing statements are just, we may draw the following conclusions. That the Father is never separated from the Son, nor the Son from the Father. And the Son ever dwells in the bosom of the Father, and the Father dwells in the Son, and the Holy Ghost flowing from the Father and the Son, in one eternal union. In all this, a clear and distinct personality of the Father is never swallowed up or lost in the person of the Son; nor the person of the Son is never merged, or lost, in the Father; neither are they ever so united as to make but one person: Therefore we think it would be very inconsis-



tent, irrational and unscriptural to call the Father by the name Son, or Son by the name Father; or to suppose that the Father sustains the character or office of the Son, or the Son sustains the character and office of Father. Should it be objected, that the Son is never called Father, nor sustains the office of father, and the objector, should appeal to Isaiah, 9th chapter, verse 6, for one proof that the Son is called the "Everlasting Father." We answer, we are willing to give our own comment, which corresponds with the judgment of some of the greatest divines of the last century, on the text cited in Isaiah, which reads as follows—"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."—This text suggests to our view, eight leading ideas.

"Unto us a child is born," refers to the human nature of our Lord, assumed in the womb of the virgin, and born of her. "Unto us a Son is given," refers to the divine nature of our Lord, as the only begotten of the Father, and the first born of every creature, and the heir of all things, as the Apostle calls him, in the 1st. of Colossians, and the 1st of Hebrews. "The government shall be upon his shoulder"—this refers in a particular manner, to his Mediatorial government, which he fills for our Salvation, as saith our Lord, "all power is given unto me in heaven and earth."—"And his name shall be called Wonderful," referring to the mystery of the union of the human and divine natures wonderfully joined together in one person. "Counsellor," as he is the "true

light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world ;” and hath been the leader, and instructor of his people, as prophet and counselor, since man apostatized from God. “Mighty God,” as we have contended he really and absolutely is ; inherently God, in his divine nature. “Everlasting Father,” of the universe, this relates to him, as real Creator of the universe, or Logos, by which all things were created.— “Prince of Peace,” as the Apostles frequently call him, on the account of his ministry of reconciliation, and of his reconciling us unto God, by the atoning blood, as saith the Apostle, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto him.”

In all this we cannot see any propriety of calling the Father, Son, or the Son, Father, in reference to the doctrine of the Trinity. Neither do we see in this text, where the Son hath sustained the office of Father, or Father hath sustained the office of Son. We find ourselves supported in this by the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, as to Jesus Christ’s being called the Everlasting Father in this text, he states, that it has reference to Creation, and not to Father in the Trinity. And Bishop Pearson, Bishop Bull, Bishop Beveridge, Mr. Stevens, and Doctor Horseley, and Mr. Whitefield, and Mr. Wesley, we think all perfectly agree in the statement I have made, respecting the personality of the Father and Son, and the union that exists in respect of them.

PART II



Remarks on Mr. Millard's works, and shall open this subject, by taking from his last publication, the contents of Section 4, Page 51.



CHAPTER I.

“Trinitarian Doctrine of Incarnation examined.”

“By the Trinitarian doctrine of incarnation, we are taught, that Jesus Christ is composed of two whole distinct natures, human and divine. That in his human nature, he is truly and properly, a man. And, that in his Divine nature, he is the very and Eternal God.

“This Doctrine, to me, is as difficult to understand, as the assertion, that God is three persons. Not content with asserting God to be three persons, Trinitarians would also teach us, that the Son, one of the three, is two persons; I am, however, aware, that they will be unwilling to admit this statement, but if their doctrine does not plainly imply it, I am at an entire loss to know the meaning of the terms they use.

“As a man, they tell us, that Christ possessed a human body and a reasonable soul, and every

one knows, that a human body and a reasonable soul, constitutes a compleat person, or being, this is one person. In his divine nature, they assert, that he is the very Eternal God, and this according to their system, must be as much as one person more, and one, and one, make two, the plain conclusion follows, that the Trinitarian doctrine asserts the Son of God to be two persons.

“But it is asserted that two natures are so mysteriously united, as to constitute but one person. But before I admit the correctness of this system, I must require some other definition of the two natures, than to state the one to be very man, and the other very God; for I need not be taught that very man is one person, and very God another.—It would be no more absurd for Trinitarians to assert that God is three persons, and yet but one person, than it is to say, the Son of God is very God, and very man, and yet but one person. .

“Did I believe that Jesus Christ was truly and properly a man, and also, the very and eternal God, I would far sooner give up the idea, God is three persons, than the Son is two. How the Trinitarians get along with the difficulty I know not.”

In answer to the foregoing remarks, it is to be acknowledged, that the writer has been good enough, to furnish us with all the elementary principles, by which we shall be able, to get along with all the difficulty, and all the objections, this writer hath raised against the article, he has been pleased to select from the Methodist discipline.

The first elementary principle, he has afforded us on this important question, we find in his last publication, page 78, which is as follows, viz. “I

shall now endeavour to show that Christ is properly the Son of the one God, and as such a being, distinct from his Father."

And a few lines after he states "the whole dispute may now be reduced to this single question, is Jesus Christ properly the Son of God? and as such, a being distinct from his Father?" And in page 80, he says, "we are abundantly taught in the scriptures, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." He still proceeds, by saying that "Unitarians say, they believe this, but at the same time they affirm, that Christ and his Father are one and the same being."

It is well here, for us to premise—First, That some late trinitarians, as they call themselves, have contended that Jesus Christ is the Eternal Father, and have not made any personal distinction between the Father and Son. We find nothing of this doctrine in ancient writers. Not only so, this at once destroys the idea of a Trinity; for Trinity includes an idea of Unity, is the definition of the term Trinity, that is three in one, from the latin words *tres* and *unum*. It follows of course, if there is no distinction between the Father and Son, in point of personality, there cannot be but two persons in the divine nature, namely, Father, and Holy Ghost; and this doctrine is not found in ancient writings. Nor in any quotations in modern writers from any of the Fathers, is there any such doctrine. We have always considered it a great and manifest impropriety, in those who hold to this doctrine, professing to believe in the doctrine of the Trinity—and therefore, whoever contends for this kind of doctrine last described as Trinitarianism, must answer for himself, yet such absurdity, ought not to make

you or us abandon the genuine doctrine of the apostles.

Mr. Millard says, "by the Trinitarian doctrine of incarnation, we are taught Jesus Christ is composed of two whole distinct natures, human and divine." This we acknowledge.

Mr. Millard goes on to say, that "in his human nature he is truly and properly a man, and that in his divine nature, he is the very and eternal God." We answer, he has not made his statement exact, according to the Trinitarian articles which we have been acquainted with. The words "*a*" and "*the*" do not give the exact sense in his statement, which they do in the methodist article which he refers to; the article reads as follows, viz. "The Son who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature," &c. Therefore, it is plain in our opinion, that the word *THE* refers to the Father, and not to the Son; that is, the Son who is the Word of God the Father, which God the Father, is the Eternal God. And in many passages of his work, he has acknowledged the same, consequently in this point there is no dispute.

He refers to the same article in the 54th page of his work, and goes on to say—"took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin, so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the God-head and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also, for actual sin of men."

The material difference which exists between us, is this; Mr. Millard supposes that which proceeded, and came forth from God, was changed into flesh, in the womb of the virgin, and united to her substance, and that the nature of our Lord, consisted of one constituent part, that is flesh, and that flesh died on the cross; for a proof of this, we turn to page 100 of his works; where we read as follows, "the word was made flesh, which I firmly believe. That which proceeded forth from God, before the foundation of the world, was made flesh in the womb of the virgin, by the power of the Holy Ghost, so that Christ's flesh being made of the Word, united with the seed of the woman, was, and is, far superior to human nature; as Christ proceeded first from God, and was made flesh, he is far superior to man, and is divine." And in page 99, "The Son of God partook of, or proceeded from God his Father, and that the children being made partakers of flesh and blood, he also took (part) not the whole."

Then it seems Mr. Millard states, as his firm belief, viz. that which proceeded forth from God before the foundation of the world was made flesh in the womb of the virgin, by the power of the Holy Ghost. We answer Mr. Millard, by saying, he goes much further in his declaration than John, the beloved apostle, hath given any authority to proceed. John barely states, that "the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."—John does not tell us, that the Word was made flesh in the womb of the virgin, neither by the Holy Ghost. Mr. Millard seems to have proceeded in his positions beyond what Paul did. St.

Paul speaking of the same point of doctrine, informs us, "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." And the apostle John informs us several times in his first epistle, "that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." And the apostle to the Hebrews, (Hellenists) speaking of God's not taking pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices, says, Christ saith, when he came into the world, "a body hast thou prepared me." Hebrews, 10th chapter. The Word of God, or the Son, which proceeded from God, must of consequence be very God in his nature, and infinitely above flesh, or any created being or thing, and infinitely different in his nature from all created things, as to dignity, value or worth; although man is said to be created in the image of God, yet when the creature is compared with the Creator, there is an infinite disproportion between them. Therefore, for us to imagine that the divine nature of Jesus Christ is transubstantiated, or changed into flesh, and that flesh died, and became dormant, would be greatly absurd and ridiculous. And to imagine that which is human can be changed into the divine, would be equally as absurd, for that would be to make that which is created, infinite in its nature, and consequently eternal. And by the same rule of reasoning, it would be impossible that the two natures can be so commixed or transformed, or transfused into one, as to make but one entire nature. And were it possible, that either of the three things above stated could take place in the person of Jesus Christ, we must be almost at an entire loss to know what conclusions to draw from such principles; however, a few conclusions may be safely drawn; if the Son,

which is the Word of the Father, and the substance of the Father, and yet can be changed into flesh, and die, and become dormant, we think it awakens the awful idea, if it argues any thing, that the whole God-head might experience the same change. This must lead us to the doctrine of materialism, and consequently to Atheism, or that God is matter, and like it changeable, and that all things came by chance, or that changing matter is eternal.

The other alternative, we acknowledge is one of the great mysteries of Godliness. If the divine nature of Jesus Christ, cannot be changed into the human, nor the human into the divine nature, the grand difficulty or question will arise in the mind, how Christ can be but one complete person; this is mysterious, yet not so much so, but what we can, in some good degree, comprehend it. Should we contemplate for a moment on our own existence, it would be the best key we can find in all the work of creation, to unlock this mystery to the mind. We find man to be a standing miracle of God's wisdom in creation, above every thing the eye beholds, or the ear hears, or ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. In man we find matter and mind joined together in one person; two component parts as distinct in their natures, as any two things in all creation; when we contemplate one of these parts of man, viz. the immortal spirit, called the soul, we find in it something, that at least bears some faint similitude or resemblance of the great Creator. Although located in the body, yet it is immaterial, and possesses substantial powers, faculties and substance. It sends a thought to the throne of God, admires his perfections, bows with reverence, worships

with admiration, and is astonished at his glory and wisdom, and power. In a moment it surveys the vast works of creation, providence and redemption, it ascends above the stars, it measures the sun, it glances from pole to pole—it dives to the centre of the earth, it compasses the bounds of the sea, it reasons on the elements, and in its researches beholds the Providences of God, past, present, and to come, and admires his handy works. It glances a thought on the wonders of redemption, and with equal surprise, is astonished at the love, goodness, and condescension of an infinite wise God, in the gift of his only begotten Son, for the Redemption of rebel man.

And now, if we contemplate the other part of man, we find it is material substance, composed of the elements, although exceeding opposite in their nature, yet most wisely, and harmoniously tempered together; the bones, the joints, the nerves, the fibres, the brain, the bowels, the vitals, the arteries, the veins, the juices, the keen sensations, and faculties, and inconceivably and mysteriously joined to an immortal spirit, by that wisdom which is nothing short of infinite; and yet the greatest of all the mysteries it makes but one person, which we call a man.

We must all acknowledge, had God created no being in the world, but spirit, we might be at an entire loss to know how it would be possible for two natures, so distinct, as the two component parts of man are, to be joined together, so as to make but one person. And we can see nothing more mysterious in uniting of the two distinct natures of Jesus Christ, so as to make but one person, than what passes before us every day. We may trace this point a little further; a human bo-

dy thus formed and united by a living soul, is not under all the laws, rules and regulations of the other elements, but becomes a body by itself; not independent from all the other elements, but being united to, and actuated by the indwelling of the soul which gives it life, sensation, and action; and it may in some sense be said to be far superior to all other bodies formed of the same elements, and is a proper temple for a living soul. And many of these rules will hold good, when we look into what we as Trinitarians call the incarnation of the Son of God. We believe he took on him the whole nature of man, soul and body, sin excepted, and although the human nature was not lost, nor changed, into the divine, yet through the indwelling and union of the eternal Word, or Son in the human, the human may be said to be completely actuated by the divine, as the bodies of our first parents were, in the time of their innocency, by the indwelling of the soul, and conscience.

We have, and again state, that Mr. Millard has furnished us with all the elementary principles, to explain all the difficulty he imagines occurs in the article he refers to, respecting Christ's possessing two whole natures. He acknowledges that Christ is not created, but is of the substance of God the Father. That he partook of the seed of Abraham. And if we mistake not these two points are sufficient to warrant us, in every expression we have made use of in that article, as to the nature or natures of Jesus Christ.

These are substantially our reasons. We suppose that which is spiritual and incorporeal, is in a true sense indivisible, or in other terms it cannot be communicated in part, but the whole nature

must be communicated, or none, therefore we conclude that Jesus Christ possessed two whole natures. Should Mr. Millard ask, how it is possible for the whole nature to be communicated in generation, and at the same time, the whole nature to be retained in the progenitor? We answer, we cannot tell. Should Mr. Millard exclaim this is one of the Trinitarian mysteries, which no person has been able to explain, and therefore we are not bound to believe it, and therefore it is dangerous and absurd: We say, should this be the case, we will for accommodation quit this mode of reasoning, and all the experimental knowledge we have gained on this point, and follow Mr. Millard and Doctor Priestly, in their mode of reasoning on the doctrine of materialism. That matter can be divided, and subdivided into atoms we are not disposed to controvert, or doubt—and for a moment suppose we admit that man is nothing but organized matter, and stimulated with spirit, like wine, as the materialists state it; and begin our examination with Adam and Eve.

We are informed by Moses, that “the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh,” &c.

Agreeable to the rule of these philosophers, and on the predicate that matter is infinitely divisible, there must be a constant declension, or diminution of human nature in every multiplication of numbers, as to quantity in each respectively; un-

less we adopt the absurdity that parts are equal to the whole. By the quotation just made, it will, therefore appear, that of a portion taken of Adam, Eve was made; that is, to Adam was reserved the half of human nature, and Eve possessed the other half; and they two begat a son, to whom they communicated half their respective natures, and retain their respective other halves; and thus pursuing the subject in regular gradation or reduction, on the supposition that every succeeding generation, has less and less share of human nature; it would present a curious arithmetical calculation, to ascertain, how, in this relation, and degree of human nature, we stand in comparison with our first progenitors, Adam and Eve. The comparison, if any similitude of the nature of Adam and Eve, or of human nature remain, must be as a mote to a mountain, as a drop to an ocean. But all this is too glaringly simple and absurd.

By spirit, or a rational soul, there is no space filled, and no divisibility is necessary; matter occupies space, and must have room, and of course, as material forms multiply and move, it must be divided and subdivided. Because it is not supposable, that the actual quantity of matter has been either diminished or enlarged. It may have been struck off into atoms, and modified by particles, and grys. But dismissing this vain speculation, and notion altogether; we must conclude it is too preposterous and vain to suppose, that this subaltern, or bodily part of man, which is matter, is the author of the mind and soul; or that the divinity who tabernacled in, or took upon him flesh, became material flesh in the womb of the virgin; and became inert, dead, and renewed, &c.

as well might it be concluded that the materials of the tabernacle and temple in which the divine presence was in olden time manifested, participated and partook of divinity. As the intellect and soul of man, becomes flesh, so the divine nature "became flesh," or as it is expressed, in other words, "took upon him human nature, the seed of Abraham."

Our views of it are, and we think it not unscriptural, that the divine Word which came forth of God, found a body prepared. And that probably at the mysterious conception of the virgin, the mysterious union of the divine nature with the human nature commenced. Or in other words, the divinity took upon him the seed of woman, through Abraham, and became marvelously joined to the immortal part of the man Jesus; and became thereby an anti-type of the divine presence in the tabernacle and the temple. Therefore as Christ said "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." In order to the more perfect disclosure of the purposes, and of the promises, and of the redeeming love of the divine spirit, and of the union between the Father and Son, man must be brought into a state of greater nearness to the Word, as it is in the flesh; and in order to this, the system must be progressive, for it is in procession that finite minds can know or approximate to God. We are therefore brought back to the starting point, to settle down in the belief of our article of faith; that is, Jesus Christ possessed two whole natures, human and divine, that is to say, the God-head and manhood whereof is one Christ, very God, and very man.

Perhaps the reader may wonder, why we have followed and wandered after Mr. Millard, in some

of our modes of reasoning. We answer, the greatest of all consequences turn on these points. For if that which is spiritual and rational, and incorporeal is indivisible in its nature, then surely Jesus Christ possessed the fullness of the Godhead, naturally and inherently in himself—this is a natural consequence, if he is the proper Son of God in any sense.

Mr. Millard observes in his 78th page—“the whole dispute may now be reduced to this single question, is Jesus Christ, properly the Son of God, and as such, a being distinct from his Father.” We answer, we think Mr. Millard under a great mistake, for we think his question is not a single one, but contains at least three distinct ideas.

To that part, whether Jesus Christ is properly the Son of God, we answer in the affirmative, that we firmly believe he is. How far he is a distinct being from the Father, and how far they are united, and what this union is, is quite another question. And not only so, but whether the Son of God, which you acknowledge to be of the substance of the Father, can be changed into flesh, in the womb of the virgin, and die, is another question. We agree with you, therefore, in the first particular, but dissent from the last particulars, for the reasons already assigned.

CHAPTER II.

Examination of the Trinitarian doctrine of incarnation, continued.

WE will now take leave of Mr. Millard for a short time, and turn our attention to Doct. Adam Clarke's doctrine; Doct. Clarke is professedly a Trinitarian, and has written a large and able commentary on the whole Bible. Mr. Millard is an Unitarian. But when we compare their comments together on the doctrine of the proper Sonship of Jesus Christ, they perfectly agree.— We have thought it proper, therefore, here, to transcribe, *two* of the Doctor's notes at full length, as our object is truth. This seems to be necessary, that by comparison, we may be able to see in what particular points they agree; and whether it is a point which the scriptures support. If not, we know of no names among men, which can consecrate errors, and gain for them belief.

The Doctor's notes follow, viz: Matthew, chapter 1, verse 20—"That which is conceived (or formed) in her"—"So I think the (Hebrew word) should be translated in this place: as it appears that the human nature of Jesus Christ, was a real creation in the womb of the Virgin, by the Power of the Holy Spirit. The angel of the Lord mentioned here, was probably the angel Gabriel, who six months before, had been to Zacharias, and Elizabeth, to announce the birth of Christ's forerunner, John the Baptist."

Luke, chapter 1, verse 35—"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee."

"This conception shall take place suddenly, and the Holy Spirit himself shall be the grand operator. The power, the miracle working power, of the Most High shall overshadow thee, to accomplish this purpose, and to protect thee from danger. As there is a plain allusion to the Spirit of God brooding over the face of the waters to render them prolific, Gen. 1, 2. I am the more firmly established in the opinion advanced, on Matthew, 1, 20, that the rudiments of the human nature of Christ was a real creation in the womb of the Virgin by the energy of the spirit of God.

"Therefore also that he *or* thing (or person) shall be called the Son of God.

"We may plainly perceive here, that the angel does not give the appellation of Son of God, to the divine nature of Christ; but to that holy person or thing which was to be born of the Virgin, by the energy of the Holy Spirit. The divine nature could not be born of the Virgin; the human nature was born of her. The divine nature had no beginning; it was God manifested in the flesh. 1st Timothy, 3, 16—It was that Word which being in the beginning (from eternity) with God, John, 1, 2, was afterwards made flesh, (became manifest in human nature) and tabernacled among us, John, 1, 14. Of this divine nature the Angel does not particularly speak here, but of the tabernacle or shrine which God was now preparing for it, viz. the holy thing, that was to be born of the Virgin. Two natures must ever be distinguished in Christ: the *human nature, in reference to which he is the Son of God, and inferior to him*, Mark xii, 32, John v, 19, xiv,

28, and the divine nature which was from eternity, and equal to God, John 1, 1, and 10, 30; Rom. 9, 5; Col. 1, 16—18. It is true, that to Jesus Christ, as he appeared among men, every characteristic of the divine nature is sometimes attributed, without appearing to make any distinction between the divine and human natures; but is there any part of the scriptures, in which it is plainly said that the *divine nature of Jesus was the Son God?* Here I trust I may be permitted to say, with all due respect for those who differ from me, that the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship of Christ, is, in my opinion, anti-scriptural, and highly dangerous; this doctrine I reject for the following reasons:

“1st, I have not been able to find any express declaration in the scriptures concerning it.

“2dly, If Christ be the Son of God, as to his divine nature, then he cannot be eternal: for Son implies a Father; and Father implies, in reference to Son, precedency in time, if not in nature too. Father and Son imply the idea of generation; and generation implies a time in which it was effected, and time also antecedent to such generation.

“3dly, If Christ be the Son of God, as to his divine nature, then the Father is of necessity prior, consequently superior to him.

“4thly, Again, if this divine nature were begotten of the Father, then it must be in time, i. e. there was a period in which it did not exist, and a period when it began to exist. This destroys the eternity of our blessed Lord, and robs him at once of his God-head.

“5thly, To say that he was begotten from all eternity, is in my opinion, absurd; and the phrase eternal Son, is a positive self-contradiction. Eter-

nity is that which has had no beginning, nor stands in any reference to time. Son supposes time, generation, and Father; and time also antecedent to such generation. Therefore the conjunction of these two terms, Son and eternity, is absolutely impossible, as they imply essentially different and opposite ideas.

“The enemies of Christ’s divinity have, in all ages, availed themselves of this incautious method of treating this subject, and on this ground have ever had the advantage of the defenders of the God-head of Christ. The doctrine of the eternal Sonship destroys the deity of Christ; now if his deity be taken away, the whole gospel scheme of redemption is ruined. On this ground, the atonement of Christ cannot have been of infinite merit, and consequently could not purchase pardon for the offences of mankind, nor give any right to, or possession of, an eternal glory. The very use of this phrase is both absurd and dangerous; therefore let all those who value Jesus and their salvation, abide by the scriptures.”

Here ends Doct. Clarke’s notes; we have been more copious in our extracts from him, because under professions of Trinitarianism, they assume additional reasons why they should be examined, and because from him they are more dangerous, if erroneous. We propose to make some general and then particular remarks upon his notions.

With the Doctor, we say, “abide by the scriptures.” He says, “if the deity be taken away, the whole gospel scheme is ruined,” in this also we unite. He says, “there must be infinite merit” in the Saviour, this we believe. And yet, with all respect to the character of Doct. Clarke, we differ from him in most of the essential points,

tóntained in the foregoing extract from his learned and elegant commentary. What we say, if it may not be esteemed precisely a refutation, will show our views, wherefore we cannot concur with him, and wherefore, from the lights we have, our doctrine is more satisfactory to us, than his doctrine. Nor ought we to be deterred from examining, and avowing any doctrines of our belief, from fear of the "enemies of Christ." We hope in the help of divine grace, not to pursue an "incautious method" of doctrine, and if any have, their doctrine should be examined, and shunned with christian temper and firmness, for the authority of names, never can sanction error.

The men of this world have differed, and will continue to differ, not only in the substance, but the terms of things; they have not all the same degree of light; and there is the true light, and some lights that are delusive and deceptive; and some men are more addicted to speculative, than to practical views. It may be so in this case.—The adorable appellations of *Father* and *Son*, and the term *generation*, as used by the Doctor, we think are unsuitable. Our lexicographers, obtain and extend the definition of words on authority, and by evident meanings intended to be given to them, by established writers, divines and poets of different ages. And why not regulate definitions by the obvious meaning of the scriptural texts, as well as the profane? May not the term or appellative of *Son*, from the uses of inspired writers, be rendered as having a more comprehensive meaning, a more copious and somewhat different sense? And in Walker, it is indeed so put down; "*Son*, the 2d person of the Trinity." And this portion of the definition of the term *Son*, may be

of sufficient force, to obviate, and show the fallacy of the Doctor's logic, for the Trinity consists of persons without beginning, eternal.

We agree the Doctor is right in his illustrations, as to these compellations, or style of address, as *Father, Son*, and as to the term *generation*, so far as applied to human relations, affections, and procession, respecting things of time, and concerns finite. But, we are very certain these terms in this limited application and sense, are not to be used to make their more comprehensive, or other use, touching the underived, and uncreated nature of the Mediator, an absurdity. As to the term *generation*, is it to be applied in the Doctor's way, to things infinite, eternal? They are said to be one now; and there would seem in this sense, no similitude, no single succession, or *generation* in things infinite, in concerns eternal. The use of the reverent title, *Father*, and the style of address, *Son*, in the scripture, we apprehend are not to be spoken of as involving *time*, or implying *generation*, in human comparison. In these relations of Deity, they cannot know the limitations, which constitute *time*; and which only can relate to finite considerations. *Time* is finite, and infinitely distinct from eternal. The eternal first cause and effect, (as man speaketh) are one on the circle of eternity; there is no antecedent or posterior. The Doctor has defined the term eternity correctly; he says, it "is that which has had no beginning, nor stands in any reference to time." Still he has taken terms of time, to reason from, in reference to his conclusions. His notions, as to the conjunction of the "two terms, eternal Son," we think is a mere supposition, not founded in good judgment. We cannot see their conjunction, in a scriptural

sense, is "a contradiction," is "impossible," nor can we agree that "they imply essentially different, and opposite ideas." "Eternity is the life of God"—the eternal is God, the Son or Word is God of God, The definition of Son, is the "2d person of the Trinity," the 2d person of the Trinity is the Word, and the Word is eternal, "the Word was with God, and the Word was God." It appears to us then, by the Apostle John's definition of Son, that there is no "contradiction," nothing "absolutely impossible," nothing from which to "imply essentially different and opposite ideas." Son is one of the peculiar *distinctions* of God.

"The Word was made flesh," that is as we understand it, was made kindred to, or kinsman to the whole man; "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" of himself, took man's nature in the womb of the virgin; and these two natures became one person. And dwelt, or tabernacled among us, and is enshrined in every heart, received into the same union, and continuing in love, by the quickening and overshadowing of the Comforter. He is tabernacled also in all his churches, they in him and he in them, "and this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and the life is in his Son, he that hath the Son hath life." This is the Son of God in his divine nature, this the anti-type of the types of God's presence in the tabernacle, and in the temple.

The Son, in the Bible dictionary, and in his divine nature, means the underived, eternal, "2d person in the Trinity," in mysterious union with the Father, and the consecrated and glorified humanity of the Saviour, for the purposes of man's salvation through his infinite merit. The mercy

of the triune God in the scheme of man's redemption, it is abundantly evident from the whole current of the bible, is infinite in its offices, and personages. "There are three who bear record in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one."

The Doctor in his commentary, we think, has shown that the best of men are frail, and their works infirm; for he has fallen into a greater dilemma, a more gratifying error to the unregenerate, and "enemies of Christ," than can be the one he so feelingly denounces and would obviate; and this is, can he avoid the result, that if the Son of God is meant created nature, and the words have relation to the human nature alone, and not to the divine nature, it is a doctrine fatally destructive of the infinite merit of the Saviour, making him a created, or derived being, and not equal, and one with the Father and Holy Ghost, except in an allegorical sense. And if so, what would the Doctor do with the ordinance of baptism, and the apostolic benediction. Must they not be idolatrous, and must not salvation itself be allegorical? It would appear he had abandoned an invincible part of the defence of the doctrine, in order to evade the attack of the common enemy, on a point where the assault was of little available importance to the assailant, and of very limited injury to the assailed. In order to obviate objections to the divinity of the Sonship, he has conceded that the 2d personage of the Trinity, the Sonship, is the human nature of Christ. As Trinitarians, we say, the Son is divine, and eternal; and in nature, dignity, and glory, is Jehovah, Saviour; and his divinity is neither derived or created. We must, therefore, marvel at the facility with which

the Doctor surrenders the point, and admits, that the term Son of God, has sole reference to the human nature of Christ, and this too, as appears by his admonition, from a fear that the "enemies of Christ," may make suggestions, that the divine nature of Christ, is derived. We are not disposed to adopt the notion, for it makes a wonderful jargon of types with the anti-type; besides destroying the foundation of the christian's faith, hopes, and confidence.

CHAPTER III.

Same subject continued.

THERE appears in these notes, something mysterious, and astonishing to us, and the most so of any thing we have heard advanced in the Christian liturgy, except, in two instances, and these are, 1st, a doctrine held by one kind of universalians, which is, "man is a part of God;" 2dly, is the doctrine advanced by Mr. Millard, which is, "that eternal substance, which proceeded and came from God, could be, and was changed into flesh, and died."

The Doctor says, "we may plainly perceive here, that the Angel (which spoke to Mary) does not give the appellation of Son of God, to the Divine nature of Jesus Christ." To this we must in conscience dissent; not only for the reasons we have and may advance, but we are sure the doctrine has left the scriptural and primitive doctrine of Trinitarianism.

We remark, it appears plain, that the Doctor has confuted himself in the most plain manner.

"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;" In this he finds an allusion, or parallel, in Genesis, 1, 2, "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." This allusion seems, to have established him in the opinion he has expressed. And yet to the note upon this text in Genesis, he defines the word "moving" to be a "brooding over, for the word expresses that tremulous motion."

made by the hen while either hatching her eggs or fostering her young," which "signifies communicating a vital or prolific principle." Under the word "creation" he says, "it does not in its primary meaning, denote the preserving or new forming things that had previously existed" &c. We think, if he is not self-confuted, he is confused. Here on the the text in Luke, he makes it out, that the Son of Mary is "a real creation" in the womb of the virgin, and in his earlier commentary he says the similar act, is not creation, therefore this shrine, or tabernacle of human nature, is "a real creation" in, and born of the virgin, and is the Son of God. We are not disposed to controvert his definition of the Hebrew words, of the text in Genesis, but are willing to consider them correct, viz. that it is not a real creation but a new forming of substance before created; and "communicating of the vital or prolific principle" to a substance not before prolific, and a form to a substance not before formed. How he run into this error, and became so startled at the text in Luke, as to abandon as untenable, an essential trinitarian doctrine, would have astonished us more, had it not been for our previous acquaintance with the Doctor's works, and our having entertained a higher opinion of his industry and learning than of his judgment as a divine.

If we understand the Doctor, he would have us to understand, that the Son of God is a created or derived being, constituting a separate and distinct person, from the divinity. We wish to preserve the divine Sonship, and its relation and unity with the human nature, if the gospel will authorize it. From woman's first apostacy, came the sentence of the law, and the first promise of mercy, that

from the seed of the woman was to come Him, who is of the God-head and of the human nature, in mysterious union; and He was to bruise the serpent's head, and redeem from apostacy. In this case, it is said by the angel, "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee," that is probably, in the same way and manner as he, "communicated the vital or prolific principle" in the beginning—and whether the process in these instances, are precisely similar to the Apostles union with Christ, or when "the Holy Ghost fell, or was poured out on those that were hearing the Word" consecrating them, is perhaps immaterial. It is to us satisfactory, that the operations of the Holy Ghost made the divine and human nature one, as the divine nature of the Son and Father are one with the Holy Ghost and consecrated the union. The Angel further communicated that "the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee" that is, protect, and shelter, &c. thereby the union is glorified. This we may know, is an eminent token of God's gracious presence, protecting, sheltering, and giving light in darkness, as in the wilderness, &c. The Son of man was thus formed under the quickening and consecrating influences of the Holy Ghost; and in this overshadowing, the presence, indwelling, and glorifying the human nature, and its union with the Highest, was sensibly manifested in this shrine of manhood; and became the long promised anti-type. And the Son of God, or second person of the God-head, at the consecration in the virgin, took upon him man's nature, as a more excellent tabernacle and temple, as was eternally purposed, for the display of the divine purposes

Q

of love and holiness, and to save from the deplorable ruins of sin, and apostacy.

The Doctor says, that the Angel in saying to Mary, "therefore also that holy thing (or person) shall be called the Son of God," we may plainly perceive, "does not give the appellation of Son of God to the divine nature of Christ." We do not know by what rule he has discovered this, for he has given us no aid in this point in any rule which he has brought forward. The Doctor goes on to say, "the divine nature of Christ could not be born of the virgin; the human nature was born of her." If the Doctor is correct, that the Son was a real creation, in the womb of the virgin, Christ has no more human nature than if he had been really created in any other part of the universe. Nor bears he any relation to God, or man, in his human or divine nature, than any other created being whatever. Let it be remembered, that he states, that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God in his divine nature; and if what he calls the human nature, was a real work of *creation* in the womb of the virgin, we would seriously ask how he could be called the Son of God, or the Son of man, or the seed of Abraham, with any more propriety than any other being in the universe.

Why then we soberly enquire, does our Lord bear these titles so often in the scriptures? We find our Lord is called the Son of God, as many as forty-five times, and the Son of man, about fifty times in the New Testament. And if Jesus Christ is called the Son of God in reference to his human nature, what can his name refer to, when he is called the Son of man. It appears on the Doctor's principles, that this last appella-

tion given to our Lord, must be entirely useless ; and not only entirely useless, but every way calculated to lead the mind to some apprehension, or vain imagination.

The Doctor asks, "is there any part of the scriptures in which it is plainly said that the divine nature of Jesus was the Son of God?" We answer in the affirmative, there is. And in the language of Mr. Fletcher, "he layed down his life" in defence of this doctrine, this truth ; and "sealed it with the blood of human nature." It will be unnecessary to recapitulate here what we have put down in reference to this point in the preceding pages of this volume. And we refer the reader to the views of Mr. Fletcher, which we calculate to annex to this volume, which he addressed to a Socinian. Remarking here, that if it should not be proved on examination of these, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature ; we refer to the succeeding articles of faith, or creed which he has subscribed to as a member of the church of England, which we shall annex and consider, so far forth, as they refer to the point in question.

1st Article on the Trinity.

"There is but one living and true God, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness ; the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible ; and in unity of this God-head, there are three persons, of one substance, power and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

We would ask the Doctor if this Son, of which the article speaks, is the same Son which he says was created in the womb of the virgin ? we would ask him, if the Son which he says was

created, was of the substance of the Father, one with him in power and eternity? Does it take the human nature of Jesus Christ to compose the Trinity? If so, there was no Trinity until the Son of God was created in the womb of the virgin. He states, that if Jesus Christ is the Son of God, he is not Eternal; yet the article states, that he is of the same substance, power and Eternity of the Father. But should the Doctor say that the term Son in the first article, has reference to Jesus Christ after he came in the flesh. We answer, the next article will convince him of his mistake.

2d Article.

“The Son, who is the Word of the Father, begotten of him, from everlasting, the very and Eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man’s nature in the womb of the blessed virgin, of her substance,” &c.

In this article of the English articles, the Methodist discipline, has omitted eight words, viz. “Begotten of him from everlasting,” and “of her substance.”

The first begotten from Everlasting, we think has certain reference to the divine nature of our Lord, and not to the human nature, and so reads the article; “The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and Eternal God, begotten of him from everlasting,” &c. The Doctor acknowledges, the Word that “was with God, and was God,” was the divine nature of our Lord; and let it be remembered the article states “the Son who is the Word of the Father.” The article, therefore, proves, that the church of England, believed, that the Sonship of our Lord referred to his divine nature, not only so, but it

states, that the same character took man's nature in the womb of the virgin of her substance. How different is this doctrine, from the idea that the Son of God was created in the womb of the blessed virgin.

We shall now look at the next article of the Trinity. It is as follows—

“The Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty and glory with the Father, and the Son, very and eternal God.” Two remarks in this article, are worthy of our notice, viz. “The Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and Son.” Does the Holy Ghost, we will ask, proceed from the divine nature of our Lord, or from the human nature? If it proceeds from the Son and the divine nature, it proves that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature; and if it proceeds from the human nature, it proves that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his human nature.—If the Holy Ghost proceeds from the human nature of Jesus Christ, it proves the Holy Ghost to be part human and part divine, for which we presume the Doctor would not contend.

Perhaps it will be objected to by those who believe with the Doctor in this point, that he does not fully believe in the English articles. We thought this might be fact; for it is scarcely possible, for a man to believe in the articles of the church of England, and hold, and advocate the tenets he advances in his notes, we have cited. One thing has caused us much grief, and sorrow of heart, and this is, christians of different orders, contending for the doctrines he has advanced; viz. denying Jesus Christ as the Son of God

In his divine nature, and at the same time professing to be trinitarians; and breathing out slanders against all that dissent from them in opinion, and branding them with the name Unitarian, Arian, Socinian, and possibly Deism, when at the same time the characters who have to bear this slander, are preaching the exact doctrine contained in the Trinitarian articles. These charges have been constantly brought against us as an order of people, by those characters, who believe with Doctor Clarke, respecting the Sonship of Jesus Christ. We do not mean to prefer this charge against the Doctor, neither wholly against any one order of christians. We take pleasure in saying the Doctor, has disclosed his views with great meekness, and commendable modesty. He says, "I trust I may be permitted to say with all due respect, for those who differ from me, that the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship is anti-scriptural, and dangerous;" he then assigns his reasons for rejecting the doctrine.

CHAPTER IV.

Further views of the same subject, in continuation.

THE first of which is, "I have not been able to find any express declaration in scripture concerning it." We hope this reason is satisfactorily answered in the preceding part of this work; if not satisfactory, the two chapters from Mr. Fletcher which we annex, will, we think, remove all lingering doubts.

We think it scarcely worth while to repeat here his reasons, as they are transcribed into this work. We are the more sensitive on this doctrine, because we believe, and especially in his 4th reason, and tenor of the whole, that if valid, he destroys the God-head, and the Trinity entirely. His remarks, however, we think more curious, than sound. He has given us concessions of sundry doctrines which oversets his own conclusions, and system. He says "the divine nature had no beginning," if the Doctor had kept this in view, and his ideas of the nature of generation out of view, he would have been saved all his trouble and difficulty. The simple question is, if Jesus Christ is the proper Son of God the Father, does he not partake of the fullness of the God-head as really, as absolutely, and in every sense as fully and inherently as God the Father?

Our doctrine is, that previous to the incarnation and from all eternity he existed as the Word.

Suppose we admit their views and doctrine of generation as to the relation of Father and Son—and devote a page or two to its consideration. Let us, premise, as to the foregoing question, Mr. Millard answers on his plan, the Son would not partake the fulness of the Godhead, &c. And the Doctor has something of the same idea. Mr. Millard states, that the Son took part of the nature of God, and part of the nature of man, not the whole. The Doctor says, that if Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature, it destroys the Deity of Christ, and if “his deity be taken away, the whole gospel scheme of redemption is ruined.” In this, the Doctor and Mr. Millard perfectly agree, viz. that if our Lord is the Son of God in his divine nature, then he is not God. Mr. Millard, promptly denies the doctrine of the Trinity, and professes to be in sentiment Unitarian; the Doctor professes to be a Trinitarian.

Mr. Millard's arguments to support his system, he has triumphantly summed up, in this triumphant question—“if Jesus Christ be the proper son of God, how then can he be the God of which he is the son?” The Doctor's arguments to support the same question are “if Christ be the Son of God, as to his divine nature, then his Father is of necessity prior, consequently superior to him; and if the divine nature were begotten of the Father, then it must be in time; i.e. there was a period when it did not exist, and a period when it began to exist. This destroys the eternity of our blessed Lord, and robs him at once of his Godhead.”

Suppose a child of fifteen years, should ask, who is this Mr. Millard, is he a man? and he

was to be answered, he is the son of a man. He should still ask, is he not then a man? We should answer, why no child, how do you think he can be a son of man, and a man of which he is the son? The child asks, is he not man in his nature? We answer he is not a man in his nature he only partakes of part of the nature of man, and is only part man. This is the reasoning of Mr. Millard, to show that Jesus Christ is not God, and we are desirous he should have all the merit of it.

The Doctor's arguments, on this point agree with Mr. Millard's, that if Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature, it destroys the eternity and divinity of the Son. The divinity, he observes, or the divine nature, had no beginning, it was that Word which was with God from eternity, John 1, 1.

If the Doctor's mode of reasoning on the eternal generation of the Son be just, he has truly gotten us into difficulty. But when he comes himself to re-consider, we are grossly mistaken if he does not find himself in some serious difficulty. He tells us the divine nature had no beginning, and then, it was and is that Word which was with God from eternity, and is God. Here are three things exhibited—1st That this divine nature is eternal, this we always believed. 2dly. That this divine nature, was and is the Word; this we believe is true. 3dly. This divine nature, or Word, was with God from eternity; in this we perfectly agree.

Now, we will assume the same mode of reasoning, that he does upon the eternal generation of the Son, in this matter. If Christ be the Word of God in his Divine nature, then the Father who

spoke this Word, is of necessity prior, consequently superior. And if this Divine Word proceeded of, or from the Father, then it must be in time; that there was a time, in which it did not exist, and a period in which it began to exist; this destroys the eternity of our blessed Lord, and robs him at once of the Godhead. Following further this mode of reasoning: to say the Word proceeding from God, was spoken from all eternity is in my opinion absurd, and the phrase eternal Word is a positive self contradiction, therefore, the conjunction of those two terms, Word and Eternity, is absolutely impossible, because they imply essentially different and opposite ideas; this is certainly absurd.

In our long contemplations upon this note of the Doctor's, an anecdote, recorded in Mr. Wesley's Journal, has often occurred to our minds. Mr. Wesley "being a churchman, was in the habit of reading prayers in the congregation, and afterwards he got into the habit of praying extempore, or without printed form; in conversation with a churchman, the churchman says to Mr. Wesley, praying extempore is no prayer at all, and I can prove it, for a man cannot think of two things at once; he cannot think how to pray, and pray at the same time." Mr. Wesley answered, "reading prayers, is no prayer at all, and I can prove it, for a man cannot think of two things at once; a man cannot think how to read, and pray at the same time." We think the attentive reader will require no illustration, or explanation of the anecdote.

Thus we see, that the procession of the Godhead, must be something infinitely different in nature and kind from any thing which takes

place among creatures, as the foundation of personal distinction. Those generative expressions which makes individuality, or personality between man and man, and creature relations can little explain or refute the eternal existence or subsistence. Because of the poverty and inapplicability of creature terms, which are infinitely short in conveying a full meaning about infinite relations, the faith of no person ought to be shaken. Signs of ideas, in relations of time can give no adequate and correct views of eternity, and eternal relations, which are infinitely more perfect. In every thing in reference to eternity our ideas are human and imperfect, yet because it is incomprehensible, we cannot presume to deny the fact, that the Father is eternal. It is, however, often verified, that "vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild asses colt." Job, 11, 12. From Father and Son in relation to the Godhead, and their eternal unity, we may learn that in the existence and subsistences of the Deity, there is that which is high above our ideas, or comprehension unless revealed, and if it were not so, we should have no reason to believe in it. That the Bible has revealed, indisputably, the eternal filiation of the son, is to us plain—and the union of man in him by the new birth or by adoption, or the spirit of the bride, under the influences of the Holy Ghost is revealed in terms equally clear. "None but the Supreme Being, can speak properly of him, but himself."

Thus we arrive, at the conclusion that the critical disquisitions of philosophic pride, refutes itself. If they make the Son of God, a *created* being, they are ensnared in their own meshes, they gain nothing, but the conceit and pride of

opinion in opposition to revelation, and the whole scheme of Scriptural redemption, which alone "is the way, the truth and the life." If they surrender up the Son of God's being a *created* being, and reason themselves into a belief that he is a *derived* being, and still reasoning upon divine and infinite things, as they do upon things human and natural, and with great polemic ingenuity speculate upon natural relations, and analogies, still they will run into insuperable difficulties.

And having spun out, their fine and attenuated thread of argument, they may turn to the only volume revealing divine truth and philosophy, and "every description of the Divine Being in the New Testament," whether of Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, "gives an idea of" the union and personality of the Godhead; the Father, being first of the "three which bear record in Heaven;" the Word or Son, the second person; and the Comforter or Holy Ghost the third person, "and these three are one," divinely considered; although, man from his limited and low capacity, may count one, two, three, understanding nothing only in parts. And they may endeavor to unite these as derived, dependant, and created parts, and it will be as the image of Nebuchadnezzar, a union merely of discordant materials; the dream of human change, and mutability, and weakness; and all afford high evidence, that we forget that human and divine nature, and intelligence, and personality, must *essentially* differ; and that reasoning from what we know of man, will be defective and inconclusive, as to the existence and subsistences of God, whom to know aright is life eternal. The testimony of Scripture, is as much above such reasoning, as heaven is

above the earth; and the revelation itself, "is an instance of the divine condescension to our low capacities."

If we were to reason on the supposition, that the Doctor and Mr. Millard are right in their notions, upon the nature of generation, and from that conclude with them, that the doctrine of the eternal generation of Jesus Christ, destroys his deity, and that the gospel plan is ruined; both arrive at this conclusion, that if Jesus Christ is the proper Son of God in his divine nature, then he is not God. Suppose we waive for the time, all opposition to their reasoning and conclusions, are there not several important queries to trouble us, in advancing on? They seem to find there is such a being as the only begotten Son of God, whether begotten in time or eternity, seems to be their difficulty. What kind of being is he? Mr. Millard says he is not *created*, and he has taken up several pages to show he is not God, and thinks it very absurd to say he is God.— This is the more astonishing to us, as we have always had the idea, that God was the only uncreated, and self-existent being in the Universe.

Mr. Millard says he is not a *created* but a *derived* being. From his position and reasoning, we fall into another dilemma; does this expression, derived, mean any thing, or nothing, from his explanation? We should imagine, that if he was really and absolutely derived as begotten of God, he is really God, in every sense; partaking of the fullness of the God-head. Upon the principles of human philosophy, we are taught, that every species of beings, we can comprehend, beget their own species, and

P

kind, and communicated their specific natures; but these writers both seem to reason this doctrine is false.

But leaving their reasoning upon generation, and whether our Lord was created or not. We suggest a few questions which we consider involve many difficulties to remove, before we can fully admit our Lord to be a derived being. Can the real divinity be derived? Can *infinite* mercy and merit be derived? Is God divisible? Can the immutable God be changed and disunited? Can Jehovah by whom all things visible and invisible that are in being, were created and made, be himself a derived being? We had supposed any derived or dependent being was a creature. And we have yet to learn, if there is any difference, what being it is; and wherein the distinctive difference consists; until this is done, we can see no benefit resulting from the distinction.—Whether created, or whether derived, seems not to be of much advantage to their argument.

If either of the two above systems, that the Son or 2d personage of the Trinity, is a created or derived being, prevails, it appears to us, that the very first and adorable principles of the gospel, are subverted. The apostles, have ever in speaking to us of the love of God exercised towards us, brought forward this kind and benevolent act, in God the Father, in giving to us his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. If the love of God is to be measured to us by this rule, and our salvation depends on a right faith in the Son of God, then it is a point of the first magnitude, that we have right apprehensions and knowledge of the glory, dignity, and perfec-

tions of his nature and character, that we may understandingly trust in him as our glorious Mediator. To dishonour him must be impiety, if to know and love him is life eternal. In his human nature, we consider him the most exalted of dependent beings, the first and chief of all elect creatures, the first and favourite of a high and singular union, wherein God and humanity became one person, for an exhibition of the love of God to apostate humanity. This human nature, we trust, which was marvelously joined to God in one person, will increase in existence, in dignity and perfections, without end, and more rapidly than any other finite existence, in consequence of this union; but this is not enough; to be the son of Mary thus united, is not sufficient; we must confide, know, and love, and be in union also, by adoption with the Son of God, the 2d person in the Trinity, who became one in person with humanity, whose love and merit are infinite, who answers to the type "without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life;" having this trust with us as the "face of heaven in its clearness," for so we believe our Bible tells us, we build our faith and reliance on the Rock of Ages. And "who shall declare his generation," who his descent?

Father and Son are relative terms, which support each other. The opponents of the Trinity acknowledge this as fact; and this excites our wonder; for if they concede the truth, there is a Father in the divine nature, they are under the necessity, if consistent with themselves, to acknowledge there is a divine Son. Mr. Fletcher very happily and justly remarks in his polemic debate with Doctor Priestly, "you acknowledge

There is a divine Father, I thank you for this expression, for we Trinitarians think, that if there is a divine Father there is a divine Son." Father and Son being relative expressions, must necessarily support each other.

Doctor Clark in his commentary, states, that "Father and Son imply generation," &c. I think here is laid a foundation, for us to be wise above what is written. We believe through our Lord, we are heirs of a heavenly inheritance, because the scriptures teach it. This authority tells the generation of the human nature of our Lord; and it is of record that the divine nature was the second person in the Trinity, that he was veiled in the flesh, and that these two natures became one person. Who can testify against the writings of the Apostles, who can state the facts with more clearness, who reason more conclusively, or trace our Lord's descent and divinity, when revelation fails. When revelation, says our Lord in his divine nature was the Son of God—who shall scan it improperly, and traduce it down comparatively, to the capacity of a glow-worm "joined with the sun to enlighten the universe." He was, as we say, *heir*, long before he made the worlds. As *heir* of all things, he is constituted Son—and inherited the *name* before all things.

The Doctor has brought to view, two things—"Father and Son imply generation, and generation a time when it was effected, and a time antecedent to such generation." Suppose we follow this rule, where will it land us, into what unknown belief, what region of doubt? Can we by it elucidate eternal things, can we measure eternity by this mode of division? On the supposition that every act of God, unfolding as to us daily, as

to his overshadowing or brooding Providence, was in time; and each act, adding to the generation or series of his infinite acts, was an act of time. And if developed, in time, consequently there was a time, or period antecedent to such time or act; consequently there was a period when the infinite attributes of God, came into action; and a period antecedent to such commencement of action; consequently again there was a preliminary time, or preparatory period, when all the infinite attributes of God lay dormant. And one late writer has followed this chain of ideas, until he questions, whether the Supreme Being did not graduate in this way into being and action. We acknowledge this is treading on suppositious ground we are not acquainted with.— We are willing to leave this bewildering and alarming way, and quit the point, where our inspired teachers have left it. The old beaten path of the apostles, is a safe way, and direct, and very plainly described. They say the Word *was*, in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; and that he is the first born of every creature, and by him all things were created, and that he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and that he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and this is the I AM, to whom the majesty on high saith, "thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." This we think is a striking illustration of the Son's being a personage in the mysterious union of the Trinity. He is also a priest "after the power of an endless life," which he has in himself, as the eternal Son of God. "I am," is the divine name he claims; "I AM, of *them* that are above," is his remarkable saying.

Holding on to this to sustain our steps ; suppose we, for a moment, wander in the track of vain imagination, and admit, that there existed an infinite period, previous to the Son's proceeding from the bosom of the Father, to begin the works of creation, providence, incarnation, triumph over death, and redemption ; what is that to us ? does it take any thing from his God-head ? does it add to or diminish any thing from, his essential glory, or our eternal felicity, through him ? We think not, unless we should admit that there is an increase in the attributes of God, or growth in his divine nature, and that it is changeable, and mutable ; which we cannot, and will not admit, for a moment.

CHAPTER V.

Further views of the same subject, in continuation.

It is, perhaps, worthy of a passing remark, that many in taking their view of Christ's proper generation, have argued that he was a *dependent* being. We can see no propriety or force in this argument, derivable from any scriptural facts. If Christ is a dependant being it must argue that there is not a proper and distinct personality existing between the Father and Son;—or it must result that the Son is a *created* being. We pass from the consideration of the improbabilities of his being esteemed a derived, dependent, or created being, merely referring to our preceding observations; and pass to consider some passages of scripture which have embarrassed many minds.

The difficulties are derived from the expressions which dropped from the lips of Christ while he tabernacled in the flesh, and which are found recorded in the gospel of St. John. "The Son can do nothing of himself; but what he seeth the Father do, that doth the Son. I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. My father is greater than I."

It was a peculiar and most excellent trait, in the Saviour's life, and character to exhibit, illustrate, and preserve in all its perfections and ex-

cellencies, the relation of Father and Son, and to exemplify the distinct personality of the Father's paternity, and the Son's perfect respect and obedience, as second personage of the triune God. And, the Father's relative precedence in reference to this relation with the Son, and still inculcating the oneness in *worship*, as in John, 5, verse 23, "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father;" inculcating also, their existing fellowship and oneness in the *works* of salvation, &c. In the same manner is the whole tenor of Christ's expressions; he distinguishes and characterizes himself, claiming a distinct personality, and yet claiming an equality and oneness in *work* and *worship*. And in the office of Son, subordinate, though not inferior in nature, work and worship, to the Father.

We have elsewhere endeavoured to show, that if Jesus Christ possessed any of the Divine Nature, he possessed it fully and absolutely as the Father. A little reflection dissipates these difficulties which opponents have raised, and may raise. Primitive Trinitarians, we think, always considered, that in this distinctive relation the characteristics of Father and of Son, are perfect; the Father as the fountain of Deity, the general term Father comprehending the whole God-head; the eternal Son, the second person of the God-head, proceeding from it, in the work of Sonship. "It is proper, among mankind, that a son should be subordinate to his father, yea, subject in many respects, though of the same human nature; yea, though in no respect inferior in any natural qualification."

Doctor Clarke, we are very certain, labours under a mistake in saying, that "the enemies of

Christ's divinity have always availed themselves of this incautious method of treating this subject." Namely, the "eternal Sonship." We are of opinion, that the enemies of the eternal Sonship of Christ, have never brought their arguments to this exact spot, or centre, as the Doctor supposes. We are of opinion, that the first grand objection, which ever has, and ever will be brought, against the doctrine of the Trinity, and the proper Sonship of Jesus Christ is, that it seems to make at least two co-ordinate Gods. That is, two infinite and independent beings, sustaining one station and office. The next most prominent ground they have assumed, is, that it is impossible that the human nature of our Lord, could be so united to the divine nature, as to make but one entire, or one person.

On these two points, the most cogent and powerful minded opponents, have risked the strength of their cause. We think the champions of both sides of this question, will acknowledge our correctness. And some of our sharp-sighted, doctrinal adversaries, have handled them with great power; and so advantageously, that they have driven numbers of our Trinitarian brethren into Sabellianism. And we have great fears, that many have fled in their polemic pride to that system, as to a refuge, and when followed and hard-pressed by their opponents, they are driven to a greater extremity still. But if our ideas of the opposing systems are correct, we feel assured they have neither scripture, nor reason, nor the writings of the fathers to defend and sustain them. Except, it may be a few scraps from the fathers, which have straggled down from the 2d century,

In the dark ages of Popery, in the times of scriptural inhibition, in the night of Bible knowledge.

The question has been, if Christ is not a *dependent* being, are there not two co-ordinate Gods? We have already made some remarks, and considered some scriptural passages, which we think are of power to assist the mind, and which we find recorded in John, chapters 14, 15, 16, and 17, and some of ancillary purport, in chapters 7, 8, 9, and 10. It is our understanding, that our Lord in his discourses, wishes us to understand, distinctly : 1st, That the Father and Son possessed a distinctive personality. 2dly, That the Son in point of dignity of nature, was in no sense inferior to the Father. 3dly, That the Father is never without the Son, nor the Son without the Father, that the Son is ever in the bosom of the Father. Even, when the Son was on the earth, the Father dwelt in the Son ; and that they each of them had their station or office in the Godhead, and were in fellowship and unison in all their works, whether of creation, providence, or redemption,

We should examine these chapters with attention, and critical care ; and, weigh these points with the temper of candour, in the balances of faith and reason, and we shall be enabled by grace to understand our Lord in his various conversations, with the Jews, and with his disciples ; and to appreciate the doctrines and points we have suggested, and the observations we may deem it proper to make.

In our judgment, there is a delightful harmony and consistency, in the scriptural language and record. Our Lord says, "I can of myself do nothing," that is, "I ever dwell in the Father, and

the Father in me, and we work jointly together." And, as the apostle tells us, "God created all things by Jesus Christ" and that Jesus Christ "is heir of all things." And, our Lord in his last prayer with his disciples, says to his Father, "all mine, are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them," &c.

We may easily discover a propriety in our Lord's expressions, when he declares to us that he can do nothing of himself, that is, in consequence of his union with his Father, he, therefore did nothing without him. We have another reason for this belief; in all our Lord's works, there appears something strikingly different, from the works and miracles wrought either by the prophets or apostles, when they came with a message to the human family. They said, "thus saith the Lord." But to sanction the truths our Lord delivered, he said to the hearers, "I say unto you." And again, when he declared and taught his own evangelical plan of love and redemption for which he took upon him human nature, he spoke to all, as one of the God-head in its self-existent power, that "whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock," &c.

Were there any in distress, "Jesus saith unto them, believe ye that I am able to do this?" on their answering, "yea Lord," he could say with power, "According to your faith be it unto you." To the sick of the palsy, that his power might be known, he could say, "thy sins be forgiven thee"—or "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." When the disciples presumed to do like works, they would say, "Christ maketh thee whole." These ever were powerful evidences to

our minds, that our Lord, in these displays of his power, had reference to his being one of the God-head, and the joint union that existed between him and his Father, and not to any inherent dependence and weakness in himself.

One expression, and one idea of our Lord, which both bear upon the same point we are considering, it is well to note here, viz. Our Lord came unto his disciples after his resurrection and said unto them that "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," &c. Perhaps as much stress has been put upon this passage, by those who have doubted our Lord's divinity, as upon any one in the New Testament, to prove the power which our Lord exercised, to be delegated power.

Now we will come to the idea referred to, which is, our Lord in all this, was acting in his capacity of Mediator, and that Mediatorial power in the sense he referred to it, was not given him in his distinct character, and person, until he rose from the dead and received the promise of the Holy Ghost, and came to commission his disciples to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

One thing more is worthy of remark on this point, viz. that at the same time our Lord makes this declaration above referred to, he promises to be with his followers or disciples always to the end of the world, which no doubt our Lord would have us understand him, he would be present in person, to aid and support them, to guard and defend, to teach and to lead them through the labours, sorrows, and dangers, they would have to encounter, in passing through this world of sorrow. Therefore, if all this was delegated, or gi-

ven, in the sense above stated, is it not plain and evident, that for our Lord to fulfil this promise to his disciples, he must be *Omnipresent*.

When we consider the dignity of our Lord—his omnipresence, his union with his Father, and his acting in his Mediatorial capacity, and that salvation in and by any other than Jehovah, is denied; we are grossly mistaken, if we are not helped to a doctrinal key whereby to unlock, and rightly understand, the various expressions and communications our Lord makes use of respecting himself, in the chapters we have cited.

When he says, "I can do nothing of myself," he must have reference to the particular *union* which existed between his Father and himself.—In the same discourse, our Lord informs us, that "whatsoever the Father doth, that the Son doth also." Again, "It shall come to pass that they that are in their graves, shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth," &c. And "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." These expressions, and various others of the same nature, explain to us very clearly, the dignity of his character, as the 2d person of the Trinity; and that the general term Father, as used in these passages, comprehends the conjoint and whole God-head; consequently his other declaratory expressions, cannot refer to the weakness of his nature, but to his union and oneness with the Father.

Again, when we consider his prayer to his Father for his disciples, and for the descent of the Holy Ghost, to sanctify his disciples, and to preserve, and prepare them for the work of the ministry, we consider him acting in the capacity of a Mediator.

CHAPTER VI.

Further views of the same subject, in continuation.

WE shall still pursue the same point, a little further, in rather a general view of doctrines, viz. Touching the union which exists in the relation of Father and Son; the union which exists in the relation of the human nature and the divine nature of our Lord. And afterwards make some remarks on his Mediatorial office.

On the union in relation to the Father and Son. We have already stated our views, as to what we think, the mistaken ideas of Doctor Clarke. We think him mistaken in saying that the terms "eternal Son" is an incautious manner of treating this subject, and that the "enemies" have taken it as their strongest and most prevailing ground against his divinity. Our views, as stated, results from the belief, that the most advantageous ground taken by the enemies of christianity, and to our Lord's divinity, is the *union* which exists in the relations of Father and Son; and the *union* which exists, in the relation of the second person of the Trinity, and the humanity he took upon him.

We have doubted, whether for the two last centuries our Trinitarian brethren, have not been driven by the enemy, on to the ground of Sabellianism, by reason of their not handling these points scripturally and rationally. Here then, we ought to re-consider.

1st, In what does the advantages of our opponents consist, and wherein do we err from the lights of scripture?

2d, And what is our best defence against their charges?

We contend that Jesus Christ is the proper Son of God, possessing the fullness of the Godhead, inherently in himself, as one of the *triume*. Our opponents on this say, we make two co-ordinate Gods in every sense, or, that is, as to equality of dignity, and that consequently they must fill the same station, office and rank, in all the works of creation, providence and redemption, and therefore our position may be called one species of Ditheism.

Again, if we contend, as we do, that the Holy Ghost, is the third personage in the Holy Trinity, or God-head; they accuse, and say, you make three co-ordinate Gods, and therefore may be called Tritheists.

On these two points, they take ground. And from the two points, they reason in this way; that the difficulties in the plan of salvation are insurmountable, for if the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, sustain one station and office, in the works of creation, providence and redemption, then of course, the original transgression of man, must be as directly against the Son and Holy Ghost, as against the Father. And on the same principles, if the Son and Holy Ghost could pardon without an atonement being offered to them; why could not the Father likewise? They say another difficulty will occur, if there are three co-ordinate Gods, then there appears a gross absurdity in either of the three becoming under the law, which they had jointly given to a finite being, which

would be in reality to relinquish the claim, by paying the demand themselves.

These are the most plausible arguments of the opponents of the Trinity, and has been so considered and treated by the best writers of the two last centuries, in the controversy with Socinius and Doctor Priestly.

It becomes us to inquire, whether our opponents have not begged the question, and reasoned from premises of their own creation, and positions, which are not to be attributed to us. We deny the charge of ditheism, or tritheism, and at the same time admit, that if we have been incautious enough to justify the charge of believing in two Gods, or three Gods, they are justified in attacking such notions, for they are gross errors.

Our belief is, that "there are three in heaven, who bear record, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these *three are one*." It will be seen that our opponents, to substantiate their baseless, or assumed positions, give no consideration or weight to the last clause of the sentence, "*these three are one*." Here is their error as to us, and the unfairness, and fallacy of their premises.—Leave out the indissoluble *union* and *oneness* of the God-head, and their ground might be tenable, and afford at least a plausible pretext; but now as to us, it is unjust in them; we ought to be condemned or justified, on considering the entire grounds of our belief. The parts of our belief, separate, distinct, and standing without their references, and connection, might seem to be weak, but altogether we think them strong, because in tenor and consistent with scripture. On this *union* and *oneness*, "*these three in one*," is founded the Trinity. And if a *union* and *oneness* in

the God-head, our belief certainly is not, in two or three distinct co-ordinate Gods, therefore it is, their reasoning has no application to us.

But we will further examine it. The original transgression of man was against the Supreme Being, the God-head. The Trinity or God-head through the Word or Son, did the work of creation, providence and redemption. And in this work, the second person of the God-head had fellowship of nature, acts, counsel, and ways with the God-head, or Father; for we apprehend, the general term Father comprehends the whole God-head, as it is many times used in scripture. The Father sent the Son, that is, it was the act, counsel, and way of the whole God-head to do it. And that the second person of the Trinity who came forth from the Father, was always in the bosom of the God-head, and in perfect fellowship therewith in the work and worship of manifestation and revelation. He was subordinate to the entire God-head, in his scriptural relation, to their counsel, and way, and acts; and in his personality, did nothing alone, but in fellowship.

An atonement for man's original transgression against the infinite majesty of the God-head, was as we believe, necessary; for the offence was against the triune, and Most High God. And the scriptural mode of man's becoming reconciled to God, is according to the eternal nature, act, counsel, and way, as manifested and revealed through the appointed Mediatorial power and agency. This, to those who have not become reconciled, and adopted into the union with Jehovah, it seems, is foolishness. But the proclamation and promise of pardon and salvation, was also necessary. If this assurance had not been made, it would be

much more difficult for a sensible mind to have believed, without such security and revelation. And, on what foundation would our faith, in a pardoning edict have rested? A demonstration of God's justice and love, was necessary to turn man from his evil way to repentance and reconciliation to God. Creature wisdom, excellency, and power, could not have reconciled righteousness and grace together; could not have atoned for an offence against an infinite majesty, or conferred salvation in the method of an eternal redemption; could not have propitiated infinite justice; could not have conferred an exemption from endless punishment, and advanced him to an endless felicity. The renovation of a moral world, and the display of infinite love, in taking away sin and its effects, and turning apostatized man to holiness, was a work worthy of a compassionate God; and which none other than God could have performed.

When we consider further, that universal sin, brought universal death into our world; and in this condition that "life and immortality" should be "brought to light" by the Word, is wonderful, yet in the way and method revealed, is altogether congruous, and worthy of a merciful God. That "the Holy Ghost," "the spirit of truth," should be also sent "to teach you all things," and that the Prince of Peace should say, "my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you," not only evinces the work of a God, but it is demonstrative that the agent on whom the honour of the work devolved must be infinite, and a participant in the counsels of the Most High. Wild must be the fancy, and sorry the argument, which can deduce from this wonderful work of infinite love, "gross absurdity;" or that this can

be concluded, a relinquishment of a claim, by paying the demand; when it is to be considered, the unveiling of the method, of reconciliation and forgiveness of sins, and justifying the ways of God's justice and mercy to man; and pointing out to man as a moral agent, the means of his reconciliation to God, in order to satisfy the law.

The notions of our opponents, both as to our beliefs, and their own reasoning, appears founded on fallacious and imaginary premises. It is easy to draw conclusions, and raise up fantasies of absurdity, if we are at liberty to make conjectural and human premises, upon divine philosophy and revelation.

From reading and reasoning from scripture purely, and the exercise of pious wisdom and study, who can doubt, that the "way of man's reconciliation to God" through the mercy, and gracious pleasure, and loving kindness of God, is an everlasting purpose of the Most Holy Trinity; and that the second person of the God-head, made promise and proclamation of "the glad tidings of salvation." The *three one* do not, as our opponents express it, pay the demand, or relinquish a claim. When man is reconciled to God, in the way divinely appointed, the ransom from the sentence of the divine law is complete, the period of forfeiture is concluded, the covenant and dispensation of mercy is perfected; the moral disorder is cured, and man is regenerated and sanctified by the spirit of God to that measure of holiness which is a growing peace and union with God, through Christ.

Man was created through Christ, and is redeemed through his infinite merits, and infinite atoning sacrifice, and is made joint heir with him in a

heavenly inheritance, agreeable to the divine purposes and counsels. "Hereby we know the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." Hereby we know our faith is no delusion. Man having disobeyed the Adamic law, the Word was pledged, that he should "surely die," and the promise of mercy was then declared, and is perfected through the Mediatorial dispensation. Our Lord became under the Adamic law a propitiatory sacrifice, triumphed over death by his own power, was the first of the resurrection, and he is the eternal life, and light, "whom to know aright is life eternal" to us. By the power of his infinite love for us, "at the consummation of the ages," he led captivity captive, and saints who had tasted of death, at the coming of the prince of peace to this portion of his dominions to take the keys of death, swelled the train of his ascension to glory. When he said, "Lo I come," to do the will of the God-head, he took away the legal sacrifice, and established "the evangelical dispensation," and proclaimed and made known the mediatorial law. Man in order to be saved must take hold of the divine dispensation, must be saved through the love and righteousness of our Lord, must believe in him, must have faith in the mediatorial rule or law, and must take hold of the hope therein set forth, as the only way of reconciliation with God.

This method of dispensation, was of all things most needed. The wisest and best of moral philosophers, anxiously waited for, and expected this divine, remedial philosophy, and declared, that a way of man's restoration to divine favour must be *revealed*; as man was absolutely and entirely ignorant upon the subject. The promulgation of

the mediatorial relief must be of God, and in which, no *created* merit or power had part. Our Lord "trod the wine press alone."

We have mentioned before, that some who have been our brethren in the belief of the Trinity, have been driven by the assumed premises, and specious arguments of our opponents, from a belief in the three *persons* "which bear record in heaven," under a fear of the suggestion that they were believers in *two*, or *three* co-ordinate Gods. From what we have said, our brethren who have abandoned the Trinitarian ground of doctrine, will discover, that we consider the accusation as the "baseless fabric" of a fable, a reckless, and unjust attack, from which there is no manner of reasonable difficulty or alarm; for the doctrine of the Trinity is as real and well founded a doctrine, and as clearly demonstrated, as any scriptural revelation, or tenet of our faith. And we devoutly trust that under the exercise of pious wisdom, and christian reconsideration of the subject, they will no longer feed upon "the husks that the swine did eat;" and that they will return to the Trinitarian flock, which the scriptures quietly lead "into green pastures, beside the still waters."

It will be borne in mind, that Origen and Sabelius taught as one of their doctrines, as we understand it, that God did not exist in three persons, properly speaking, but exercised himself in three different capacities, or offices, and that there are different qualities or substances in the divine nature; for instance, he acted as Father in creation, as Son in redemption, and as Holy Ghost in being poured out on the apostles. And to illustrate their different substances or qualities, they represented them under the emblem of the sun or fire, which

they state is composed of the substances or qualities of heat and light. How very unsatisfactory!

This doctrine of Sabellius, which it seems was first taught in the second century, was rejected and disapproved by the churches in general in that age of christianity. We do not state this as infallible evidence, that the doctrine was wrong, but for the reasons before stated. It is, however, a generally received opinion, that although many errors arose in the three first centuries of christianity, yet no one so generally prevailed as to gain the general approbation of the churches.

Mr. Worcester has stated the fact that this Sabellian doctrine was rejected, as we have stated, and has advanced it as an argument in support of his system against the doctrine of the Trinity. And we give Mr. Worcester a great deal of credit, for his weighty and powerful arguments against that sectary who are preaching that doctrine under the *name* and cover of Trinitarianism. An abuse which we think to be too frequent a case in our country at the present day. But whether these arguments of Mr. Worcester aid, or in any sense support his system, or militate against the primitive doctrine of Trinitarianism, is another question. And somewhat doubtful.

Mr. Worcester brings forward the doctrines of Origen as well as Sabellius to show the inconsistency and confused notion of the Trinity. Two of the peculiar notions or ideas of Origen on the Trinity, appear to have been, "that Christ dwelt in God, as reason dwells in man, and the divine spirit was nothing but energy or active force." Mr. Worcester proceeds upon it, to show, that this was not a Trinity of persons, and establishes that Origen contended for nothing but a kind of

an allegorical trinity, and we agree that Mr. Worcester is right in his judgment, as relates to this point, as respects the doctrines of Origen and Sabellius, whose views when brought to their points, fellowship and centre together.

Mr. Worcester is a professed Unitarian, consequently did not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity. He has shown the fallacy of this doctrine pretty ably and we are not dissatisfied with it, for we disavow their ideas, as anti-trinitarian, so far we coincide with Mr. Worcester.

Mr. Worcester in his way having refuted their doctrine, builds his own superstructure of doctrine, on this sandy foundation, and averment, that "the doctrine of the Trinity, had its original or birth in Origen's allegorical method of explaining the Scripture, and its growth in the degeneracy of the church, and its finish, in a disorderly and confused council." Now, from the time that Origen lived and taught divinity, which was in the third century, and from that time to the year 381, which was 56 years after the Council held at the city of Nice, it is certain the church took rapid strides in degeneracy, and apostacy, and the council held in the city of Constantinople, was said to be a very confused and disorderly Council, and one historian tells us, that at this Council, the doctrine of the Trinity, received its finishing touch or stroke. These are the facts and reasons, on which Mr. Worcester made the foregoing remarks.

We think him materially mistaken when he asserts that the doctrine of the Trinity had its birth in Origen's allegory; and its growth in the degeneracy of the church. Yet, we do think many doctrines, which are now taught, and *misnamed* points of the Trinity, had their birth in Sabellianism, and was

nursed and fostered by Origen, and had a considerable growth and support in the degeneracy of the church; still this does not effect, or blemish the genuine Scriptural doctrine of the Trinity, or the proper sonship of Christ; as the Trinity must stand, with every candid and ingenuous mind, unrepu- diated by any thing extrinsic of its system. We are, however, persuaded, that the wild fables and glaring inconsistencies, which have been taught as of, and for the doctrines of the Trinity, has driven more professors into Arianism, Socinianism, and Unitarianism, than all the arguments which have been advanced in open attack against the Scriptural doctrine of the Trinity.

We now return to the prime points taken by the enemies of the Trinity and proceed with our inquiry. And wherein do we err from the lights of Scripture, and what is our best defence against their charges? We presume we have said enough to prevent the charge of Tritheism as to us, and that we do not at present feel there is the least necessity of sheltering ourselves, as others have been too prone to do, under the errors of the system taught by Sabellius. And having discovered this error, and the dangers and inconsistencies of tritheism; we warn all to hold on to the truth of the Scriptural trinity, of three in one. This is always the best defence and shield against accusations, and charges which may be made. This doctrine is only sustained by keeping to the gospel manifestations of the glory of the Godhead, in the beauty and excellency of the person of Christ, who is the Jehovah sent; who is of the "three which bear record in heaven" "which three are one." Which also agrees well with the adjective Holy, which is plural, as well as the substantive

Elohim, and which harmonizes with the doxology of angels, and the doxology of christians, and the baptismal ordinance; and with the expressive name Jehovah, which is singular, and full of meaning. The use of it by Moses is strikingly trinitarian. "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord." Every one knows that Moses uses the name God, or Elohim in the plural.

On the phraseology of this quotation, we cannot refrain from subjoining an extract from the pious and learned President Edwards. He says, "In the original, it is thus, *Jehovah Eloheinu* is *Jehovah Ekadh*; which if most literally translated, is thus, *Jehovah Our divine Persons is one Jehovah*: as though Moses, in this remark, had a particular reference to the word *Elohim* being in the plural number, and would guard the people against imagining from thence that there was a plurality of Essences or Being, among whom they were to divide their affections and respect."

The general tenor of scripture and revelation rests upon the doctrine of the Trinity; that taken away the Mediatorial redemption of the human family, has no foundation; the harmony, consistency and assurances of revelation, are but as "wood, hay, and stubble:" and our confidence is unstable and insecure. But the Bible demonstrates this doctrine as fully as any other tenet of our creed. Our defence is then alway in this book, which gives us the nature, the character, the glory, and sufficiency of the Saviour, as the Son of God in his divine nature, as the second person in the Godhead, as the Word which was God, and of the "three which bear record," &c. and which "are one."

R

CHAPTER VII.

Further views of the same subject, in continuation.

And in what do we err? and what causes us "to wander from our Father's house," and the way he hath appointed in his Word? these causes, we will endeavor to point out; and we will also endeavor, to plainly map our course of error and wandering, from the "truth as it is in Jesus Christ."

The first error we most naturally run into, is evidently the one which the ancient Jews were inclined to, and which Moses, the mediator of the law, took such remarkable pains and trouble to obviate and guard against; and this error is, believing in a plurality, or *three* Gods, and forgetting their UNITY. And having discovered and been startled at this gross error, the next course is apt to be, when the enemy of christians charges it home upon us, that we abandon, as many have abandoned, the trinitarian strong-holds, and flee for refuge and shelter, to Sabellianism, still trusting in trinitarianism, still reposing on its armour, on its name, and Scriptural evidences. Then we are extremely apt to deny that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, in his divine nature, which lays the foundation for a full belief in the Sabellian Doctrine; this point conceded, it is but a trifle to deny there are no such characters as Father and Son in the Godhead, and it follows as a necessary effect. It will be seen at once by every sensible mind, that if we

believe in a Trinity, it must be a Trinity of persons, or being, or offices. Destroy the idea of the Trinity being composed of persons, it is hard to maintain the doctrine, for we cannot have any revealed, or Scripture names for them; and if we believe in the Word, we will not desire names not found in it: and shall not well like to discard by substitution, such a considerable portion of it, which is so full of edification, consolation, love, and hope, and faith; and which constitutes some of the most beautiful and sublime truths, sentiments, and language and consistency; and which is "as it were the body of heaven in its clearness." For if we call the first person Father, it is acknowledged by all on every side of the question, that Father implies Son, and according to Doctor Clarke, generation also. Suppose it should be said the first of the persons is called Father, in reference to creation, this does not relieve from the difficulty, for there appears another person in the work of creation, viz. the second person, he certainly can have no name, unless both are called Father. And should we call the second person the Word of the Father, and deny that the Word and Son has reference to one and the same person, it does not exactly relieve from the difficulty, for those that deny that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature, will vociferously cry out, that Father and Son imply "*time and generation, and a time antecedent to such generation,*" which they say destroys the Godhead of Christ. And indeed if this train of reasoning is followed, it is plainly perceived that it will not do to call this second person in the Trinity, the Word of the Father, this would imply a *time* when this Word was spoken or proceeded

forth from God; and a *time* or period antecedent to that *time*; and Doctor Clarke thinks, that will destroy the deity of our Lord, and ruin the plan of Salvation; and although he and others may in their own conceit have become wiser than the Bible, they do not condescend to give a name, therefore we still are at an entire loss for a name for the second person in the Trinity. The next and not a very great stride, is to step on to the ground of Sabellius, and conclude with him, that these three are only different qualities or one person acting in different capacities or offices. Thus we see plainly the road, the devious way of error, when we grope our way in the light of human reason alone, and leave the divine lights of Scripture. It is always a downward and dangerous way we pursue, when "much learning" maketh us mad, and we conceit ourselves wise above what is written and revealed. Alas, for these "troubled waters which cast up mire, and dirt."

In recurring to their notion that if Christ is a being unoriginated and Eternal, he cannot either be the Son or Word of the Father, for the names Son or Word would naturally intimate to us, that he proceeded from the Father, and following up these ideas, other important questions arise in our minds. What could the apostle mean, and have reference to, when he makes mention of a character who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature? and when he informs us that "by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or principalities," &c. in the 1st chapter Colossians. Is the Father the Image of the Invisible God? or was it the human nature of Jesus Christ? or the first born of every

creature? We shall all agree it was not the Father; and how can it be the human nature of Jesus Christ? Another question of very serious and solemn account, is, unto what then were we *baptized*? We can find no name for the two first persons, for it seems our brethren will not admit it is correct to call them Father and Son. Shall we baptize in the name of the one God, and the human nature of Jesus Christ? and in the room of the Holy Ghost, shall we say, we baptize in the name of the energy and active force of God?

But have Sabellius, Arius, or Socinius helped us out of any difficulty? Admitting the doctrine of Tritheism, or of three co-ordinate and separate Gods, the difficulties in the plan of redemption are insurmountable. But the doctrines of Sabellius, Arius and Socinius, to which vain men have fled for refuge, have not helped us out of any difficulty. By their systems, we cannot find a proper character for a mediator, who is to make an atonement for sin. This is the all-important point, the glad tidings of great joy. All the wise men before the Christian era, were anxiously expecting a revelation as to man's restoration from sin; religion then was only a local authority, the custom of each particular country; and all agreed that the particular interposition of God, was necessary; they all denounce as foolish, unmeaning, and abominable the worship in their respective countries; but as human wisdom and power was too infirm to remove ancient prejudices and to establish better and general modes of worship, they recommended the observance of these, until the *revelation* should come. In what then are these three systems above named better than the heathen? And why then should we fly to them for

shelter, and leave the refuge and the light of Scripture? Why should we fly to them if they darken the way of atonement for sin; if they destroy confidence; if they embarrass the way by insurmountable doubts; and if we are to rely still upon creature means and inventions?

Under these systems, if correct—what is our bible ordinance of benediction? Need we indeed wonder there is so much controversy about the ordinance of baptism? for it must follow that it is a mysterious and unmeaning ordinance. Provided our Lord possessed two whole natures, united in one person, as we have concluded he does, there would appear a great impropriety in both sacraments of the gospel. To apply them to the lesser nature of our Lord, and omit their application altogether, to the other, and infinitely superior nature, and to leave that without any sacrament, or ordinance to represent it, or bring it to remembrance, seems to our understanding to be irreconcilable. The second sacrament, which we call the Lord's Supper, undoubtedly must have reference to the humanity of our Lord, and to his flesh and blood in particular. Again, if there is not a divine spirit, or third person in the Trinity, possessing vitality, rationality, and real divinity, we cannot imagine why we should be commanded to be baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost.

We have considered the original institution of the divine ordinance of baptism, to be of great utility, as a symbol, or remembrancer, of much meaning, leading our minds into frequent recurrence to first and fundamental principles of the gospel of Christ, and to a greater intimacy and nearness, of knowledge which the divine union, and of our adoption into it, and love and fellowship therewith. In-

deed, we as Trinitarians, may as well blush and revolt as the Arian or Socinian, when we baptize in the name of the Father and Son, if we do not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature. Neither did we ever see, why, we cannot commune, with as much propriety, with the Socinian or Arian, as with professors of the doctrine of the Trinity, who deny and expunge the idea, that God has a divine Son.

CHAPTER VIII.

Same subject concluded.

We shall now recur to the inquiry. What has been the general objections brought against the doctrine of the Trinity, and the proper Sonship of our Lord? And what way, and how, ought these objections to be answered?

1st. Objection is, that it seems to make three co-ordinate Gods. This objection, is the one in which our opponents have had the greatest confidence. And whoever has been at the pains of of hearing their debates, and examining their arguments, will find we are not mistaken in considering this point, as one, on which they have placed their greatest reliance. Indeed it has been exhibited with so much of derision and impious exultation and triumph, that a question upon the subject, has been put to a congregation, by an anti-trinitarian preacher, in this way—"What would you think, if you were to see a man, or person, come into this congregation with three heads on one body?"

The primitive Trinitarians never likened their Trinity, to the three headed image of the heathens, they never contended that three heads proceeded from one body. These writer to fix this notion of three co-ordinate Gods and three headed Gods, attack the corruptions or abuses of the doctrine, incautiously or purposely admitted or avowed by

designing or ignorant professors of the doctrine; a direct attack upon the Gospel grounds of it, is rarely made, or with long continued effort; they soon fly off upon creature errors of doctrine. The nominal and real opponents, oftener attack those who wear the *name trinitarian* as a frontlet; and the latter, who are only outwardly friendly, or defective in experimental views, and blinded to consequences, most generally made the attack direct, and furnish the materials and grounds of accusation, schism, and denial. These last who bear the superscription only, of trinitarianism, we have ever supposed were referred to, by doctor Mosheim, he says, "the faction of the Donatist, was not the only one which troubled the church, during this century. Soon after its commencement, even in the year 317, a new contention arose in Egypt, upon a subject of much higher importance, and followed with consequences of a yet more pernicious nature. The subject of this fatal controversy, which kindled such deplorable divisions through the christian world, was the doctrine of three persons in one God. A doctrine which in the three preceding centuries had happily escaped the vain curiosity of human researches, and had been left undefined, and undetermined, by any particular set of ideas. The church had, indeed, frequently decided against the Sabellians, and others; and that there was a real difference between Father and Son, and that the Holy Ghost was different from them both."

The reasons why we place this doctrine which arose in Egypt to the account of those who have perverted the genuine doctrine of the Trinity, is; 1st, because Doctor Mosheim informs that this sect, which caused such deplorable division, arose

In the year 317. 2dly, That these ideas had escaped "the vain curiosity of human researches," and it kindled, at the period he speaks of, extensive division in the christian churches. 3dly, We offer on the authority of the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, that the Latin Fathers began to use this word "persons" in the 2d century, which was one hundred years before this sect arose in Egypt. He tells us, "these divine subsistences were soon called persons by the Latin Fathers as appears from Tertullian (who wrote as early as 120 or 130) who in his book against Praxeas, frequently mentions the *person of the Son*, and the *divine persons*. The primitive christians, finding it inconvenient to repeat always, at full length, the names of the divine subsistences, as our Lord enumerates them, in his charge of baptizing all nations, began about the same time, both for brevity and variety's sake, to call them the Trinity; and if by renouncing that comprehensive word, we could remove the prejudices of deists against the truth contended for, we would give it up, and always say, "The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost," which is what we mean by the Trinity. In the mean time, if to worship the Son and the Spirit, as comprehended in the Unity of the Father's God-head, is to deserve the name of Trinitarian, we glory in the appellation, provided it does not exclude that of Unitarian—for we do not the less worship the *Unity* in mysterious Trinity, than the Trinity in the most perfect and unfathomable Unity." The veracity or knowledge, of Mr. Fletcher, in the writings of the three first centuries, no person will question.

We offer as a 4th reason, that this doctrine which sprung up in Egypt, must have been a per-

version, or spiritualizing of the genuine doctrine of the Trinity, very similar in complexion and features to the modernized doctrines which are frequently taught at the present day, and which then and now, is not less or more, than a modified and partial revival of "the ancient heresy of Judaizing christians," as it has been termed, sheltering under the name of the Trinitarian doctrine. And the more especially, for we cannot learn that they defined who these three persons were, that in unity were one God;—or whether under their Trinitarian notions they had any names attached to them; or what was the nature of that union, and what ideas of their unity were defined and determined. It appears by the last clause of our extract from Doctor Mosheim, that "the church had indeed frequently decided against the Sabellians and others," we therefore conclude it was not a sect who had taken anti-trinitarian names; nor can it be the sect of genuine trinitarians, for the historian says nothing of the *unity*, but of the difference of their subsistences. Besides the genuine trinitarian doctrine could not be at that time a new sect, unless the words of all authority are discredited. It must of course be a sect, holding on to the *name* of trinitarian, and yet schismatic as to the divine unity and oneness, of nature, glory, and dignity. If the name and doctrine agree, and accord with the baptismal sacrament, and the angelic doxology, and the christian doxology, this is the test of genuine trinitarianism, for the *unity* is preserved which is essential, and indispensable; and the use and meaning of the word Trinity was in use and so understood in the 2d century, and indeed there can be no doubt, but it was so at a period prior to the era of Tertullian.

In answer to the charge of making in our views of the Trinity three co-ordinate Gods, we must be content to go no further than the scriptures have given authority. In tracing the scriptures, from Genesis to the Revelations, inclusive, we find Father to be *first* of the "three which bear record in heaven;" He is the Majesty on High, the Holy One; Father is frequently used as the whole God-head. Says Mr. Wesley, Holy and Holiness mean the same as God, and God-head. The scriptures abundantly speak of the Holiness and glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And hereby is the mystery of the Holy Trinity eminently confirmed. Holiness is often styled glory; often "his Holiness and Glory are celebrated together, for holiness is covered glory, and glory is uncovered holiness." The Angelic doxology is always, "Holy, holy, holy," three times repeated, and is a solemn, confirmatory enumeration.

The very name Father, imports and confirms the idea of the first person of the God-head, and must bear with weight upon every unprejudiced and christian mind, under all the gospel, and doctrinal uses of the appellation. If confidence is to be placed on the internal evidences of scripture; and if also, we may rely on the greatest historians, and on men of the deepest wisdom and piety, as witnesses for the verity and steadfastness of the churches in the three first centuries of christianity, in maintaining the ground; we may assuredly say—that the Father sustains the first office in the Trinity, and is the first which "bears record in heaven." We think some important consequences result from considering the divine person Father is neither of the persons of the Trinity *sent*.

We have heretofore made some remarks on some of our Lord's expressions. We shall only add, we understand the Father in the works of the God-head, fills the first office, and this is perfectly consistent in the relation, and most perfectly belongs to him. Our Lord's saying "My Father is greater than I," confirms it, and must have reference to the station or office the Father fills in this relation. When he saith "what he seeth the Father do, that doth the Son," must have respect to the dignity and glory or holiness of the nature of the Son, which was nothing inferior to the Father's. He might then say with striking propriety, that all men should honour the Son as they honour the Father. And for additional reasons there is great propriety in it. Because the Father had committed all judgment to the Son. The Son possessed the God-head as fully and inherently in himself as the Father. And if we do not honour the Son, we do not honour the Father, for very plain reasons; we rob the Father of the glory which is justly due to his paternity, or fatherhood; and we dishonour the Father as to his love in the gift of his Son to man for their redemption, and it is pouring contempt on the Father's authority in sending the Son into the world. All this is very plainly evidenced by our Lord's observations to his disciples; "He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me."

In candidly weighing all these points, in the balance of reason and in the light of scripture testimony, we may see a most perfect union and harmony in our Lord's declarations to the Jews, concerning himself and his Father, as to the dignity and glory of their character, and the station

or offices they sustain in the works of creation and redemption. And these points were of the highest importance to the Jews, as well as to the succeeding generations in every age of the world.— If we do not mistake, this is the ground, and the only ground which the christians endeavoured to maintain in the three first centuries, against every sect of their opposers, Deists, Polytheists, Tritheists, Ditheists, and Arians, and those who held in that day the doctrines of Sabellius, and the doctrines afterwards embraced by Socinius.

The doctrine of the Trinity is so very important in our view, that it is not in man to discern how any other plan could have been laid for man's salvation without it. Vary the plan, or constructively alter, one jot or tittle, and we have not from human speculation, been able to perceive a character in the universe, who could consistently become surety for man; or that could be made under the law, broken by man, and at the same time could be able to offer himself, and become an infinite sacrifice and oblation for sin. Where is the infinite merit and ransom? unless the Father and Son are equal in point of nature, dignity, glory, and attributes; unless the divine nature of Christ, under the law, is the Son, and "heir of all things," in the eternal counsel and act of the God-head.

If the Father does not sustain the first station or office in the Trinity, and if there is not a proper Father and proper Son in perfect Unity in the Trinity, we are confounded and dismayed, and know not which way to turn, or look for salvation; and, unless taught of God, we can discover nothing but chaos and ruin, and we have no other revelation. And it is hoped every discriminating and charitable Socinian and Arian, will perceive

and acknowledge an evident difference between our plan, and tritheism, or in other words three co-ordinate and *separate* Gods. At any lay, we attach very different ideas to our theory. Indeed we perceive not only a decided difference, but a manifest propriety, and harmony, in the phraseology of the gospel, that the Father in the relation of the works of the God-head, should be first in his relation to the other subsistences, in his paternity, and the first who "bears record in heaven." That we should find many passages of the Bible speaking of the Father in this light, and that in the divine baptismal sacrament, the Father should be placed first, appears to us as it should be. And it appears to us a no less plain and desirable revelation, that our Lord should speak of the Father, in a sense having a manifest reference to, and comprehending the whole God-head, "I am in the Father and the Father in me;" and that the Holy Ghost, the third person who beareth record, should be comprehended in the Divine nature, is as conclusively manifest.

The order, in which they are placed in the gospel in the relation of sending and sent; the order, and number, and oneness in the God-head; the order, number, and fellowship in the work; the order, number and oneness in angelic and christian worship, and in which they bear record in heaven; and the agreement in number with those who bear witness in earth, and which "agree in one," and which are elegantly and harmoniously subservient to the three persons testifying in heaven; and the whole unity, and general current of scripture, explaining and proclaiming the plan; are striking and illustrative coincidences, which must have a favoring influence upon every sensible

mind, and christian temper. Superadded to all this, the authority of the Fathers in the first centuries, and as well as the leaders of the reformation, who have always been careful, and anxiously assiduous in placing the trinitarian doctrine in the most plain point of light; and the whole, crowned as it is by the co-operation and the unity and communion of experimental christianity working upon the faith; are strong corroborative testimony, which if mistaken, would be passing strange. All these, in heaven and in earth bear the same unerring testimony, that the Son of God is divine, is the God of all grace. They testify of Him, in his state of humiliation on earth, and of his state of exaltation and glory. All power, all things and beings made and sustained, all beings redeemed and sanctified, are of the God-head, and not by any thing different from the mind of the God-head. Who can make, or bring man to be the image of God, but a God?

There is not the least discrepancy in the testimony of Christ's being the Son of God, in his divine nature. The whole tenor of revelation attests the fact. The Father, the Son or Word, and the Holy Ghost, in solemn enumeration, bear record in heaven, and they each testify to the fact on earth also. And "these three are one;" one in essence, in knowledge, in will, and in their testimony. The God-head testifies of it. The angels testify of his glory and exaltation, and in all the solemnity of their doxology perpetuate it.—John the Baptist, testified of his exaltation, and humiliation, and so do the apostles. This testimony we have thought was perfect. The Holy God, the Majesty on High, the God of all grace, and the God of all truth, hath testified of it. "If

we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; and this is the testimony of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth in the Son of God hath the witness in himself," &c. Who then can doubt our title to, and the real beginning, of our eternal life; and the divinity of our Lord? What thing is better substantiated, than the station the Father naturally sustains, in the Trinity; or what is better defended than the Divinity of the Son—or what is more immovable, and secured, or exalted in our worship, than the divine honour which is justly and naturally attached to the Father on account of his paternity, and planning; or to the Word, on account of his divine Sonship, and executing; or to the Holy Ghost, on account of his divine work of sanctifying, or of perfecting; or to the divine unity and majesty of the triune Godhead. The Unity and oneness of the three, in essence, knowledge, will, and testimony, is indubitable, if any thing, even if our own existence is a certainty. So we feel, and in so much is our faith firm and steadfast. The Son, we repeat, is divine in his nature.

We are also, as unshaken, that the salvation of man depends upon the maintenance of the doctrine, as we are in its verity and truth. The doctrine, therefore, being in our estimation, of infinite magnitude and importance, as the foundation of the gospel plan of salvation, demands our most anxious, prayerful, and solemn attention. If it is true that man's original transgression cannot be pardoned without an infinite atonement, and very few professed believers in any age have doubted it; and even the wisest heathen philosophers, were persuaded of its absolute necessity: and that

a revelation was needed to show the way and manner, and even conceded the point that infinite wisdom alone could devise and perfect the plan of redemption; we say if this necessity existed, and if in the gospel our only title to eternal life, and a never ending, heavenly inheritance, is to be found, the motives to lay hold upon it, will be of the same eternal character.

It may therefore, be of much interest to reflect upon and inquire for a few moments into the necessity we have for divine interposition, and a divine means of ransom. The command was, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." We think the character and extent of it is very manifest and plain. The Veracity, and Word of God was pledged—"in the day thou eatest thereof *thou shalt surely die.*" Now man disobeyed the command, and did eat thereof, and it was violation of the command, and not only this, the veracity or word of the God-head, or of the Father was pledged; "for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Now if the Father sustains the first office and station, in creation, and the plan of redemption, and the trinity, this transgression must be considered against the Father, or the Majesty of the God-head on High. For God considered as the Father to become veiled in humanity, and become a substitute for man, and become as a Lamb, "in fashion as a man," under that law, and offer an oblation to God, in our opinion, would seem absurd.

And were there three co-ordinate Gods—the transgression would be equally against the three, and there would appear an inconsistency for ei-

ther of the three to become surety to the other two to redeem man from his state of ruin.

We have considered in this work, there was much reason, and assurance, that a created being could not render to God obedience, over and above, the obligations they naturally owe to God. And of course, no created being could offer a sacrifice for the sins of a world of men. Hence it is, if God has not *given* us an only begotten Son, possessing all the divine attributes, as we have contended; and which we have concluded Christ does possess; we know not where to find a Mediator or Redeemer, to ransom man from the state of the fall, and the sentence of the law, and by an atonement to reconcile man to God, and restore him to the favor of the Highest, and most holy Father.

Having therefore examined the works of Doctor Clarke, and Mr. Millard, we hope with a proper and charitable temper, and with all due respect for them, including also, some notices of Mr. Worcester. Finding, as we apprehend some insurmountable difficulties in their respective systems. We have concluded to turn our attention, and lay before our readers, some of the views, of the most excellent writers, as well as of those who have written on the subject of the Trinity, and the person of Jesus Christ, and the various systems of divinity. We have also to

hope to possess that confidence and faith which insureth Eternal life, we hope also, to have charity and brotherly love towards brethren ; for we deprecate the arrogance and illiberality of that class, who engross to themselves the name of orthodoxy, and despise others who do not agree with them, for this spirit is unholy and anti-christian. This charge is not to be understood as having any allusion to Doctor Clarke. Orthodox, in its modern use is a word of doubtful meaning, perhaps few words have more ambiguity. If those who have left the primitive doctrine of the Trinity and claim the name Trinitarian and of orthodoxy, are orthodox, we know not what class of men may not claim it, with equal propriety and force of application. Where they are, and what class of men they are to be likened unto, and by what name they are to be known, is left to the judgment of the pious reader. And no real christian will shrink from the scrutiny and judgment of men of apostolic and real piety.

PART III.



Introductory Remarks.

This part of our work, we commence with the 3d chapter of Mr. Fletcher's works, and which he wrote in vindication of the divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity, against the attack of Doctor Priestly. Mr Fletcher was one of the vicars of the church of England. Doctor Priestly a modern Socinian. The candid reader, whether acquainted with Mr. Fletcher's works, or not, are requested to give them a careful and attentive perusal ; and to note well the weight and force of his arguments, and compare them with Scripture, and with our preceding remarks ; and prayerfully consider, "unto what, then, were ye baptized?" Acts 19, 3. We wish also, particular examination may be especially given, of his proofs that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature ; and that critical comparison be made of the views of Mr. Fletcher and the opposite views of Doctor Clarke.

CHAPTER III.

FROM DOCT. FLETCHER.

That, according to the Scriptures, God the Father has a proper Son, by whom he made, governs, and will Judge the world.

WE cannot read the divine oracles without finding out this capital truth, that God, considered as Father, has an only begotten Son, called the *Logos* or the *Word*, whom he "loved before the foundation of the world," John xvii. 24. "who is the express image of his person," Heb. i. 3.—"by whom he made the world, who was in the beginning with God, and was God," John i. 1.

We need only to consider the first verse of Genesis, to find an intimation of this capital truth. "in the beginning," says Moses, "Elohim, the Gods," in the plural number, or *God*, considered in the *distinctions*, peculiar to his nature, "He created the heaven and the earth." The learned know, that *Elohim* is a word in the *plural* number, signifying more exactly *Gods* than *God*: and accordingly it is sometimes so translated in our Bible: "Thou shalt have no other ELOHIM," no other Gods, "but me" Exod. 20. "The Elohim doth know, that ye shall be as the Elohim;" which is rendered by the Septuagint, and in our version, "God doth know, that ye shall be as Gods:" Gen. iii. 5. a proof this, even to an illiterate reader, that the very first line of the Bible gives us some notice of the mysterious distinctions in the divine nature, one of which is

called *the Spirit* in the very next verse: "And the Spirit of the Elohim moved on the face of the waters.

"In the beginning was the Word," the Son, the second of the distinctions in the Godhead, says St. John, "and the Word was with God," the Father, "and was God;" partaking of the divine nature in union with the Father, John, i. 1.

Is man to be created, these divine subsistences consult together: the Elohim says, Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness: and when man is fallen in attempting to be like the *Elohim*, God says, "Behold, he is become like one of us—to know good and evil."

Light is thrown upon this mysterious language, where David, speaking of the Son manifested in the flesh, introduces Jehovah as saying to the Messiah, "Thou art my son—this day have I begotten thee." Struck with the awfulness of this decree, or divine declaration, the psalmist cries out, "serve Jehovah with fear, kiss the Son," give him the kiss of adoration by trusting in him as Jehovah-Saviour, kiss him, "lest ye perish out of the way" of saving faith, if his wrath, the terrible wrath of the Lamb, described Rev. vi. 16. "be kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him," Psalm ii. 7, 11, 12. And to prove that this *Son* of Jehovah, whom we are to *trust in* under pain of destruction, is not a *mere man* (as Dr. P. supposes,) but the proper son of God, we need only compare with the above, these two scriptures: "Trust ye in the Lord Jehovah, for in him is everlasting strength—Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and whose heart de-

parteth from Jehovah;" Isaiah xxvi. 4. and Jer. xvii. 5.

Agur had a sight of the mystery revealed in the second psalm, when he asks, "Who hath established the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name?" Prov xxx, 4. And that this everlasting Son was, at times, the object of the religious addresses of prophets and kings, appears from these words of the psalmist: "All kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him," Psalm lxxii. 11. "And worship Him all ye Gods," Psalm xcvi. 7. the very passage to which St. Paul alludes, where he writes, "When God bringeth in his first begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6.

But what was only on particular occasions taught the prophets, was continually held out to view by the apostles. God the Son, or *the Son of God*, or *God manifested in the flesh* is the sum of the New Testament. He plainly spoke of *God the Father*; and with the blood of human nature, which he assumed for our salvation, he publickly sealed this great truth, *I am the son of God: before Abraham was, I am.*

He speaks of his eternal Father, as of his proper and natural Father, with whom he shared divine honors before he appeared upon earth. "And now, O Father," says he, "glorify thou me," in my complex nature, "with thine own self," at thy right hand, "with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," John xvii. 5. Speaking of his appearance as Son of man, he calls himself both "the Son of God," and "the Son of man, whom God the Father hath sealed," John x, 36, and vi. 27. St. Paul seaks the same language,

When he mentions "the church in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Thess. 1. i. If he wishes peace to the Ephesians, it is "from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ," Eph. vi. 23. If he prays that Titus and Timothy may be filled with grace, he looks up to "God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour," Titus i 4. St. Jude salutes those who are "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ," Jude ver. 1. St. Peter, full of the glorious idea of the Trinity, writes to them that are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," 1 Peter i. 2. In his second epistle, he adds, "We were witnesses of his majesty: For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," 2 Peter i. 17. And St. John, who declares, "the Son of God is come, the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father."—St. John I say, salutes the elect Lady, by wishing her "mercy from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father," 2 John i, 3,—John i. 1. 14.—1 John v. 20.

It is not possible, that an unprejudiced person should read these scriptures, without being struck with this thought, If the gospel teaches us, that there is in the Godhead One, who is called God the Father, it teaches us, at least indirectly, that there is another, who may with propriety be called the only *begotten*, or *proper Son of God*—

T

a Son *by nature*, and not barely a son by *creation* as Adam, or by *adoption*, as St. Paul and St. John, or by the *resurrection* from the dead, as those saints who came out of their graves when our great High Priest died to overcome death and the grave. And, therefore, unless the gospel sets before us the most strange temptation to idolatry, (the bare supposition of which is not to be allowed for a moment,) there is in the Godhead a Son, who was in the beginning with God the Father, and who was as truly God with Him, as Isaac the *proper son* of the man Abraham, was truly man, like his father.

This will appear beyond all doubt, if the reader weighs the following scriptural remarks upon our Lord's sonship.

1. Some are the created sons of God, whether they are supernaturally formed out of nothing as angels, or of pre-existent matter as our first parents: 2. Others are the reputed sons of God, as all those who profess to serve him with filial reverence: 3. Others are the titular sons of God, as all those to whom a share of God's supreme authority has been delegated: 4. Others are (in one sense) the adopted sons of God, as St. John, and all those who receiving by faith the *proper Son*, and being led by the spirit, receive the *initial* adoption—namely, *the redemption of their souls*: And 5. Others, (as Enoch, Elijah, and the saints who now share in the first resurrection,) *being sons of the resurrection, are the adopted sons of God in the full sense of the word*; for they have *received the (full) adoption,—namely, the redemption of their body*, Luke xx. 36. and Rom. viii. 14. 23.

The first and the last of these five degrees of sonship, are the most extraordinary : but neither is peculiar to our Lord. For, if with respect to his humanity, he was miraculously and supernaturally formed of the substance of his virgin mother, *Mary*, Adam was thus formed of the substance of our then virgin mother, *the earth* : And if our Lord burst triumphantly out of the womb of the grave, on the day of his resurrection, so had some of the saints done three days before him, when entered as Prince of life into the territories of death : For, when *He gave up the ghost, the earth did quake, the rocks rent, the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept arose* : And supposing they rose only with him, yet even upon this footing, it could not be said, that, as *Son of the resurrection*, he is God's only *begotten Son*, seeing many rose with him, even the multitude of rescued prisoners who graced his triumph, when *he ascended upon high, leading captivity captive*. It follows then, that our Lord hath a peculiar and incommunicable Sonship, of which these are some of the principal characters.

1. Though he is a *created Son* of God, as well as Adam, with respect to his *humanity* ; yet, with regard to his superior nature, he is such a *Son by whom* the Father *made the worlds*, Heb. i. 2. "The world was made by him : " For "by Him all things were made, and without Him was not any thing made that was made," John i. 3. 10. Hence St. Paul speaking of Adam and of Christ, says, "The first man, Adam, was made a living soul ; the last Adam a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy : but the second man is the Lord from heaven," 1 Cor. xv. 4. 5. 47.

2. Hence our Lord spoke in the most positive manner of his coming from heaven: "I proceeded forth, and came from God," John viii. 32. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go to the Father," John xvi. 28. "I came down from heaven, to do the will of Him that sent me. This is my Father's will that sent me, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day." And when the Jews murmured at him, because he said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."—when they whispered, "Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph? how is it, then, that he saith, I came down from heaven?" Our Lord saith, "Doth this offend you? What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" John vi. 38, 40, 42, 62. And, alluding to the glory which Christ had with the Father before the world was, John xvii. 5. John the Baptist says of him, "He that cometh from above, is above all: He that is of the earth, is earthy, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh from heaven is above all," John iii. 31. Who does not see, that if our Lord and his forerunner be allowed to have spoken the words of soberness and truth, he reigned in glory with the Father before his incarnation.

John the Baptist was older than our Saviour, according to his *humanity*, and began to preach *before* him; nevertheless, with regard to his deity, John said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world: This is he of whom I spake: He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me," John i. 15, 29. And well might he say so, if our Lord

himself says, "Before Abraham was I am," if St. John declares that "the Word was in the beginning with God," the Father, "and was God," and if David and St. Paul agree to say of him, "Thy throne O God, is forever and ever—Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands: They shall perish, but thou remainest: They shall wax old, as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years fail not."

3. He is a Son so exalted above all that are called gods upon earth, that St. Paul fears not to say, "He is the image of the invisible God," as a son is the image of his father, "the first-born of every creature," (that is, begotten before any creature—for, adds the apostle, showing that this is his true meaning,) "by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers—all things were created by Him and for Him: and he is before all things," before all creatures, "and by him all things consist," Col. i. 15, &c.

4. He is such a Son as can say, "All things that the Father hath, are mine," being fully possessed of the most incommunicable attributes of the Supreme Being. If the Father say, "I, Jehovah search the heart; I try the reins," Jer. xvii. 10.—the Son says, with equal truth, "I am he that searcheth the reins and the heart," Rev. ii. 23. If Solomon said to the Father, "Thou, even Thou only knowest the hearts of all the children of men," Kings viii. 39.—the apostles say to the Son, "Thou knowest the hearts of all men," Acts i.

24. John ii. 24. Doth the Father say, "I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God?" Isa. xlv. 6.—the Son says, "I am the first, and I am the last.—I and the Father are one," Rev. i. 17. John x. 30. Doth the Father say, "I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end," Rev. i. 8.—the Son, his adequate image, echoes back the awful declaration, and says, "I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end." Rev. xxii. 13. Is the Father called "King of kings, and Lord of Lords?" 1 Tim. vi. 15.—the Son is proclaimed "Lord of lords, and King of kings," Rev. xvii. 14. Doth St. Paul call the Father "Lord of all?" Rom. x. 12.—St. Peter says of the Son, "He is Lord of all," Acts x. 36. And to crown these glorious testimonies, if Isaiah name Jehovah "the mighty God," Isa. x. 21, he gives the very same title to the *Son*, chap. ix. 6.—and the apostle calls him, "Over all God blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 5. And if the Father is so incomprehensible, that "no one knoweth him," (fully) "but the Son," the Son is likewise so incomprehensible, that "no one knoweth him" (fully,) "but the Father," Mat. xi. 27. If "no man cometh to the Father but by the Son," John xiv. 6. "no man can come to me," says the Son "except the Father draw him," John vi. 44. And as Philip did not satisfactorily know the Father, before the joyful day, in which the Son revealed him to the apostles by the spirit, (see *John* xiv. 8, 20, 23. and Acts ii. 1.) so St. Paul did not satisfactorily know the Son, till *it pleased God to reveal his Son in him*, by filling him with the Holy Ghost, who alone can savingly teach us to "call Jesus Christ Lord, my Lord, and my God!" Gal. i. 16. Acts ix. 17. and 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

From this common, equal, and full participation of the highest titles, and most distinguishing perfections of the Supreme Being, it follows, that the Son (with respect to *deity*) is as perfectly equal to the Father, though all the Son's deity came from his *Divine* Father; as Isaac (with respect to *humanity*) was equal to Abraham, though all the *humanity* of Isaac came from his *human* parent.

5. Accordingly our Lord was not only declared Son of God with power by his rising from the dead; but he declared himself the very source and fountain of life: "I am the resurrection and the life," said he, "he that believeth in **ME**, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die," John xi. 25, 26. Could the Father speak stronger words to declare himself the true and living God? Nor ought we to wonder, that the Son should speak in so lofty a manner; for being the *Truth* itself, he must speak the truth—he must speak as the oracles of God, which represent the Father and the Son as so perfectly united, that they are one inexhaustible spring of life and action, of grace and peace. "No man hath seen God," the Father, "at any time; the only begotten Son, who is," even while on earth, "in the bosom of the Father," and who *came in the flesh*, "he hath declared him," John i. 18. "I am not alone, but I and the Father who sent me," John viii. 16. "Believe that the Father is in me, and I in him," John x. 38. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father:—I am in the Father, and the Father in me," John xiv. 9, 11. "They have not known the Father, nor me," John xvi. 3. "Whoso denieth the Son, hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Fa-

them also," 1 John ii. 23, &c. "Mercy from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father :—He that abideth in Christ, hath the Father and the Son," 2 John ver. 3, 9. "If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also," John xiv. 7. "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father," John v. 23. "Our fellowship is with the Father and his Son," 1 John i. 3.

From these, and the many scriptures, where mercy and all blessings are equally and jointly implored from God the Father, and from the Son of God, we conclude, that as the natural sun, and the blazing radiance which it continually generates, make but one wonderful luminary.—so the Father, and the Son, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, make but one God over all blessed for ever.

As concluding remarks to this chapter, we can have but little to add to this venerable and pious divine—and these few, mere notes of application. From the contents of this chapter, we learn that according to the scriptures, God the Father has a *proper Son*, by whom he made and governs the world. Our views concur with this venerable writer's ideas, that it is most clearly a gospel truth, that this Son must be God in his divine nature; for every unprejudiced mind, must admit, that none but a God, can create, govern, and judge the world; and that the being having this power, must possess the fullness of the attributes of the Father, naturally, and inherently in himself as the Father. And as this pious divine saith, "we cannot read the divine oracles without finding out this capital truth, that God, considered as Father, has an only begotten Son, called the Logos

or word, whom he loved before the foundation of the World." We find also, that Mr. Fletcher believed that the Son, or Logos, or Word of the Father, to be one and the same character or being. This learned and pious divine, is consistent in all this, with the articles of faith he has subscribed as a member of the church of England; which we have ever professed to believe, so far as they refer to the question under consideration. The 2d article states, "the Son who is the Word of the Father, took man's nature," &c. It will suffice for us to say, that Mr. Fletcher's views concur with ours, that Christ as Son, is exalted, above all that are created, derived, and dependent beings, and above all called Gods upon earth; and that is supported by the great Apostle Paul;—and by him all things were created and exist—he is the beginning and the end, the first and last. We are in belief with Mr. Fletcher, and we think his authority, maintains what we have previously written in this work. We now lay before our readers for their edification, the 4th chapter of Mr. Fletcher's vindication.

CHAPTER IV.

BY MR. FLETCHER.

That our Lord claimed the divine honor of being the proper Son of God the Father, and laid down his human life in proof of this very truth.

Jesus Christ, says St. Paul, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," Phil. ii. 6, &c. Hence the carnal Jews, who judged of him merely according to their carnal reason, being offended at him, verified the truth of Isaiah's prophecy: "He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." But "who shall declare his generation." The Jews, I say, judging of him according the flesh, charged him with *blasphemy*, and "sought to kill him, because he said that God was his (proper) Father, making himself equal with God," although, like a true Son, he acknowledged that the Father (in point of *paternity*) was greater than him, yet he never declared himself of the supposed blasphemy, but defended himself by proper appeals to his works: "I and the Father are one," so intimately one, that "the Son can do nothing of himself, but," like a divine son, in the most perfect unity with his Father who precedes him, "he does what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever the Father doeth, those also doeth the Son likewise,"

whether they be the creation, or the preservation of worlds—the fixing, or the controlling of the laws of nature, “For as the Father hath” a divine and quickening “life in himself, so hath he given to the son to have” a divine and quickening “life in himself.” “For as the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.” [Nay, added our Lord, there is one thing which the Father leaves entirely to the Son:] “For the Father judgeth no man : but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men should honor the Son as they honor the Father,” John v. 18, 26. x. 30. Thus our Lord, far from pleading not guilty, to the charge of “making himself equal with God,” proved by two unanswerable reasons, that divine honors are due to Him, as well as to the Father : 1. He does the very works of his Father jointly with him : And 2. The Father hath, over and above, committed to him the most awful and tremendous of all works—that of judicially killing and saving alive : “for the Father judgeth no man,” in the daily course of providence, as well as in the great day: This divine work is the Son’s honourable prerogative, that none should scruple to “honor Him as they honor the Father.”

Let us see how this divine Son defended himself against the same charge on another occasion. When he had asserted, that “He and his Father were one, the Jews took up stones again to stone Him, saying, We stone thee for blasphemy, and because thou, being a man, makest thyself God” What a fair opportunity had our Lord here, to disclaim divine honors, and to set kindly the Jews to rights, if they had mistaken his meaning, But far from doing this, he tries, to convince

them of his divinity, by a rational argument, and by a further appeal to his god-like works.

1. By a rational argument.—“Is it not,” saith he “written in your law, I said Ye are Gods?—If he called them Gods, unto whom the Word of God (the Logos) came, say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?” John x. 31, &c. The force of this argument may be better understood by a short paraphrase. It is just as if our Lord had said, If the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, gives the honorary title of gods, to the prophets, judges, and kings of Israel, whom God appointed to be types of me, the Head of the prophets, and the Judge of all the earth,—do ye not act very inconsistently with the scriptures, which cannot be broken, when you suppose that I blaspheme; by saying, “I am the Son of God?” If the bare types and forerunners of me, are titular *gods* in your own account, are you not as unreasonable as you are unjust, to be offended at me for saying “I am the Son of God?” whereas I might have roundly said, that I am, in union with my Father, “God, over all blessed for ever.” If my shadows are called *gods* without blasphemy, do ye not break at once through the word of God, and through the bounds of common sense, when ye say; that I, the sum and substance of all types and figures—I the *King of kings*, and the *Lord of lords*, who am sent by my Father with godlike credentials, blaspheme, when I declare that *I am the Son* (the proper Son) *of God?*

2. After our Lord had advanced this convincing argument, he proceeded to an argument, the strength of which was felt by all those who had

eyes and a grain of candor, I mean an appeal to his works. "If I do not the works of my Father," the works of God, "believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; so shall ye know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him," or, to use his former expression, "that I and my Father are One," John x. 30, 37, 38.

The effect of this last argument shows, that our Lord, far from having made any concession to the Jews, stood to his point, viz. that *He and the Father are One*—that being the proper *Son of God*, he is, in union with his Father, the *One true God*; which he instantly proved by a divine work: for the *Jews*, enraged at what appeared to them confirmed *blasphemy*, "sought again to take him;" but, (notwithstanding their impetuous fury,) "he escaped out of their hands," John x. 39.

And when at last he suffered himself to be apprehended by them for the establishment of our faith, and to leave the enemies of his divinity, and the inconsistent admirers of his humanity, without excuse,—he sealed with his blood the glorious truth, for which he had been stoned again and again; namely, that he was the very Son of God, to whom the psalmist says, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: therefore God, thy God," and thy Father, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness," or hath appointed thee Christ for ever, Psalm xlv. 6, 7. For when the high-priest, standing "up in the midst, asked him, Art thou the Christ" (that very Christ, of whom the prophet Micah saith, "out of Bethlehem shall come forth He that shall be Ruler in Israel, whose goings

U

forth have been from of old, from everlasting?" Micah v. 2.) "Art thou the Son of the blessed?" (that very Son, of whom the prophet Isaiah says; Unto us "the Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace?") To this double question, which the Jews certainly understood in the high sense of the well known prophecies by which I illustrate them, as appears by Mat. ii. 4, &c.—to this awful question Jesus answered, "I AM; and ye shall see the Son of man," whom ye now reject because his form of God is veiled under the form of a servant, "sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming," in his form of God, "in the clouds of heaven, Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith. Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death," Mark xiv. 61, &c. So true it is, that the open or secret enemies of our Lord's deity, who, when we speak of his pre-existence, and of the adoration due to him, as the everlasting Son of the Blessed and everlasting Father, cry out, Absurdity! Blasphemy! Idolatry! and, in their indignation rend the church, as Caiaphas rent his garments, have drunk into the very spirit of the priests and the pharises, who led the van of the Jewish mob, when it cries, "Away with him!" He is only Joseph and Mary's son, and of course a proud *blasphemer*; for *he says*, "that God is his," réâl and proper, "Father, making himself equal with God," John v. 18.

Remarks.—“ Thus far Mr. Fletcher had proceeded when he was called to his reward.”— This chapter is so lucid and full, the language so clear, and the arguments so strong and forcible ; that we have only to press the reader to a candid and anxious reading of it ; and we think he will find himself ready to draw his own conclusion, on the points we have labored, and wish him to consider.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

We now insert several sections from the 8th chapter of the Rev. Mr. Benson's continuation of the subject which by death the Rev. Mr. Fletcher was prevented from completing. The extracts from Mr. Benson's works will contain some quotations from the fathers of the 2d and 3d centuries of christianity. This is to give the reader a view, of the ideas of the most approved fathers on the subject.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM THE REV. MR. BENSON.

That the Apostles represented HIM as the immediate Author of all the Divine Works, &c.

1. WE have already seen in that remarkable passage, quoted at large from the beginning of St. John's Gospel, that he considered the WORD which was "in the beginning with God," as the immediate creator of all things. His words are very express,—“All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made,” ver. 3. And again, ver. 10, “The world was made by him.” St. Paul, it is well known, taught the very same doctrine,—“By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities

ties or powers: all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”

2. It is true, the *Father*, who is the fountain of *deity* and of *divine power*, is also the *primary cause* of all the divine works. But it is plain, from these passages, that the apostles considered the *Word* that was in the beginning with God, as the immediate author of them, the operative creator, (if I may so express myself,) the *real* and *proper framer* of all things, visible and invisible, temporal and eternal. Hence it is that they apply to him (as we have seen) the words of David in the 102d Psalm—“Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thine hands:” which words certainly represent the person, of whom they are spoken, not as an *instrument* in the hands of another, but as in a true and proper form, the *maker of the world*. And this was certainly the opinion of the ancient fathers, as innumerable passages, in their writings, shew. For the illustration of the subject, I shall quote two or three pages from Bishop Bull’s Defence of the Nicene Faith; in which it will generally be allowed, he fairly represents the sentiments of these eminently holy men, who living so near the apostolic age, (some of them being the disciples of the apostolical fathers,) and being so constantly conversant with their writings, could not easily be ignorant what the doctrine of the apostles was upon this subject.*

* I make use of the translation of FRAN. HOLLAND, A. M. Rector of Sutton, Wilts.

3. The following passage the bishop gives us from *Justin's Epistle to Diognetus*, p. 498.—“He, the Almighty, the creator of all things, the invisible God, hath implanted among men, and engraven in their hearts, the heavenly *truth*, the *Word*, holy and incomprehensible; not sending, as any one would conjecture, a *servant*, an *angel*, a *prince*, an earthly *potentate*, or one to whom he had entrusted the administration of heavenly things,—but the *artificer* and *maker of all things*, by whom he formed the heavens, and shut in the sea in its proper bounds: whose mysteries all the elements faithfully observe: from whom the sun has received his charge to measure out the day, whom the moon obeys, when he commands her to shine in the night, and the stars which follow the course of the moon; by whom all things are ordered and bounded, to whom all things are subject, the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is; the fire, the water, the abyss; what is in the heights and depths, and betwixt them: Him he hath sent to them. For what end? As a man would think to tyrannize over them? To awe and terrify them?—No: He sent him as a *king* sends a *king*, *his son*, in clemency and meekness: He sent him as a *God*: He sent him to man—he sent him to save.”

4. The bishop quotes *Athenagoras* to the same purpose, p. 131.—“The Son of God is the *Word* of the Father, in idea and energy. All things were made by him, and for him; the Father and Son being one,—the Son in the Father, and the Father in the Son, by the unity and power of the Spirit. *The Son of God is the Mind and Word of the Father.*” And (p. 143, 144,) produces from *Irenæus*, a disciple of Polycarp, a passage

still more explicit.—“Nor shall any thing made, and in subjection, be compared with the *Word of God*, by whom all things were made, who is our Lord Jesus Christ. Because, whether they are angels or archangels, or thrones or dominions, they are made by him who is God over all, by his *Word*. So St. John hath told us. For when he had said of the *Word of God*, that he was in the Father, he added.—“All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made.” David, also, when he had particularly enumerated his praises, added,—“for he commanded, and they were created; and spoke and they were made.” Whom did he command? *The Word*, by whom the heavens were made, and the host of them by the breath of his mouth.—Now the things that are made, are different from Him that made them; and those appointed, from Him that appointed them. He is unmade, without beginning, without end; he wants nothing, is self-sufficient, and gives to all other things their being. The things made by him had a beginning, and, as such, may have an end,—are subject—indigent. It is altogether necessary they should have a different name, especially among men of any discernment of such things. So that *He who made all things*, with his *Word*, be justly and alone called *God and Lord*; but not that those who are made, should participate, or justly take to themselves, the name of their *Creator*.”

5. In the two following pages the bishop quotes two more passages from Irenæus to the same purpose.—“The Son, who is the *Word of God*, laid out these things from the beginning, the Father not standing in need of angels for the cre-

ation of the world, and the making of man, for whom the world was created, nor again wanting a ministerial power for making these things that are made, and the disposing the affairs of the world, after the formation of man, but having a sufficient and ineffable one. For his own offspring, and impress ministers to him in all things, i. e. the Son and holy Spirit, the Word and Wisdom, to whom angels are subject, and minister." Again—"All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made." Here is no exception, but the Father made all things by him, whether visible or invisible, sensible or intellectual, temporal, for a certain purpose, or eternal. He made all things, not by angels, or powers, *different from his mind*; for the God of all things wants nothing, but his *Word* and *Spirit* making, disposing, and governing all things, and giving being to them.

6. The same doctrine Irenæus delivers in another place, p. 214.—"There is only one God, the creator, who is above all principality and power, and dominion and dignity. He is the Father, the God, the creator, the builder, the maker, that made those things by himself, i. e. who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, by his Son and Holy Spirit."—Again, p. 369 of Irenæus' works, "The angels then did not make, did not form us: They could not make the image of God, nor any but the *Word of God*; no power distinct (separate) from the father. Nor did the Father stand in need of them to make what he had before designed, as if he had not hands of his own. He has always with him his *Word* and *Wisdom*, the *Son* and *Spirit*, by whom, and in whom, he freely made

all things, and to whom he spake, saying,—Let us make man after our image and similitude.”

7. To testimonies of *Justin*, *Athenagoras*, and *Irenæus*, disciples of the apostolical fathers, I shall add from the bishop, a passage of *Origen*, which the bishop defends as perfectly orthodox:—“The *Word*, the *Son of God*, is the immediate, and, as it were, the very framer of the world: The Father of the *Word*, in that he ordered the *Word*, his *Son*, to make the world, its primary creator.”—*Origen*, p. 317.

8. The fathers, therefore, at least in these passages, (which it will not be doubted bishop Bull has fairly represented,) approve this doctrine,—that though the *Father* is primary creator, yet that the *Son*, his *Word* is the *immediate creator* and *framer* of the world. But that he did not do this as a being *separate from* the Father, but in such a sense, *one with him*, that the Father, creating the world by him, might be said to create it by *his own hands*, as *Irenæus*’ phrase is, or *by himself*; according to the words of *Isaiah*, ch. xlv. 24, “I am Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens ALONE, that spreadeth abroad the earth by MYSELF.” For as the *Holy Spirit*, who is undoubtedly of a nature *properly divine*, is the *Spirit of the Father*, and *proceedeth from the Father*, but though *sent forth*, is never *separated* from him: so, in like manner, the *Word* is the *Word of the Father*; and though he says, he “proceeded forth, and came from God, and that he came not of himself, but the Father sent him,” *John* viii. 42, yet he is still united to him, and one with him,—“is still in the Father, and the Father in him.”

INTRODUCTORY.

We now proceed to lay before the reader two letters, from the celebrated letters of the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, to Doct Priestly. We shall then make some practical remarks on them and the preceding chapter.

LETTER II.

Doctor Priestly is mistaken, when he asserts that the prophets always spoke of the Messiah as of a mere man like themselves, and that the Jews never expected that the Messiah could be more than a man. In opposition to this error, this letter proves that our first parents expected a divine Messiah, and that the divine person, who appeared to the Patriarchs and to Moses, was Jehovah the Son, or Christ in his pre-existent state.

REV. SIR,

You might have given us, at least, twenty lines of plain uncontroverted truth in the beginning of your history, but regardless of so decent a caution, you stun us at once by a glaring, anti-christian paradox. In the sixteenth line of your huge work, (for we need not go by *pages* to reckon up your errors) speaking of the thoughts which the Jews entertained of the *Messiah*, you say, "none of their prophets gave them an idea of any other than a man like themselves in that illustrious character, and no other did they ever

Now, sir, in opposition to this strange assertion, I shall shew you, not only that the prophets gave the Jews an idea of a *divine person* to appear in the character of the Messiah, and that accordingly they expected such an one, but that even our first parents must have formed a much higher notion of that "seed of the woman which was to bruise the serpent's head," than that of a mere man, "like themselves." In proof of this, I shall not produce the expression of Eve upon the birth of Cain, whom it is highly probable she thought to be *that seed*, though according to the Hebrew it is *I have gotten the man, the Jehovah*. But I shall go upon surer grounds than any particular expression can afford. I shall argue from facts and from the reason of the case. However unwilling you may be to allow it, it is nevertheless, as we have already seen in the former part of this work, an unquestionable truth that the *Logos*, the *Word*, who "was in the beginning with God and was God;" was the immediate maker of our first parents, of that beautiful world in which he placed them, and of all the creatures over which he set them, nay, and of all things visible and invisible. Now can we suppose that *Adam*, who, as he came out of the hands of his maker, had such knowledge, that at first sight he gave names to all the creatures, as they passed in review before him, and names perfectly descriptive of their natures; can we suppose, I say, that *he* did not know who was his *creator*, and the creator of all these creatures he had named? Certainly we cannot. But if he knew who was his creator, he could hardly be ignorant who would be his *redeemer*. For considering the holy and happy state he and his partner had been in before

their fall, the serenity of their minds, the vigour of their bodies, and the beauty and fertility of the blissful spot where their bounteous Lord had placed them; and considering the sad change that had now taken place, the dreadful ruin they had brought on themselves and their posterity by their transgression; considering their crime itself with its awful retinue, shame, the curse, sorrow, toil, death, and corruption; it was reasonable surely to think, that the repairer of the breach, the restorer of a ruined world, would be *that* divine person, by whom it was created. Thus when we see an exquisite piece of mechanism capitably injured in all its parts, we reasonably conclude, that none can completely mend it, but the *maker*, or an artist who equals him in skill.

Nor was it unreasonable for our first parents to think that their redeemer would be he, whom *St. Paul* calls the *Lord from heaven*: for, he who made and married them, who gave them the garden of *Eden*, and warned them not to eat of the forbidden fruit; he, who came to them "walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and from whose presence they hid themselves when they heard his voice;" he, who after he had convicted them, and had passed sentence of death upon them, so kindly saved them from despair, by the unexpected promise of a deliverer; he who *already* carried his merciful condescension so far as to strip them of their *fig-leaves*, to *make them coats of skins*, and to *clothe them* with needful and decent apparel; he might, in some future period, condescend to unite himself some how or other, to the woman's seed, and become the destroyer of death and the serpent,

The reasonableness of this hope is evident, if he taught our first parents, (as it is highly probable he did) to offer in sacrifice the *beasts, of whose skins he made them coats*, and thus already shewed himself *our passover, the lamb of God*, typically *slain from the foundation of the world*. Nor can we more reasonably account for the *original* notion and the *universal* custom of expiatory and propitiatory sacrifices than by the supposition, that mankind were led to this part of divine worship by a peculiar revelation, or by a positive command of that divine person, who familiarly conversed with *Adam*, and who is called **GOD**, or **LORD GOD**, twenty-six times, in the second and third chapters of *Genesis*.

The same scriptures which inform us, that "no man hath seen God," the Father, "at any time, but" that "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared him," (John i. 18,) teach us nevertheless, that God appeared to several of the patriarchs, and sometimes even in a *human* shape. Hence it follows, that we must either reject St. John's declaration above quoted, or admit, that he, who thus appeared, is the **SON**, the **LOGOS**, who "was in the beginning with God, and was God."

The truth of this conclusion will appear more clearly, if we take a view of the *design* and *circumstances* of these ancient manifestations, these preparatory and transient incarnations, (if I may so call them) OF **THE WORD**, who in a fixed period was to be really and lastingly manifested in the flesh.

Whether we consider his expostulating with *Cain*, about the murder of *Abel*, his trying and condemning that murderer, as he had done *Adam*,

and his *setting a mark* upon the guilty vagabond, lest any finding him should kill him; or, whether we take notice of the manner in which he directed *Noah* to build his ark, made him enter into it, shut him in, saved him and his family from the flood, and then "speaking unto him, said, go forth out of the ark," &c. Whether we advert to the friendly manner in which he appeared to, and conversed with *Abraham*, in his various stations and journies; or whether we attend to the familiarity with which, accompanied by two of his angels, he came to that patriarch in a human shape, condescended to eat with that friend of God, as he ate with *Simon*, and worshipped and invoked by him, as THE JUDGE OF ALL the earth, who claimed the absolute right of sparing *Lot*, and destroying *Sodom*, as he had spared *Noah*, and destroyed the whole world by water; and who actually destroyed that wicked city by raining, as *Jehovah*, fire from *Jehovah* upon it, when the two angels who accompanied him had made *Lot*, and his daughters escape out of that accursed town: whether, I say, we consider these, or any other of the Lord's appearances, he is represented as *Jehovah*, coming to do before hand the work of the Messiah.

As supreme prophet, he leads *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, opens the eyes of *Agur*, instructs *Moses* and all the prophets, *Bazaleel* and all the ingenious artists. As supreme high priest, he directs *Abraham* and *Aaron*, how to offer up proper sacrifices. As Lord of hosts, or captain of the Lord's host, he overthrows five kings before *Abraham*; *Pharoah*, before *Moses*; the kings of *Canaan* before *Joshua*, and the *Philistines* before *David*. As angel of the covenant, he

strengthens, wrestles with, and blesses *Jacob*; he visits, directs and animates *Gideon*; he assumes a human shape to promise a son to *Abraham*, and to *Manoah*; and as he said to the Jews, "Before Abraham was, I am;" so speaking to *Moses*, from the burning unconsumed bush, which was an emblem of his eternal power and glory, he shews that, with his Father, he is "the first and the last," and declares their common name, "I am that I am."

These manifestations of Jehovah's glory had circumstances characteristic of the *Son's* person, as appears by the accounts handed down to us in the sacred writings. When "Moses, Aaron, and seventy-two of the elders of Israel went up, and SAW THE GOD OF ISRAEL," it is said, "there was under his FEET, as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness; and that upon these nobles he laid not his hand." He appeared therefore as a man, since he had *feet* and *hands*, which it cannot be shewn the Father ever did.

Accordingly the apostle, speaking of the preference, which *Moses's* faith gave to the God of *Israel*, over the idols and riches of the *Egyptians*, says that "Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt," *Heb.* xi. 26; the *Israelites* being then as much *reproached* by the *Egyptians* for worshipping the *God of Israel*, as we are by you, sir, for worshipping the *Logos*. And *St. Paul*, alluding to these words of *Moses*, "The children of Israel TEMPTED JEHOVAH, saying, Is JEHOVAH among us or not?" *Exod.* xvii. 7, says to the *Corinthians*, "Let us not tempt CHRIST, as some of them," the children of *Israel*, "also tempted him," and were

destroyed of serpents: 1 *Cor.* x. 9. Which shews the apostle believed that Jehovah leader of *Israel* through the wilderness, was the very *Logos*, who sustained *openly* the office of Messiah when he was at length manifested in human flesh.

And as the scriptures shew, that these transient manifestations of Jehovah, are in general to be understood of Christ, in his divine nature, or in his "form of God," see *Phil.* ii. 6, your own *reason*, sir, prejudiced as it is, must see the propriety of this doctrine. For, if there be, in union with the Father's Godhead, a *Word*, a *Son*, "whose goings out are from everlasting," who "was in the beginning with God," the Father, "and was God," insomuch that he can say, as "the only begotten Son of the Father, I and my Father are one," in a sense which can be true only with respect to him who is the *proper Son*, and the *express image* of the Father, see *Rom.* viii. 32, in the original, and *Heb.* i. 3.—If there is, I say, such a being, whom St. John calls the *Logos*, and whom the Father names his "well beloved Son;" and if the scriptures testify, that the Father sent this Son to redeem mankind, and to bless all nations; is it not *more reasonable* to believe, that the Father occasionally sent him first to redeem the *Israelites* from their *Egyptian* captivity, and to bless that favoured people, than to believe that the Father, who never personally appeared, no not for the redemption of all mankind, appeared nevertheless sometimes as a man, and sometimes as an angel for the redemption of the children of *Israel* from their house of bondage?

A Son, even the proper Son of God, may, with the greatest propriety, be *sent* by his *Father*, to do works worthy of omnipotence, such as the re-

temptation of a world, or the deliverance of a favorite people. But to suppose the Father personally to appear as a partial Saviour in a cloud, or in a flame, on a mountain, or in a temple, to suppose him to shew himself sometimes as an *angel*, and sometimes as a *man*, is contrary both to the analogy of faith, and to the dictates of reason.

Besides, the scriptures inform us, that "by faith Moses endured as seeing Him, who is invisible," because "he dwells in the light, which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen or can see:" Heb. xi. 27, and 1 Tim. vi. 16: And they declare, that if the Father is visible, it is in his Son, John xiv. 9. From these *rational* and *scriptural* premises, I conclude, that Jehovah, who appeared to *Moses*, and to the seventy-two elders, and who said to the people of *Israel*, "I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the house of bondage," is that "express image of the Father," that "Prince of Life," who said, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father: I and the Father are one."

The Reviewers* have proved to you, sir, that this was the opinion of *Justin*, one of the most ancient and respectable fathers, who had the honor of sealing the truth of the Gospel with his blood, one hundred and thirty years after our Lord.—And bishop Bull confirms the proofs brought against you, where he writes, that the Son of God,

* Monthly Review for January 1784, p. 61. "To prove," say these gentlemen, "beyond the possibility of dispute or evasion. that by the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, *Justin* meant *Christ*, we refer the reader to his celebrated Apology to the emperor *Antonius Pius*, p. 93, 94, in which this expression is not only applied to Christ, but even vindicated as his own appropriate and distinct character."

was he, who “appeared to *Moses* in the the bush and said, ‘I am the existent Being.’ Justin, in his Dialogue with Trypho, eagerly contends. The case is this. That description of God, in *Moses, I am*, equally agrees to the *Father*, and the *Son*, as to one God; always saving the distinction of persons: Which is excellently explained by Justin, after this manner: God the Father is *the existent*, as always existing of himself; God the Son is *the existent*, as existing with the Father, and *eternally* begotten of him.” *Bull by Grabe*, vol. i. p. 347.

Meaning to resume the important subject the first opportunity, I now release you, and subscribe myself,

Your sincere friend,

And obedient servant, in the
Word made flesh,

JOHN FLETCHER.

LETTER III.

The Subject of the former Letter continued.

REV. SIR,

SHOULD you deny that Jehovah, who *appeared to Abraham* in the plains of *Mamre* accompanied by two angels, was the Logos, we prove our assertion thus. The scriptures no where speak of any transient incarnation of the *Father*; it is therefore unscriptural to suppose, that the person who *did eat of the butter, milk, and cakes* which *Abraham* did set before him, and who kindly inquired after *Sarah* was the Father. Nevertheless that he was God is evident, for he is called eight times Jehovah in the context. And therefore, the analogy of faith requires us to believe that it was Jehovah the Son, who already condescended to quit "his form of God," and to appear in the "form of a servant," that he might "receive sinners and eat with them:" compare Gen. xviii. 8. with Luke xv. 2, and John xxi. 12.

The same reasons prove that the divine person, who stood above the mysterious ladder which *Jacob* saw in *Bethel*, was Jehovah the *Son*. "Behold," saith the historian, "Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah the God of Abraham thy Father, and the God of Isaac, behold I am with thee in all places whither thou goest, and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And Jacob waking out of

his sleep said, surely Jehovah is in this place, and I knew it not; It is none other but the house of God, and the gate of heaven," Gen xxviii. 13, 17. Now the God who appeared to *Abraham*, Gen xxii. 1, to *Isaac*, Gen. xxvi. 24, to *Jacob*, Gen. xxviii. 13, and to *Moses*, Exodus iii. 6, is again and again called the angel of Jehovah, or rather Jehovah the angel, as appears from Gen. xxii. 11, 12, 18, Exodus iii. 2, and Mal. iii. 1. Now that this Jehovah, angel both of the Jewish and of the christian covenant, is *the Son*, appears from these three reasons. 1. The Father never sustained the part of an angel, a messenger or an envoy. Who should send him? 2. The Son, who can with propriety be sent by the Father, is frequently said to have been delegated on errands worthy of redeeming love. And 3. The scriptures expressly declare, that Jehovah angel of the covenant, is our Lord Jesus Christ—compare Mal. iii. 1. &c. with Mark, i. 1, &c.

Nor will it avail to say that the Jews, not having the New-Testament, could not find out the truth I assert, for as has been observed, in the former part, the Old Testament, clearly indicates, that in the deity, there is a mysterious distinction of interlocutors and agents, though without any division. The Jews who (as we have seen) had this key given them at the very beginning of their revelation could not but take notice that although each of these interlocutors is called *Jehovah* yet one of them is Jehovah the envoy, the ambassador or the angel. And they might as well deny the veracity of *Moses* as deny that Jehovah who appeared to *Jacob* in *Bethel* is Jehovah the envoy. For *Jacob* said to *Rachel* and *Leah* "the angel of God appeared to me in a

dream, saying, I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar and where thou vowedst a vow unto me : Now arise, get thee out from this land." Gen. xxxi. 11, 13. Now the God of *Bethel*, declared to *Jacob* in *Bethel* that he was the God of *Abraham*, and of *Isaac*, and therefore every attentive Jew could not but see that *Jehovah* envoy, or the *angel* of the Jewish covenant was the God of the patriarchs, viz. the *Logos*, the Son, who, being *Jehovah*, rained from *Jehovah*, fire upon *Sodom*, after he had told *Abraham* that he could not spare that wicked city.

Christ is represented in the New Testament as the captain of our salvation, armed with a sword : *Heb.* 11. 10. and *Rev.* xix. 15. And the Old Testament exhibits *Jehovah*-envoy as sustaining the same character. "When *Joshua* was by *Jericho*, he lift up his eyes, and behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand : and *Joshua* went to him, and said, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries ? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And *Joshua* fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servants ? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto *Joshua*, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy." (The very charge which the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* gave to *Moses* from the flaming bush in *Horeb*.) And when *Joshua* had obeyed the man, who appeared as captain of the Lord's host, gave him directions about the taking of *Jericho*, as the God of *Abraham* had given directions to *Moses* about the delivering his people from their *Egyptian* bondage. These orders are thus expressed :

And "Jehovah, said unto Joshua, see, I have given into thy hands Jericho : Ye shall compass the city six days," &c. Josh. v. 13, &c. and vi. 2, &c.

Unless we absurdly suppose, that the captain of the Lord's host appeared merely to bid Joshua loose his shoes from off his feet, it follows from this narration, that the personage who appeared to Moses' successor, was Jehovah God of *Abraham*. This is evident, 1. From his being called *Jehovah*, and 2. From his requiring and accepting religious worship from *Joshua*. And that it was Jehovah the Son, is equally plain, 1. From his assuming the form of a servant ; 2 from his styling himself the captain of Jehovah's armies ; for according to the analogy of faith, the Son, *Jehovah-envoy*, may be called the captain of his Father's host, but the Father can never be sent on an expedition, as captain of his Son's armies.

That *Jehovah-envoy* so frequently stiled *the envoy of Jehovah*, or as we have it in our translation *the angel of the Lord*, was known to the Jews as the *Mighty God*, whose name is wonderful, appears from the following account :— "The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, and said Jehovah is with thee,—and Jehovah looked upon him and said, Go in this thy might," the might which I impart unto thee, "and thou shalt save Israel : have I not sent thee ?" And when *Gideon* drew back, "Jehovah," namely the angel Jehovah, "said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." Hence the *Israelites*, when they fell upon the *Midianites* shouted "The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon." When *Jehovah-envoy*, who appeared only as a traveller, with "a staff in his hand, disappeared, after giving a proof of

his divinity, by shewing he was God, that answereth by fire, see *Judges* vi. 21. *Gideon* perceived the infinite dignity of the personage who had spoken to him, and remembering that *Jehovah* had said to *Moses*, "No man shall see me," in my form of God, "and live," *Exod.* xxxiii. 20; and and thinking he was to die immediately, cried out, "Alas! O Lord God: for because I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face: And *Jehovah*," as he disappeared, "said unto him, Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die: And *Gideon* built an altar there unto *Jehovah*, and called it *Jehovah Shallon*," that is, the God of peace. From this account it is evident: 1. That the angel who appeared to *Gideon*, is the very angel *Jehovah*, who appeared to *Abraham* on mount *Moriah*, to *Jacob* in *Bethel* and to *Moses* in *Horeb*. 2. That he is *Jehovah*, who answers by fire, seeing he manifested his glory to *Gideon* as he did to *Moses* and *Elijah*, by supernatural fire. 3. And that as the analogy of faith does not permit us to believe that God the Father ever appeared as a man with a staff in his hand, it was without doubt *Jehovah* Jesus, who as the great Saviour of the *Israelites*, appointed Saviours for the deliverance of his people, and *Gideon* among others, as afterwards in the days of his flesh, as the great apostle of our profession, he appointed twelve apostles to instruct mankind.

The doctrine is confirmed by account we have of the manner in which *Sampson* was raised to the office of a temporal Saviour of the *Israelites*. A personage who is called several times the angel of the Lord, or the Envoy-*Jehovah*, appeared as a man to *Manoah* and his wife, to whom he promised the birth of *Sampson*: *Manoah*, not know-

ing his dignity, asked him his name. And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret, or wonderful (Peli; the very word afterwards used by the prophet, who saith, His name shall be called wonderful, Peli: Isaiah ix. 6,) "So Manoah took a kid, with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto Jehovah; and the angel of the Lord," or Jehovah-envoy, "did wonderful for" shewing himself the God that appeared in the burning bush to *Moses*, and accepting the propitiatory sacrifice, which *Manoah* and his wife offered, "he ascended in the flame of the altar, as they looked on and fell on their faces to the ground. Then Manoah knew that he was" Jehovah-envoy, or "the angel of the Lord; and he said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God: But his wife," perceiving that it was Jehovah-Shalom, the God of *Gideon*, the God of peace, who had appeared unto them, "said to him; If Jehovah were pleased to kill us, he never would have received a burnt offering at our hands." Judg. xiii. 23.

The same reasons which prove, that the person who appeared to *Gideon* is Jehovah Jesus, prove also that the person who appeared to *Manoah* and his wife, whom they at first called *a man*, and before whom they trembled, when they knew him to be *God* and *Jehovah* is that very *Immanuel* that God manifested in the flesh, whom christians worship as Jehovah Shalom, coming to make peace and reconciliation.

Remarks.—From the preceding letters, there are many and convincing proofs of the positions we have taken in the preceding work, and it will be noticed we have followed much the same mode of reasoning.

We consider every candid reader from the preceding letters, must be satisfied it would be inconsistent, for God the Father to have made his appearance, in the manner pointed out, to the patriarchs, and to the Israelites; and while it is evident that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had engaged to make his appearance for the redemption of the world at large, and perceiving that these were errands worthy of redeeming love, yet far inferior to the great work of Redemption. Yet it will be observed, this character on all these errands, assumes all the titles and demands all the honors justly belonging to the Supreme Being. We very much admire the manner and power of Mr. Fletcher's and Mr. Benson's manner and style; we think their writings very intelligent and convincing to the unprejudiced and enquiring mind; and their direct effect is to lead the mind into the first and most important principles of christianity with a distinctness and intelligence we have not seen surpassed by any commentators; and with arguments to our mind unanswerable.

EXTRACTS.

WE shall now insert some portions of the Reverend John Wesley's translation of the New-Testament and comments, to which we solicit the readers attention.

The first chapter of St. John, to the 15th verse with the notes.

1 IN the beginning existed the Word, and the

1. *In the beginning* (Referring to Gen. i. 1. and Prov. viii. 23.) When all things began to be made by the word: In the beginning of heaven and earth, and this whole frame of created beings, *the word existed*, without any beginning. He was when all things began to be, whatsoever had a beginning. *The word*—So termed Psalm xxxiii. 6. and frequently by the seventy, and in the Chaldee paraphrase. So that St. John did not borrow this expression from Philo, or any heathen writer. He was not yet named Jesus, or Christ. He is *the word* whom the Father begot or *spoke* from eternity; by whom the Father *speaking* maketh all things; who *speaketh* the Father to us. We have, in the 18th verse, both a real description of the word, and the reason why he is so called. *He is the only-begotten Son of the Father, who is in the bosom of the Father, and hath declared him. And the word was with God*—Therefore distinct from God the Father. The word rendered *with* denotes a perpetual tendency as it were of the Son to the Father, in unity of essence. He was *with* God alone; because nothing beside God had then any being. *And the word was God*—Supreme, eternal, independent. There was no creature, in respect of which he could be stiled God in a relative sense. Therefore he is stiled so in the absolute sense. The Godhead of the Messiah being clearly revealed in the Old Testament (Jer. xxiii. 6. Hos. i. 7. Psalm xxiii. 1.) the other evangelists aim at this, to prove that Jesus, a true man, was the Messiah. But

- Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 2 The same was in the beginning with God.—
 3 All things were made by him, and without him was not one single thing made that was made.
 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of
 5 men. And the light shineth in darkness, but the darkness perceived it not.
 6 There was a man sent from God, whose
 7 name was John. The same came for a testimony, to testify of the light, that all through

when at length, some from hence began to doubt of his Godhead, then St. John expressly asserted it, and wrote in this book as it were a supplement to the gospels, as in the Revelation to the prophets.

2. *The same was in the beginning with God*—This verse repeats and contracts into one of the three points mentioned before. As if he had said, This word, who was God, was in the beginning, and was with God.

3 *All things* beside God, were made, and all things which were made, were made by the word. In the first and second verse is described the state of things before the creation, ver. 3. In the creation, ver. 4. In the time of man's innocency, ver. 5. In the time of man's corruption.

4. *In him was life*—He was the foundation of life to every living thing, as well of being to all that is. *And the life was the light of men*—He who is essential life, and the giver of life to all that liveth, was also the light of men; the fountain of wisdom, holiness and happiness, to man in his original state.

5. *And the light shineth in darkness*—Shines even on fallen man; *but the darkness*—Dark, sinful man, *perceiveth it not*.

6. *There was a man*—The evangelist now proceeds to him who testified of *the light*, which he had spoken of in the five preceding verses.

7. *The same came for*—(that is in order to give) *a testimony*—The evangelist, with the most strong and tender affection, interweaves his own testimony with that of John by noble digressions, wherein he explains the office of the baptist partly premises and partly subjoins, a farther explication to his short sentences. What St. Mathew, Mark, and Luke term the Gospel, in respect of the promise going before, St. John usually terms *the testimony*, intimating the certain knowledge of the Relator; *to testify of the light*—of Christ,

8 it might believe. He was not the light, but
 9 *was sent* to testify of the light. *This* was the
 true light, who lighted every man that cometh
 10 into the world. He was in the world and the
 world was made by him; yet the world knew
 11 him not. He came to his own, and his own
 12 received him not. But as many as received
 him, to them gave he privilege to become the
 sons of God, to them that believe in his
 13 name: Who were born, not of blood nor by
 the will of the flesh, nor by the will of man,
 but of God.
 14 And word was made flesh, and tabernacled
 among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory
 as of the only begotten of the Father) full of
 grace and truth.

9. *Who lighteth every man*—By what is vulgarly termed natural conscience, pointing out at least the general lines, of good and evil. And this light, if man did not hinder, would shine more and more to the perfect day.

10. *He was in the world*—Even from the creation.

11. *He came*—In the fullness of time, *to his own*—Country, city, temple: *And his own*—People, *received him not*.

12. *But as many as received him*—Jews or Gentiles; *that believe on his name*—That is, on him. The moment they believe, they are sons; and because they are sons, *God sendeth forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father*.

13. *Who were born*—Who became the sons of God *not of blood*—Not by descent from *Abraham, nor by the will of the flesh*—By natural generation, *nor by the will of man*—Adopting them, *but of God*—By his Spirit.

14. *Flesh* sometimes signifies corrupt nature; sometimes the body; sometimes, as here, the whole man, *We beheld his glory*—We his apostles, particularly Peter, James, and John, Luke, ix. 32. *Grace and Truth*—We are all by nature liars and children of wrath, to whom both grace and truth are unknown. But we are made partakers of them, when we are accepted *through the Beloved*.

The whole verse might be paraphrased thus: *And in order*

to raise us to this dignity and happiness, *the eternal word*, by a most amazing condescension, *was made flesh*, united himself to our miserable nature, with all its innocent infirmities. And he did not make us a transient visit, but *tabernacled among us* on earth, displaying his glory in a more eminent manner, than ever of old in the Tabernacle of Moses. And we, who are now recording these things, *beheld his glory* with so strict attention, that we can testify, it was in every respect such a glory, as became the *only-begotten of the Father*. For it shone forth not only in his transfiguration, and in his continual miracles, but in all his tempers, ministrations, and conduct through the whole series of his life. In all he appeared *full of grace and truth*: He was himself most benevolent and upright; made those ample discoveries of pardon to sinners, which the Mosaic dispensation could not do: And really exhibited the most substantial blessings, whereas that was but a *shadow of good things to come*.

The first chapter of Hebrews to the 8th verse inclusive, and notes.

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers man-

1. *God, who at sundry times*—The creation was revealed in the time of Adam, the last judgment in the time of Enoch; and so at various times and in various degrees more explicit knowledge was given, *in divers manners*—In visions, in dreams, and by revelations of various kinds. Both these are opposed to the one entire and perfect revelation which he has made to us by Jesus Christ. The very number of the prophets shewed, that they prophesied only *in part*: of old—There were no prophets for a large tract of time before Christ came, that the great prophet might be the more earnestly expected; *spake* A part is put for the whole, implying every kind of divine communication, *by the prophets*—the mention of whom is a virtual declaration, that the apostle received the whole Old Testament, and was not about to advance any doctrine in contradiction to it; *hath in these last times*—Intimating that no other revelation is to be expected; *Spoken*—All things; and in the most perfect manner, *by his Son*—Alone. The Son spake by the apostles. The majesty of the Son of God is proposed, I. Absolutely by the very name of Son v. i. and by three glorious predicates, whom he hath appointed, by whom he made, who set down; whereby he is described, from the beginning to the consummation of all things v. 2. 3. II. Comparatively to an-

ners spake of old to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by *his*
 2 Son. Whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom he also made the worlds:
 3 Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and sustaining all things by the word of his power when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on

gels, v. 4. The proof of this proposition immediately follows the name of *Son* being proved, v. 5. His being heir of all things, v. 6, 9. his making the worlds, v. 10, 12. His sitting at God's right hand, v. 13, &c.

2. *Whom he hath appointed heir of all things*—After the name of *Son*, his inheritance is mentioned. God appointed him the heir, long before he made the worlds, (Eph. iii. 11. Prov. viii. 22, &c.) The *Son* is the first-born; born before all things. The *Heir* is a term relating to the creation which followed, v. 6. *By whom he also made the worlds*—Therefore the *Son* was before all worlds. His glory reaches from everlasting to everlasting, though God spake by him to us only in these last days.

3 *Who sat down*—The third of these glorious predicates, with which three other particulars are interwoven (which are mentioned likewise, and in the same order, Col. i. 15, 17, 20.) *Who being*—The glory which he received in his exaltation at the right hand of the Father, no angel was capable of; but the *Son* alone, who likewise enjoyed it long before; *the brightness of his glory*—Glory is the nature of God revealed in its brightness; *the express image, or stamp*—Whatever the Father is, is exhibited in the *Son*, as a seal in the stamp on wax; *of his person or substance*—The word denotes the unchangeable perpetuity of divine life and power; *and sustaining all things*—Visible and invisible, in being, *by the word of his power*—That is, by his powerful word; *when he had by himself*—Without any Mosaic rites or ceremonies, *purged our sins*—In order to which it was necessary he should for a time divest himself of his glory. In this chapter St. Paul describes his glory, chiefly as he is the *Son of God*: afterwards, c. ii. 6, &c. the glory of the man, Christ Jesus. He speaks indeed briefly of the former, before his humiliation, but copiously after his exaltation; as from hence the glory, he had from eternity, began to be evidently seen. Both his purging our sins, and sitting on the right hand of God, are largely treated of in the seven following chapters: *sat down*—The priests stood while they minist-

- 4 the right hand of the Majesty on high, Being so much higher than the angels, as he hath by inheritance a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels did he ever say,
 5 Thou art my son ; this day have I begotten thee ? And again, I will be to him a Father,
 6 and he shall be to me a Son ? And again,

tered. Sitting therefore denotes, the consummation of his sacrifice. This word *sat down* contains the scope, the theme, and the *sum* of the epistle.

4. This verse has two clauses, the latter of which is treated of, ver. 5, the former, ver. 13. Such transpositions are also found in the other epistles of St. Paul, but in none so frequently as in this, The Jewish doctors were peculiarly fond of this figure, and used it much in all their writings. The apostle therefore, becoming all things to all men, here follows the same method. All the inspired writers were readier in all the figures of speech than the most experienced orators ;—*Being*—By his exaltation, after he had been lower than them. (ch. ii. 9) *so much higher than the angels*.—It was extremely proper to observe this, because the Jews gloried in their law, as it was delivered by the ministration of angels. How much more may we glory in the gospel, which was given, not by the ministry of angels, but of the very Son of God ? *As he hath by inheritance a more excellent name*—Because he is the Son of God, he inherits that name, in right whereof he inherits all things. His inheriting that name is more ancient than *all worlds*. His inheriting all things as ancient as *all things : than they*—This denotes an immense pre-eminence. The angels do not inherit all things, but are themselves a portion of the Son's inheritance, whom they worship as their Lord.

5. *Thou art my Son*—God of God, light of light ; *this day have I begotten thee*—I have begotten thee from eternity, which by its unalterable permanency of duration, is one continued, unsuccessive day. *I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son*—I will own myself to be his father and him to be my son by eminent tokens of my peculiar love. The former clause relates to his natural sonship, by an eternal, inconceivable generation ; the other to his father's acknowledgment and treatment of him, as his incarnate son. Indeed this promise related immediately to Solomon, but in a far higher sense to the Messiah.

6. *And again*—That is, in another scripture ; *He*—God

When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith,
 7 Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son, Throne
 8 O God, *is* for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom *is* a sceptre of righteousness.

saith, when he bringeth in his first begotten—This appellation includes that of son, together with the rights of primogeniture, which the first-begotten son of God enjoys, in a manner not communicable to any creature; *into the world*—Namely, at his incarnation. *He saith let all the angels of God worship him*—So much higher was he, when in his lowest estate, than the highest angel!

7 *Who maketh his angels*.—This implies, they are only creatures, whereas the Son is eternal, ver. 8, and the Creator himself, ver. 10. *Spirits and a flame of fire*—Which intimates not only their office, but, also their nature; which is excellent indeed, the metaphor being taken, from the most swift, subtle, and efficacious things on earth; but nevertheless infinitely below the majesty of the Son.

8. *O God*—God, in the singular number, is never in scripture used absolutely of any but the supreme God; *Thy* reign, of which the sceptre is the ensign, is full of justice and equity.

The first chapter of Paul's epistle to the Colossians, from the 13th to 19th verse inclusive, with the notes.

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the

13. *Power* detains reluctant captives. A kingdom cherishes willing subjects: *His beloved Son*—this is treated of in the 15th and following verses.

14 kingdom of his beloved Son. In whom we
 have redemption through his blood, the for-
 16 givenness of sins : Who is the image of the
 invisible God, the first-begotten of every crea-
 17 ture. For through him were created all
 things, that are in heaven and that are on
 earth, visible and invisible ; whether *they be*
 thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or
 powers ; all things were created by him and
 for him. And he is before all things, and by

14. *In whom we have redemption*—This is treated of from the middle of the the 18th verse. The voluntary passion of our Lord, appeased the Father's wrath, obtained pardon and acceptance for us, and consequently dissolved the dominion and power which Satan had over us through our sins. So that forgiveness is the beginning of redemption, as the resurrection is the completion of it.

15. *Who is*—By describing the glory of Christ and his pre-eminence over the highest angels, the apostle here lays a foundation for the reproof of all worshippers of angels : *the image of the invisible God*—Whom none can represent but his only begotten Son ; in his divine nature, the invisible image, in his human, the visible image of the Father, *the first begotten of every creature*—That is, begotten before every creature ; subsisting before all worlds, before all time, from all eternity.

16. *For* This explains the latter part of the preceding verses, *through*—Implies something prior to the particles *by* and *for* ; so denoting the beginning, the progress, and the end : *Him*—This word, frequently repeated, signifies his supreme majesty, and excludes every creature : *were created all things, that are in heaven*—And heaven itself. But the inhabitants are named, because more noble than the house : *Invisible*—The several species of which are subjoined. Thrones are superior to dominions, principalities to powers. Perhaps the two latter may express their office, with regard to other creatures : the two former may refer to God, who maketh them his chariots, and as it were, rideth upon their wings.

17. *And he is before all things*—'Tis not said, He was ; He is : from everlasting to everlasting. *And by him all things consist*—The original expression not only implies, That he sustains all things in being, but more directly, *All things were and are compacted in him into one system.* He is the cement as well

18 him all things consist, And he is the head of his body the church : who is the beginning, the first-begotten from the dead, that in all
 19 things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased *the Father*, that all fullness should dwell in him :

support of the universe, And is he less than the supreme God ?

18. *And*—From the whole, he now descends to the most eminent part, the church, *He is the head of the church*—Universal. The supreme and only head both of influence and of government to the whole body of believers, *who is*—The repetition of the expression (see ver. 15.) points out the entrance on a new paragraph, *the beginning*—Absolutely, the eternal, *the first-begotten from the dead*—From whose resurrection flows all the life, spiritual and eternal, of all his brethren ; *that in all things*—Whether of nature or grace, *He might have the pre-eminence*. Who can sound this depth ?

19. *For it pleased the Father, that all fulness*—All the fullness of God, *should dwell in him*—Constantly, as in a temple, and always ready for our approach to him.

Remarks on Mr. Wesley's views.—This great divine says, he was not yet named Jesus or Christ, he is the Word whom the Father begot, or spoke from Eternity. Again, says the same divine, we have in the testimony of John the Baptist, as found in the book of John the evangelist, both a real description of the Word, and the reason why he is so called ; having come to, and mentioned the incarnation, St. John no more uses that name, the Word, in all his book. There is wonderful felicity of expression in John's gospel, and the more critically examined and considered, the more accurate and excellent are the choice of his words. It is put down in the testimony of John the fore-

runner in the 18th verse, "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*." These expressions "denote the highest unity, and the most intimate knowledge," as existing between the Father and the Son. And "the Word was *with* God," therefore distinct from God the Father; *was with* denotes a perpetual tendency as it were of the Son to the Father, in unity of essence. He was with God alone, because nothing but God had then any being.—Mr. Wesley's note to the 14th verse should be read with attention. This divine saith, when speaking of Christ's being the image of the invisible God, "whom none can represent but his only begotten Son, "in his divine nature." Again, says Mr. Wesley he was begotten by an "inconceivable generation," begotten "from eternity, which by its unalterable permanency of duration, is one continued unsuccessive day." "He was heir long before he made the worlds." "The Heir is a term relating to creation, therefore the Son was before all worlds. His glory reaches from everlasting to everlasting, though God spake by him to us only in these last days." "He inherited the name before all things." In these remarks Mr. Wesley perfectly agrees with Doctor McNight, as in the Doctor's translation, we find, he translates, Rom. 8, 32. "He that spared not his own *proper* Son, but delivered him up for us all." &c.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

We now call the devout attention of the reader, to sundry declarations and confessions of the fathers in the church of Christ, who lived in the three first centuries of christianity. The most of these quotations, we have selected from Mr. Worcester's work, printed August 1810. The source from which we take them does not lessen their validity. Was any apology necessary for taking them from this compilation, we might say, the works of this author, were before us, and the original history of them was not. We differ from this author, perhaps as much as any class of men, in relation to the Unity of the Godhead. We have, however, no suspicion of his integrity in these quotations—he is pledged as to their correctness, and his motives could scarcely be suspected of making them essentially variant from their original text. He has extracted from the histories of Mr. Milner, and Doct. Mosheim. We therefore rely on these quotations, with confidence as to their genuineness; we draw other and different conclusions than he does. We first put down those found in Milner's church history 1st. volume.

CLEMENT, *Bishop of Rome.*

This man was co-temporary for a time with St. Paul. From him two passages are selected.

“Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Sceptre of the Majesty of God, came not in the pomp of arro-

gancy, or pride, though who can understand the thunder of his power, but he was meak and lowly." Page 182.

"Have we not all one God, one Christ, one spirit of grace poured upon us, and one calling in Christ."

Mr. Worcester remarks upon the above declaration of Clement by saying—these passages have no appearance of favoring the Athanasian doctrine; and the Spirit is not represented a person, but as something poured upon us. We answer once for all, that in the confession of Clement, as well as the declarations of other fathers, which we shall insert in this work; the question then pending, was not, whether there exists three persons in one God; neither the mode of God's existence; neither, whether the Spirit can properly be called a person, but the simple question, to which we think these fathers have reference, is the character and dignity of the Son of God. We do not expect to gain any essential advantage from these quotations on any other point.

We have taken notice before in this work that historians have told us of a sect, who arose in the third century in Egypt, who contended that there existed three persons in one God, and that this sect was not approbated by the church at large; and we have endeavoured to show, that this sect did not hold similar doctrines with those we espouse, and believe to be primitive trinitarianism—Therefore this will be the leading point which we shall pursue in examining these testimonies of the fathers in the primitive church.

We have made our remarks before, in this work respecting the Union which we think exists between the Father, and the Son, and the Holy

Ghost. The Father, we hold, ever dwells in the Son, and the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost is comprehended and contained in the divine nature, consequently proceeds from the Father and the Son, in the work of sanctification—possessing vitality, rationality, and real divinity. Should the speculating christian ask us how far these three subsistences are united, and in what particulars they differ, one from the other? if he means in every minute point—We are ready to answer, in the language of a great writer, we cannot tell, because it is not told us. And we may further answer in the language of Moses “that the secret things belong unto the Lord our God; But those things which are revealed belong, unto us, and our children.” But it is equally true that there is a real difference between the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that these three exist in union; as we have considered before in this work. And these three have different offices attached to them. So far we think we are authorized to proceed; and with this knowledge we are willing to be content till a further disclosure of his glory shall be made to the immortal mind, in that Eternal World when we shall see him as he is, and we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. “The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal,” and some eternal things not seen, are God, grace and heaven.

The testimony of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch. He was for a time, cotemporary with St. John, and suffered martyrdom. He testifies.

“For this they were persecuted, being inspired by grace to assure the disobedient, that there is one

God, who has manifested himself by Jesus Christ, his Son, who is his Eternal Word. Page 163.

In page 159 Ignatius states—"I have known some passing from hence whom you did not suffer to sow among you, stopping your ears, so that you would not receive their seed, as being stones of the temple of your Father, prepared for the building of God, lifted up in heavenly places, by the engine of Jesus Christ, which is his cross, using the Holy Spirit as a cord."

And again while before Trajan the Emperor, being asked respecting the doctrine believed by christians, he answered; "There is only one God who made heaven and earth, and one Lord Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, whose kingdom be my portion.

The confession and declaration of Justin Martyr.

He suffered, about the year 163, on trial before Rusticus. He was questioned respecting the faith of christians; he answered.

"We believe the only one God to be the creator of all things visible and invisible, and confess our Lord Jesus Christ to be the Son of God foretold by the prophets of old, and who shall hereafter appear the judge of mankind. As for myself, I am too mean to speak any thing of his infinite Deity. This was the work of the prophets, who many ages ago, foretold the coming of the Son of God into the world."

Again in his dialogue with Tripho, Justin calls Christ, "God the Son of the maker of the universe," page 196. And in the same page, he calls him, "the Son, the Christ of God"

POLYCARP.

The confession and prayer of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. He was put to death as a martyr A. D. 167. His church published an account of his martyrdom, and recorded the prayer which he made at the stake, at the close of which, the fire was kindled.

“O Father of thy blessed and beloved Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained a knowledge of thee, O God of angels and principalities, and of all creation and of the just who live in thy sight; I bless thee, that thou hast accounted me worthy of this day, and this hour, to receive my portion in the number of martyrs in the cup of Christ, for the resurrection to eternal life, both soul and body, in the incorruption of the Holy Spirit; among whom may I be received before thee this day, as a sacrifice well savored and acceptable, as thou the faithful God hast prepared, declaring beforehand, and fulfilling accordingly. Wherefore I praise thee for all those things, I bless thee, I glorify thee by the eternal High priest Jesus Christ, thy well beloved Son; through whom, with him in the Holy Spirit be glory to thee, both now and forever, Amen.”—Page 214.

The church of Smyrna, close their narrative with a doxology, by saying—“To him who is able to conduct us all by his grace and free mercy, into his heavenly kingdom by his only begotten Son Jesus Christ; To him be glory, honor, power, and majesty, forever, Amen.”—Page 217.

ATHENAGORAS.

He wrote towards the close of the 2d century. Speaking of christians, he describes them, “as men that made little account of the present life,

but were intent only upon contemplating of and knowing his Word, who is from Him. What union the Son has with the Father, and what communion the Father has with the Son ; what the Spirit is, and what the union and distinctions are, of such so united, the Spirit, the Son, and the Father.

IRENEUS, *Bishop of Lyons.*

He testifies, as follows—"If there was any doubt, about the least article, ought we not to have recourse to the most ancient churches, where the apostles, lived ? ought we not to follow the traditions they left to those with whom they committed the care of the churches ? It is what several of the barbarous nations observe, who believe in Jesus, without paper or ink, having the doctrine of salvation written on their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and faithfully keeping up to the ancient tradition, concerning the one God the creator, and his Son Jesus Christ."—Page 263.

Ireneus, also, calls "Christ the Word of God, the all powerful Word of God."

Remark—We think these declarations of Ireneus put together, prove that he thought that the Sonship of our Lord, had reference to his divine nature and not to his human nature.

DIONYSIUS, *Bishop of Alexandria.*

He died in the year, A. D. 264.—In a letter which he wrote concerning the Sabellian doctrine—he said

"As many brethren have sent their books and disputations to me, concerning the impious doctrine, lately sown in Pentapolis, containing many blasphemies against the Almighty God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ; as also, much infidelity

concerning his only begotten Son, the first born of every creature, and the Word incarnate; and also senseless ignorance of the Holy Ghost; some of them I have transcribed and sent copies to you.”—Page 447.

We now call the attention of the reader to the Sabellian doctrine which we have extracted from Mr. Buck’s Theological Dictionary, volume 2d. page 394.

Mr. Buck states—“*Sabellians*, a sect in the third century that embraced the opinion of Sabellius, a philosopher of Egypt, who openly taught, that there is but one person in the Godhead. The Sabellians maintained that the Word, and the Holy Spirit are only virtues, emanations, or functions, of the Deity, and held that he who is in Heaven is the Father of all things. That he descended into the Virgin and became a child, and was born of her as a Son; and that having accomplished the mystery of our salvation, he diffused himself on the Apostles in tongues of fire, and was then denominated the Holy Ghost. This they explained by resembling God to the sun, the illuminated virtue, or quality of which was the Word; and its warming virtue the Holy Spirit. The Word, they taught, was darted like a divine ray, to accomplish the work of Redemption, that being re-ascended to heaven, the influences of the Father, were communicated after a like manner to the apostles.”

Remarks.—Mr. Buck appears to agree perfectly with other writers respecting the leading principles of the Sabellians; and I think we may safely conclude, that it was these principles which Dionysius calls “the impious doctrine lately sown in Pentapolis, containing many blasphemies

against the Almighty God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." &c.

On these principles, we would here remark further. 1st. This sect considered the Godhead to consist of *one person*, only ; consequently they must rob the Son of his personality, and must rob the Father of the glory of his paternity, or father-ship. 2dly. It leads our minds into "senseless ignorance of the Holy Ghost." 3dly. Dionysius calls Jesus Christ the "only begotten Son, the first begotten of every creature, and the Word incarnate." Dionysius, must therefore, have supposed and believed, that the Sonship of our Lord, must have reference to his Divine nature, and not to his human nature.

Many, and voluminous remarks might be made on the declarations and confessions of the Fathers, but the reader will draw his conclusions without our help. We do not like to dismiss here the Sabellian doctrine without comment, as in the course of this work we have observed, that when we lose a distinct knowledge of the personality of a divine Father, and a divine Son, dwelling in unity in the Godhead, experience has shown us liable to fall away from the gospel doctrine, into some of the Sabellian errors—consequently into "much infidelity concerning the only begotten Son of God, the first begotten of every creature, and the Word incarnate ; and senseless ignorance of the Holy Ghost," as Dionysius phrases it.

Again, when we lose a knowledge of the Divine Son, we are at an entire loss how to measure or esteem the love of God in giving his Son to die for us. On the other hand when we behold Christ with the eye of faith, and believe in him as the only begotten of the Father, and ever-dwelling in

the bosom of the Father, it has every tendency to win our affections, and excite in us the strongest feelings of love and gratitude to God, for the gift of his Son, "that whosoever believeth on him, may not perish, but have everlasting life."

BAPTISMAL ORDINANCE, &c.

We now submit to the consideration of the reader, an extract from the works of the Rev. *John Newton*. vol. 3, pages 222, and 223.

“The form of baptism prescribed by our Lord for the use of the church is thus expressed.

“Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,”—Matthew 28, 19.

“It is evident by comparing this sentence with that I before cited from the Epistle of John, that the *Word* and *Son*, are synonymous terms, expressive of the same character; they are both the titles of the Messiah. Of him John spake when he said the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and of him God the Father said, thou art my beloved Son, this day have I begotten thee. Had God spoken thus to an angel, it would be in effect saying, Thou art the Word, which in the beginning was with God, and was God, by whom all things were made. But to which of the angels would the great God, use language like this?

“Our Lord in his conference with Nicodemus was pleased to say, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,” &c. John 3. 10.

“It was undoubtedly his desire by this expression, to give to Nicodemus, and to us, the highest idea possible of the love of God to sinners. He so loved the world, beyond description of comparison, that he gave his only begotten Son.

“Surely then, the gift spoken of, must not be limited to signify, the human nature only. This was not all that he gave. The human nature was the medium of the acts and sufferings of the Messiah. But he who assumed it, was the Word, who was before all, and by whom all things were made. It is true the human nature was given supernaturally; formed by Divine power, and born of the Virgin.

“But he who was in the beginning God with God, was given to appear, obey, and suffer in the nature of man for us, and for our salvation. And to him are ascribed the perfections and attributes of Deity, of which the highest angels are no more capable than the worms which creep upon the earth.”

THE APOSTLES CREED.

“I believe in one God, the Father, Almighty maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God; begotten of his Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate, by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us, under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, and was buried, and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven; sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead;

whose kingdom shall have no end ; and I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of Life ; who proceedeth from the Father, and the Son ; who with the Father and the Son together, is worshipped, and glorified ; who spoke by the prophets. And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church.”

THE NICENE CREED.

This is the deliberation, and result, of the most respectable Council ; perhaps, not inferior to any Council ever assembled, under the christian name, except the one convened at Jerusalem, by the Apostles, and primitive church. And let it be remembered, that this Council was convened to decide on the very question now before us. This Council was called together by Constantine, the Great ; and was composed of 318 bishops, from all the Christian world, and brought with them as many presbyters, containing in the whole, about 600. They were convened, according to Mr. Milner's Church history, in the year 325, at the city of Nice, to decide on the Arian controversy, or, on the divinity of Christ, as we call it. And we think it no venture to say, the well informed part of community, will acknowledge, that according to the most judicious historians, that in general, the church had not, at this time departed from the genuine and primitive faith of the Gospel ; consequently we ought to hear their result with candour and deliberation, and weigh it in the balance of reason, and bring it to the standard, for a final test with the scriptures.

The result of that Council was, that they decided the Scriptures taken together, which referred to this point, amounted to this "That Christ was not created but was peculiarly of the Father, as begotten of him ; God of God, Light of Light, the Eternal of the Eternal, and the Invisible of Him which is Invisible."

Likewise, according to some writers, the Council decided—"The Father is God, but not of God ; and the Son is God but of God ; the Father, is Light, but not of Light ; the Son is Light, but of Light."

And we think, we may presume to say, that the primitive churches, or, the churches in the three first centuries, acknowledge no Trinity, but what was composed of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Although we acknowledge that Sabellius, and Origen, in some sense taught a different doctrine ; and most probable, the sect which arose in Egypt, which we have already referred to, as schismatic from the primitive trinitarian doctrine, being mere trinitarians in name, but not indoctrinated as such ; these taught a different doctrine, (as many professing and specious trinitarians do at the present day) yet they never gained the general approbation of the Church, but were frequently rejected by the churches in their councils.

And we may further observe, that the Nicene Creed, is so full to the point, that we would wish to confirm it. And perhaps the best comment which can be made upon it, might darken counsel with words, without adding knowledge, therefore, we shall leave it to the consideration of the reader.

Only observing, that Mr. Worcester, makes several remarks on this quotation, to this amount—"That in all these decisions, and declarations, he

finds nothing to support the idea of three persons in one God." The grand and important question, agitated for the deliberation and decision of this Council, was not, what *union* existed between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but the important question pending, was what the proper dignity of the Son consisted in? We think their decision on this point, is perfectly correct. Indeed we very clearly and distinctly see, that there is directly implied two distinct persons, in their decisions, viz. Father and Son. We desire to gain information on this weighty doctrine respecting the *union* of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.—Let us to turn our Lord's own words, recorded in John 15, 16, 7, which we think will be the best guide, to inform us, as to this glorious mystery.

We will now take notice of some of the articles of faith on the doctrine of the *Trinity* adapted to the reformed church, so called, since the days of the reformation from Popery. And having the Episcopal methodist articles before us, we shall attend to them in the first place, And here let it be remembered, that these articles were taken from the Episcopalian, or English Church; and the English Church substracted and adopted them, from the articles of the Lutheran Church.

Article First.—On the Trinity.

“There is but one living and true God, Everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible; and in the

Unity of this Godhead, there are three persons of one substance, power, and Eternity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Article Second.

"Of the Word, or Son of God, who was made very man.—The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and Eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead, and the manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof, is one Christ, very God, and very man; who truly suffered, was crucified, died, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but for actual sins of men."

The Fourth Article—on the same point of Doctrine.

"The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son; very and Eternal God."

Here, it is probably well to remark, that the English article on the Sonship of Christ, is a little fuller than the Episcopal Methodist article.

The English article reads thus—"The Son who is the Word of the Father, begotten of him from Everlasting." Again, says the article "took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance." These eight words, viz. "begotten of him from everlasting," and "of her substance"

which we find in the old articles, make the point we would wish to defend, more plain and explicit.

We shall wave many remarks on these articles, for two reasons, viz. 1st. we have already briefly considered them in the body of this work in answer to Doct. Clarke's notes. 2dly. The articles themselves, are so clear and explicit, that comment would throw very little, and probably, no additional light on them. And we are well assured, that every unprejudiced mind, must see that the church of England considered, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature, and that he partook of human nature in the womb of the Virgin,

CATECHISM.

We now invite the reader to notice and consider the decision of the Assembly of Divines, in their catechism.

They ask, "how many persons there are in the Godhead?—Answer, there are three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," &c.

"Question.—How did Christ the Son of God become man?

"Answer.—Christ the Son of God became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul; being conceived in the womb of the Virgin, and born of her." &c.

Remark—We refrain from further copying the articles of faith of different churches, simply observing that the Dutch reformed church and many

of the Baptist churches of our country, perfectly agree in all the leading principles of the articles of faith, recited.

Remarks.—We do not undertake to defend every expression made use of by these bodies of divines, in their articles on the Trinity. There are, also, some ideas included in them, upon which we neither remark upon in favor, or against. But we do presume to say, that in all the points we have been desirous to establish in this little volume, they harmoniously agree with our views.

Definition of Trinity.—*vide Mr. Buck's Theological Dictionary, vol. 2, page 466.*

“**TRINITY.**—The union of three in one, generally applied to the ineffable mystery of three persons in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” &c. In support of his definition, Mr. Buck refers his readers to the works of Messrs. Owen, S. Brown, Fawcett, A. Taylor, J. Scott, Simpson, Wesley, Price, and others.

RECAPITULATION.

WE have thought it suitable to recapitulate, the points, upon which we have written.

In order to ascertain whether Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature, or whether he is only the Son of God in his human nature. We have searched and considered the scriptures, of both the old and new testament, as the only written and infallible rule, by which to decide this weighty point of faith and doctrine; and we hope, we have acquitted ourselves, without partiality, and with a single eye to the truth, as it is in Jesus Christ. After seeking for light from the oracles of God, and pondering our path, we trust, with that temper, sincerity, and love of truth, which alone ought to mark and excite the enquiries of every professed believer in the redeeming love of our Lord. And having taken some pains to learn, in respect to the points under consideration, what were the views and opinions of the Fathers, who lived in the three first centuries of christianity. And further, having taken notice of the articles of belief of several of the reformed churches of the three last centuries, who have taken the most general spread, both in Europe and America. Having also made copious extracts, from the writings of the most learned, wise, and pious divines of the last century, of the Calvinist, and other sectaries; and having submitted our views and opinions, we refer the

whole to the charitable and dispassionate reader, hoping in the result, that the christian may be strengthened, and that our earnest and humble efforts may become the medium of good, and not evil, to the family of man.

We presume to say, that unless we are grossly blinded through prejudice and superstition, it satisfactorily appears, from the scriptures of the old and new testament, the early fathers in the church of Christ, the articles of the reformed churches, with their most excellent divines, all speak forth one language, and echo this most sublime and heart-cheering truth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature.— And as such, none inferior to the Father, God of God, light of light, the eternal of the eternal, and the invisible of him which is invisible, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; upholding all things by the Word of his power; for by him all things were created, whether visible or invisible, whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers; and he is the *heir* of all things.

We think our attention is now very directly called to consider this character as the author of our redemption, and our eternal salvation. It is evident, we apprehend beyond a doubt, that the propriety or necessity of man's redemption, consists in the belief of our apostacy, and human depravity. We have ever considered, that if man had not apostatized from God, and had not become degenerated in his nature, redemption of course must be out of the question. Moses informs us, that when God had finished his works, he pronounced them "very good;" consequently there would have been no need of a ransom, or

redemption, from that state of innocency and holiness, in which we believe man stood, in his primeval state.

It will be proper to make a few brief remarks on man's apostacy. We say a few, because this subject might occupy more time, than we can devote to it in this place. If Moses has given us a true history of the facts, and it is not doubted, as they transpired, and the manner of his apostacy, they open a field or scope for many important reflections.

Man was created in the image of God, and pronounced very good, from the mouth of his maker. We have a right to suppose his body was sound in all its parts, his soul in all its powers, and his affections pure from every stain, or blemish. He was, therefore, a proper and fit subject to be placed under the government of a holy and just law. And Moses has informed us, that God placed him in the pleasant and good garden, which he had planted for him, "to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And the Lord God made "him an help meet for him." And they transgressed this very plain and express law, known and acknowledged to be such, at the time our first parents violated it. The penalty of this law, was equally known, understood, and acknowledged, by the woman at the time the serpent tempted her; to his offered temptation, she replied, "But of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it,

neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Here is furnished us, rational views of our fall from innocence, rational arguments, why man should die, and wherefore this transgression could not be pardoned, unransomed; why man could not be redeemed from the penalty of the law, and its condemnation, without his salvation from the sentence, was "bought with a price."

It is very plain and express, also, that the veracity, and Word of the Lord God, was pledged to execute the penalty of this law, in case it should be broken; and the kind and quality of the penalty he would inflict was declared; and the time they came under the condemnation, was expressed, "in the day that thou eatest thereof, &c.

We are aware, however, that some divines, do not approve of the phrase, price paid for redemption, but as these, and the like expressions, occur so often in the new testament, we need not be afraid to advance them. Paul, 1st. Corinth. 6, 20, saith, "For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Therefore, it is concluded that soul and body were indeed in the purchase. Again 7th chapt. verse 23, the same apostle repeats, "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." Again 1st. Timothy 2, 6, "Who gave himself a *ransom* for all, to be testified in due time"—that is a price paid for sin, which is the definition of the word, *ransom*. "That he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus, 2, 14.

Numerous are the expressions of the apostles on this point, and it would be unnecessarily te-

dious, in this place, to cite chapter and verse, for the support of this fundamental truth, which the apostles made their chief study to understand, and teach, as one of the first principles of the gospel of Christ.

And on the belief we “are bought with a price,” and resting for its verity upon gospel authority, some important enquiries present themselves. It will be here borne in mind, that we have contended that Jesus Christ possessed two whole natures, viz. the God-head and manhood; and as the English article states, “never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God, and very man;” one of these important enquiries, which will naturally present itself to the mind is, whether the human and divine natures were both included under the law broken by man?—We must answer in the affirmative.

They surely were, and the assembly of divines, so called, in their confession of faith, as it is in their catechism, have done justice on this point, unless in some expressions, it may be apprehended they have gone too far. If there was nothing but the human nature of our Lord, included under the law, we have nothing but a human righteousness to plead, for the remission of past sins. Or, as it is expressed by Paul, after charging sin upon Jews and Gentiles, he concludes by saying, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to de-

clare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

Another inquiry has arisen in some minds, we hope, however, of very few, which is, if Jesus Christ condescended to become, under the law broken by man, whether the law would not require that the divinity itself should die to satisfy that divine law? We answer in the negative; being persuaded it would be absurd, in the most comprehensive sense of the word, to say, divinity itself died; we esteem it a doctrine highly dangerous, and blasphemous. Several critical inquiries, present themselves, if our sentiments are correct.

How can we make it appear on just principles, that there is in the righteousness and sufferings of Christ, an infinite merit. Two things seem to be extremely necessary to be understood in this question. 1st. His righteousness—2dly. his victorious death.

Bishop Pierson has on these topics exhibited some things worthy our attention; he saith "if we be truly sensible of our sins, we must acknowledge, that in every one, we have offended God; and the atrociousness of every offence must increase, proportionately to the dignity of the party offended, in respect of the offender; because the more worthy any person is the more reverence is due unto him, and every injury tendeth to his dishonor; but between God and man, there is an infinite disproportion, and therefore every offence committed against him must be esteemed as in the highest degree of injury."

Here we know, as the apostle hath assured us, "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." And we may ve,

ry well doubt, how the blood of him, who hath no other nature, than that of mere man, can take away the sins of other men ; There appearing no such difference, as will show a certainty in the one, and an impossibility in the other.

The Bishop proceeds—" But since we may be bought with a price, well may we believe the blood of Christ sufficiently precious, when we are assured that through the union of the human nature with the divine, " it is the blood of God," as St. Paul calls it, Acts 20, 28. Nor can we question the efficacy of it, in purging our consciences from dead works, if we believe Christ offered up himself through the eternal Spirit. For as the atrociousness of the offence beareth proportion to the person offended, so the value of reparation ariseth from the dignity of the person satisfying ; because the satisfaction consisteth in the reparation of that honor, which by the injury was eclipsed ; and all honor doth increase proportionably, as the person yielding it is honorable. Notwithstanding therefore by every sin we have offended God ; who is of infinite emineuce, according unto which the injury is aggravated, yet we may be secure of our reconciliation with God, because the person who hath undertaken to make the reparation, is of the same infinite dignity ; so that the honor rendered by his obedience, is proportionable to the offence, and that dishonor which arose from our disobedience."

On these points, last stated, by the Bishop ; turns the dispute between the Unitarians, and the primitive Trinitarians, consequently we shall not pass over them without making further remarks on some of the leading principles contained in the two points last referred to, viz. the blood and

righteousness of Christ. The apostle Paul has exhibited these points in the clearest light, in the 5th chapter of his epistle to the Romans; he first speaks of the glorious fruits and effects of the righteousness and blood of Christ in these words.

“Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

“By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

“And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

“And patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed,” &c.

The apostle immediately proceeds to inform us, from whence these inestimable blessings flow, viz.—from the virtue of the blood and righteousness of Christ; his first and most elegant remarks, are found in the 8th, 9th, and 10th, verses of the same epistle and chapter.

“But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled we shall be saved by his life”

In the 18th verse of the same chapter, the apostle further informs us, that in one point, justification and condemnation run parallel, he says, “Therefore, as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life.” In 19th verse he

speaks much to the same effect—"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners ;—so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

Here we ought to be cautious, and carefully notice, that the apostle confines his observations to two points ; 1st. as to original sin, as we generally term it. 2dly. To justification from that sin. We think it is evident from the whole scope of the apostles reasonings in this, as well as his other Epistles, that the apostle did not wish us to understand him to speak of regeneration and sanctification, but simply of justification from original guilt.

One point more in this chapter, deserves our attention, viz. the declaration of the apostle in the 16th verse—"And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift, for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification of life." It will here be remarked, by the attentive reader, that the apostle informs us, that the offence and the justification, did not run parallel in all cases ; for instance, the offence was by one i. e. Adam, and consequently condemnation came upon all beings in his loins. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift ;" the apostle says, and proceeds to show us wherein the difference consists ; "the free gift is of many offences unto justification of life," that is, we are justified from actual transgressions, by the righteousness and blood of Jesus Christ, as well as from original sin.

This point is acknowledged by the assembly of divines, as well as the English Church. The assembly express it in these words ; "justification

is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only, for the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us, and received by faith alone."—The English church say, "Christ was crucified, &c. to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also, for actual sins of men."

We shall do well to give an attentive consideration to the observations made by the Bishop, just quoted, on the two important points, respecting the blood and righteousness of Christ. He appears to reason conclusively upon the nature of sin, for he has very plainly shown, that if there is nothing included under the divine law but the humanity of our Lord, it could be nothing but a human righteousness, to repair the injury done to that original law given to man in paradise; and how much less would it answer for our offences? How inadequate the reparation unless "Christ offered up himself through the eternal Spirit?" We may safely conclude, that this blood and righteousness, on the principle of its being merely human in its nature, must come infinitely short of purchasing eternal inheritance for all men.

And not only so, but as we have before remarked, all created beings must, in the nature of things, be dependent on their Creator, for existence, power, faculties and talents they possess, and must of consequence owe their best performance to their Creator, and therefore cannot render to God works of supererogation, or works over and above the obligations they are naturally and continually under to God.

The Bishop, further asserts, "that it is the uniform doctrine of the old and new testament, that

the Lord Jesus Christ hath ransomed our lives, by laying down his own. The Son of man, came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and give his life a ransom for many. He gave his life a ransom for all; he died for our sins; according to scriptures, he died for all, when all were dead. Tasted death for every man; the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all; he bore our sins in his own body on the tree; was wounded for our transgressions; bruised for our iniquities; and bore the chastisement of our peace; was made sin (a sin-offering) for us, though he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God, in Him, or might be justified through him. Hence we are said to be redeemed, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, Peter i, 18. To be "bought with a price," I Cor. vi. 20, therefore not to be our own, and to have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins."

Says the Bishop, "if Jesus Christ, whose life is thus represented to be laid down as the price of man's redemption from everlasting death and destruction, to everlasting life and salvation—if Jesus Christ be a mere man, it is certain his life must be of incomparable less value, than this eternal salvation of all mankind; thus said to be procured by it. For, however holy and excellent, we may suppose him to be, yet his life could not be worth the lives of all men; especially his temporal life, could not be worth the eternal lives of all men. His parting with a short, uncertain, and afflicted life, and coming under the power of death, with regard to his body merely, and that only for two or three days; (his soul in the

mean time, neither dying nor suffering the loss, either of its holiness or happiness) and doing this in sure and certain hope of being raised again, and receiving in exchange, after that short space of time, an eternal and most blessed life;—this surely was no such great thing, as that it could be any proper consideration, or redemption price, on account of which, divine and infinite justice, should deliver an infinite multitude of rational and immortal beings, of exactly the same nature with this man, thus dying for them: not only from temporal, but also from eternal death; and should put them in possession of glory and felicity, greater beyond conception than that which they had forfeited, and lasting without end.

“According to the declaration of the apostle, one principal end of the death of Christ, was to demonstrate God’s righteousness. That is the purity of his nature, implying his infinite hatred to sin, the authority of his law, which denounces vengeance against the sinner, and the equity of his government, or in one word, his justice. But if satisfaction can be made for the injury done to the glory of God, by all the sins of all mankind, and their salvation from eternal destruction, into everlasting life and happiness; can be rendered consistent with the divine attributes, in consequence of their repentance upon such easy terms, as the giving up one mere man, to temporal death for two or three days, and then rewarding him with supreme dominion and glory, at God’s right hand; whatever inference the intelligent creation of God may draw from hence, in favour of his love and mercy, they can draw none in favour of his righteousness or justice. They cannot learn from these principles, to form

more exalted views of God's holiness, justice, or truth; but on the contrary, they will find their ideas of it contracted. And will be inclined to suppose that sin is no very great evil, and that God is not much displeas'd with it; inasmuch as he forgives the complicated, and aggravated guilt, of so many myriads of sinners, forbears to execute upon them the vengeance threaten'd in his holy and divine law, and even raises them to glory, and felicity inconceivable, and eternal, merely because one mere man, like themselves, died for them. Surely, to talk of God's righteousness being demonstrated by such a scheme as this, and say all this was done to save the honour of his *justice*, that he might be, (and appear to be) *just*, while he is the merciful justifier of him, which believeth in Jesus, would be highly absurd and ridiculous."

The above quoted remarks, were advanced, not only against the Socinian doctrine, but also to show the propriety of the expression made use of, by their church in the 2d article on the Trinity, which is, speaking of the human and divine nature being united in the womb of the virgin, as they say, "whereof is one Christ." We have advanced in this work, that this is one of the deciding points, between the Trinitarian and Socinian; viz.—Whether the Son of God could be united to human nature, so as to make but one person? And if this cannot be made to appear, we are under the necessity of acknowledging, that we have nothing but a human righteousness to plead, or human blood to atone for the remission of sins, and acceptance with God.

Let us extol Christ ever so high; even, let us imagine that he is the eternal Father, it does not

help us in this all important point of christian faith.

And were we to take the ground, that some late Trinitarians have taken, and say that Christ's humahity was offered on the divinity, and the divine altar, sanctifies the gift, it is our established opinion, it does not help us at all, in this question, but adds many new and serious difficulties; and exposes the doctrine of the atonement, more and more to the ridicule of the unbelieving, and infidel.

Mr. Millard, a professed unitarian, in his last work, written against Luckey and Harmon, states "that Mr. Harmon says, although nothing but the humanity suffered, yet it is not acknowledged to be a human sacrifice." And Mr. Millard tells us, that Mr. Harmon endeavours to state three reasons, to show that this sacrifice is not a mere human sacrifice. His reasons, stated on the authority of Mr. Millard, are:—1st, that it is a sacrifice prepared by God. 2d, It was without sin. 3d, It was offered on a divine altar." Mr. Millard in his answer, says, "Mr. Harmon's two first reasons are nothing to his point, and his last has no foundation in scripture for its support."

We are bound to acknowledge, that the three arguments advanced above, on the point of the atonement, do not amount to any thing more, than the arguments advanced by the Socinians in general. And we never could see, why Doctor Priestly and Socinius, might not use the same arguments, if they supposed they were calculated to assist them in the important point of the atonement.

And if it is a fact that the divine nature could not die; and a sacrifice offered on a divine altar, cannot be esteemed of infinite value; and if no created being can render obedience to God, over and above the obligations they are naturally under to him; and if it is absurd and ridiculous to say, that the Father left the throne, and became obedient to his own law given to man, to make that law honourable, and to work out a righteousness for man. We say, if the four principles last stated, are found to be false, which we firmly believe them to be; and we can further state, we have no manner of confidence in them for life and salvation, than we have in the most fictitious fable.

And should we admit Doct. Clarke's note, to be sound doctrine, viz. that "if Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature, it would destroy the deity of the Son." We say, should we admit this, as divinely true, we shall find all our beliefs in the wind, and ourselves in difficulty enough; and we are willing to acknowledge, that every argument in favour of the christian religion which we have esteemed substantial, are swept from under us, and our hopes are shaken to their centre.

We are yet, however, confident they cannot be correct and scriptural. It is, however, proper we should be brought into a close examination, respecting the first and fundamental principles of the gospel of Christ. And with due respect for those who differ, it is our opinion, that these doctrines are erroneous, and have an alarming tendency to destroy the most sublime and substantial principles, on which the christian's hopes are founded.

It becomes in us a duty, therefore, to take a brief survey, and particularly consider the points which we think are essential to the first principles of the christian religion. We consider Bishop Pierson has furnished us with many doctrinal helps, and opened, to the inquiring, and discerning mind, a way to this portion of the treasures of revelation. Should there be found any deficiency in his remarks, we have no doubt St. Paul has left of record, a supply of argument and illustration, to make good our doctrine, and test the soundness of the Bishop's exposition.

It will be borne in mind, that Bishop Pierson, presents to our view, the *righteousness of Christ*, as one of the first things to be considered, in man's redemption, and this point in our judgment, has been too much overlooked. If we look at the blood of atonement, and forget his righteous obedience, we find ourselves in various doubts and difficulties, how we can make this blood appear to be of *infinite merit*. When we take into the consideration, his obedience to the divine law, it helps us at least one step out of the difficulty which encumbers our progress. The first important point to be considered in man's redemption, is to see how God can be "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus;" as the apostle expresseth it. In considering the character of Christ, in the light we have endeavoured to exhibit it, in this work, we very easily discover his righteous obedience to the divine law, and its high and interesting importance in man's redemption.

The assembly of divines declare, that "the humiliation of Christ consisted in his being born in a low condition in being made under the law,

and in undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross, and in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time." The English church, speaking of the human and the divine natures of our Lord, say, "whereof is one Christ, very God, and very man; Who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his father to us," &c. These are the declarations of these large bodies of divines on the point of our Lord's being made under the law.

We do not undertake to defend every expression quoted in the above cited passages; yet one thing is evident, that is, that these churches considered that Christ in his human and divine natures were to be understood under the law, and in short, this was one of the important reasons of assuming our nature in order to take man's law place and render that honor to that divine law, which God's divine justice, and truth demanded; consequently, we may see very clearly, the force of the Bishop's reasoning on the righteousness of Christ, as being of infinite merit in the sight of God; because on these principles God can be just, in man's redemption and forgiveness. And his divine character, shineth in infinite purity to all intelligent beings, in relation to his inviolable justice and truth, as well as love and mercy. And inviolate all these must be. And inviolate they are, "if there was a real infliction of punishment on our Saviour." Every attribute is harmonized, and glorified, unsuperse- ded, and unclouded.

If we turn from human views, and exposition, to a very few declarations of Scripture, they will afford us undimmed light upon this subject. We

refer to the second chapter, Phillippians, verses 5. 6. 7. 8.

“ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus :

“ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God ;

“ But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man ;

“ And being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

We subjoin *three notes* of the Rev. Mr. Wesley, on these texts. It will be well to premise, that Mr. W. in his translation, varies in the phraseology of the texts : as in 7th verse, instead of “ but made himself of no reputation,” he has it “ Yet emptied himself.”

6. “ *Who being in the essential form, the incommunicable nature of God from eternity (as he was afterwards in the form of a man, real God, as real man) counted it no act of robbery (that is the precise meaning of the words) no invasion of another’s prerogative, but his own strict and unquestionable right to be equal with God. The word here translated equal, occurs in the adjective form, five or six times in the New-Testament, Mat. xx. 12. Luke vi. 34. John v. 18. Acts. xi. 17. Rev. xxi. 16. In all which places it expresses not a bare resemblance, but a real and proper equality. It here implies both the fulness and the supreme height of the godhead ; to which are opposed, he emptied and he humbled himself.*

7. *Yet—He was so far from tenaciously insisting upon, that he willingly relinquished his claim. He was content to forego the glories of the creator,*

and to appear in the form of a creature: Nay, to be made in the likeness of the fallen creatures; and not only to share the disgrace, but to suffer the punishment due to the meanest and vilest among them all. *He emptied himself*—Of that divine fullness, which he received again at his exaltation. Though he remained full, (John i. 14.) yet he appeared as if he had been empty; for he veiled his fullness from the sight of men and angels. Yea, he not only veiled, but in some sense renounced the glory which he had before the world began; *taking*—And by that very act emptying himself, *the form of a servant*—The form, the likeness, the fashion, though not exactly the same, are yet nearly related to each other. The form expresses something absolute; the likeness refers to other things of the same kind; the fashion respects what appears to sight and sense; *being made in the likeness of men*—A real man, like other men. Hereby he took the form of a servant.

8. *And being found in fashion as a man*—A common man, without any peculiar excellence or comeliness, *he humbled himself*—To a still greater depth, *becoming obedient*—To God, though equal with him, *even unto death*—The greatest instance both of humiliation and obedience, *yea, the death of the cross*—Inflicted on few but servants or slaves.”

Herein we understand, that our Lord voluntarily humbled himself, and became obedient. As Paul elsewhere expresses it, “he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, that ye through his poverty, might be rich.” And, as he saith again, “he was made under the law.” Here we understand the apostle, that the character which was and is, the 2d person of the Godhead, in his hu-

humiliation became clothed in flesh, made under the Adamic and Mosaic law, and became obedient to the divine law in all things, in order that it might be said, he fulfilled all righteousness, and became an example in his humiliation. He voluntarily, "emptied himself," of divine fullness, "taking the form of a servant, becoming obedient even unto the death of the cross;" but exalted and enthroned in the glory of the Godhead. He took the cross, as an example for us to take it, and he "emptied himself" that he might prepare the way, to recompense our humiliation under the law, by pouring out upon us the spirit of mercy and holiness, and thereby to exalt us into a participation of his exaltation.

We would not be understood, that our Lord's divine nature underwent any change in all this, neither do we believe it is possible that the divine nature can be changed into the human, nor the human nature of our Lord into the divine nature, as we have before stated in this work.

For the further illustration of this subject we will consider the blood and righteousness of Christ as connected in man's redemption. An eminent English writer, speaking of the expression we have already referred to in their second article, viz. the union of the human and divine nature of our Lord, "whereof is one Christ, very God, and very man," states, that the intention of the church in using this expression, was, to show a peculiar distinction, between the union which existed between the two natures of our Lord, and all other divine inspirations.

We think it is easy to discover, that if there is not a material and peculiar, difference between the Union, that existed between the human and di-

vine natures of our Lord, and all other divine inspirations, we say, if there is not in this matter, a peculiar distinction ; we have all the difficulties to encounter, which we suppose the Socinians have to labor under, that is, we cannot make it appear that there is an infinite merit in the blood and righteousness of Christ : failing in these two points of the inquiry, we think we must inevitably fail in the whole question before us. The first point to be considered, is whether Jesus Christ in his divine nature was not made under the law ? And as such, was he the real agent, or actor, yet in perfect *union*, with the human ? In *union*, as we have before observed in this work, as the body of a man is actuated and governed by the indwelling of the soul ? this, if we mistake not, perfectly agrees with the reasonings of Bishop Pierson on this point, in our foregoing extracts from him. In order, however, to shed further light, upon it, we will once more call the attention of the reader to one or two observations of the Bishop, viz. “ the atrociousness of the offence consists in the dignity of the party offended, so the satisfaction consisteth in the dignity of the person satisfying.” We consider it evident, that the Bishop supposed that the divine nature of our Lord, as well as the human, was included under the law, broken by man ; and the dignity of this character, being as we have considered it, and who as he described himself, “ thought it not robbery to be equal with God ;” must therefore, be considered as one of the most essential points, in repairing the injury done to God’s divine law. Of course, as we have before observed, the righteous obedience of Christ, and the dignity

B b

of his nature, ought ever to be kept in view, as of the first importance in man's redemption.

We will now, for a moment, turn our attention to the sufferings and blood of Christ. As to the blood of Christ, although in some sense it may be called human, yet, when we consider it as *united* to the divine nature, in the sense we have considered it to be, there seems, at least, to be a kind of dignity, attached to it, that does not belong to other human bodies. And the apostle Paul seems to confirm the idea, in exhorting his fellow laborers "to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Moses informs us, "that the life is in the blood," and again, he says, "it is the blood that maketh atonement."

And when we have said all we can imagine, on this subject, no doubt there are many points will remain untouched, and probably were we to dwell too long on this point, we might darken counsel, with words without knowledge. View the scheme of salvation by faith, as we will, "it has heights, and depths,, which surpass all" human knowledge, even the knowledge of pious believers. It is ever thus, according to the course of human inquiry respecting divine relations, and purposes. Believers know, that our Lord has opened the door of salvation," by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated," &c. And, that "as by rending the veil of the temple, the holy of holies became visible, and accessible, so by wounding the body of Christ, the God of heaven was manifested, and the way of heaven opened."

PART IV.



Thoughts on the Divinity of the Holy Ghost.

Having spent some time in searching the Scriptures, and the writings of the Fathers, who lived in the first ages of Christianity, on this subject, whether it is proper to call the Holy Ghost a person? And having compared the early views of the Fathers, with the articles of the reformed churches, we find there has been much and long controversy, for, and against, the term *person*; when we speak of the Holy Ghost.

From late writers on both sides of the question, we learn that they have risked the strength of their tenets, on the use of the personal pronouns *him* or *his* which have reference to the Holy Ghost. On the Trinitarian ground it has been contended, that these personal pronouns being so often made use of, when speaking of the Holy Ghost, amounts to a demonstration, that the Holy Ghost is a *person*; and on the contrary, these arguments have been resisted by the Unitarians, and those with them on the same side of the question, that personal pronouns, have been used in Scripture to express the operation of the elements, and have been applied to inanimate things, as the word *it*, has been used frequently to express the same things, as a neuter demonstrative pronoun.

We have long contemplated upon these points, and arguments, and as we are not wedded to terms, we would freely give up the term, *person*, when speaking of the Holy Ghost, if it would answer any valuable purpose, and in nothing compromise any principle dear to christians ; but we learn it is not the term only which separates us in opinion, but a real difference in sentiment, respecting the divinity of the Holy Ghost.

From the character of the work we have in hand, it is suitable we should submit to the reader, a few thoughts on the real Divinity of the Holy Ghost. We say a few, for perhaps a few pages on this important point of doctrine, may answer all the purposes, which we expect ; for the reader will have apprehended that a body of the testimony we have already considered in the foregoing pages of this work, applies with equal verity and force to this branch of our subject. Our object, therefore, will be to condense our remarks on this topic of doctrine, and the reasons which influence our belief.

The citing a few passages of Scripture we consider will shed some light, and support our own belief ; even should they contribute but little in answering the various objections that are raised against, we trust they will have their interest, as passages of the Oracles, of divine truth.

Premising, that we are commanded to be baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, as well as in the name of the Father and the Son. This we have coincided in ; and it has ever appeared to us as a strong argument in favor of the real divinity of the Holy Ghost. If the Holy Ghost, is nothing but "energy, or active force," as some Socinians, and Arians, have termed it, there appears great

absurdity in this ordinance ;—but on the other hand, if the Holy Ghost possesses vitality, rationality, and real divinity, inherently, and naturally, in himself, then indeed, we may see as great propriety in being baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, as in the name of the Father and Son.

We have used the words vitality, rationality, and divinity, as these words express our views on this subject, better than any other words, which we are acquainted with ; and we find we are not alone in these views on this subject, for we find, that some eminent writers, in the English Church have made use of the same words in expressing their views and beliefs.

This doctrine is surely a very important, and deeply interesting one. We feel the pressure of many weighty reasons, urging us, on the score of duty to contend in all christian meekness and energy in favor of the doctrine. It appears to us dangerous, to depart, in the least degree from the most plain and obvious meaning of Scripture. If we are not deceived, the Scriptures are clear and plain on these points. One of the gospel passages which we think favors the idea that the Holy Ghost possesses vitality, and real divinity, as we term it, was uttered by our blessed Lord, in these words.

“ And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him : but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” “ But is in danger of eternal damnation.”

There is a repetition of the enormity of this sin, and its denunciation. And from it, there appears no doubt, but that the Holy Ghost, is equal to the

Son, in point of dignity and divinity, otherwise we can see no propriety in the aggravated and heinous character of this blasphemy, in the sight of God, when uttered against the Holy Ghost.— Here, we may with great propriety, once more refer to Bishop Pierson's reasonings on the dignity of the Father and Son; viz. "the magnitude of Adam's transgression, consisteth abundantly, in its being committed against an infinite, holy, just, and good God, for the more worthy a character is, the more honor, glory, and worship is justly due to him, consequently a non-performance of such glory, honor, and worship, joined with wilful disobedience and malice, must amount to a sin of the greatest magnitude, which can be committed, by rational and finite beings."

We are aware that the opposers of the doctrine of the Trinity, may start one objection against this mode of reasoning; which is, that if this precept and reasoning are true, it proves that the Son is not divine, or not equal with the Holy Ghost. We think, this is not so, for it is stated, that "a non-performance of such honor and worship, joined with wilful disobedience, and malice, must amount to a sin of the greatest magnitude," &c. And when we reflect, Jesus Christ, when veiled in the flesh, was acting in his priestly character or office. In that state of humiliation, no doubt many who saw his miracles, did not know, and were not aware of, the dignity of his character. This appears to be the case with the eminent apostle Paul in his unconverted state; for we learn, that when he journeyed, and drew near to Damascus, and our Lord displayed his glory, Paul cried out, "Who art thou, Lord?" and "the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." We find Paul

In the next words, crying out, "what wilt thou have me to do?" From this we are under the necessity of concluding, that a sin against the Son, is not equal to a sin against the Holy Ghost; on account the Sin against the Holy Ghost, is sinning in full light and knowledge, and certainty, and truth, and must be wilful and malicious; and Sin against the Son, may be forgiven, on account of the ignorance and unbelief, which has prevailed in the human heart, respecting the dignity of his character. This appears additionally, and abundantly clear from the declaration of the same Apostle, in one of his epistles, in which he says, he was "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."—We may, therefore, very safely conclude, that nothing can be inferred from this passage, against the real divinity of the Son, or the Holy Ghost.

Respecting the divinity of the Holy Ghost, it appears to us, that the very name, *Spirit of God*, which is so frequently used in every part of the Scriptures, demonstrates to every impartial mind, that the Divine Spirit possesses real divinity, as absolutely as the Father or Son. This idea, receives confirmation, from the last discourse of our Lord with his disciples, which is touchingly distinct and clear, on what we call the doctrine of the Trinity. We would here refer to 15th chapter of John, verse 26, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you, from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." Again, John 16, 8, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of Sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Again, verses 13, 14,

and 15. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

The Spirit of truth, "being *sent* by our Lord *from the Father, to testify of him,*" are personal characters, and plainly distinguish "the Holy Spirit of truth," from the Father and the Son; And his title *as the Spirit of truth,* together with his *proceeding from the Father,* can agree to none but a divine person. And that he proceeds from the Son, as well as from the Father, may be fairly argued from his being called *the Spirit of Christ,* (I. Peter i. 11.) And from his being here said to be *sent by Christ from the Father,* as well as sent by the Father *in his name;*" according to the act and counsel of the Godhead; all point to the Holy Ghost, as one of the *distinctions* of the Trinity. This text from Peter, it will be well to cite here, and to remark upon it concisely. "Searching what, and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them signified, when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow."—Here we feel that doubts are dispelled—the Holy Spirit spoke by the prophets, he testified of the sufferings of Christ beforehand, he testified of "the glory of his resurrection, ascension, exaltation, and the effusion of his Spirit; the glory of the last judgment, and of his Eternal Kingdom: and also the glories of his grace, in the hearts and

lives of christians." The "mighty effusion of his miraculous gifts," proclaim the divinity of the Holy Ghost. And what he taught concerning Christ, "angels desired to look into;" long to know; these also testify of his divine dignity of personal character.

We find from the passages of Scripture cited, that the Holy Spirit, proceedeth from the Father; this to us is abundant evidence, that the Holy Ghost, or Spirit, possesses real divinity, inherently, in himself. Again, this appears clear when we inquire after the rationality, or personality of the Holy Ghost, and which is discovered in the text, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." These appear to be distinct acts of rationality, distinct personal acts. If they are to be esteemed rational and personal acts, it must prove two things, viz. The Holy Ghost possesses divinity and rationality. If uncreated rationality belongs to the Holy Ghost, divinity must also; and we believe no one has presumed or pretended that the Holy Ghost is a *created being*. And if rational; personal acts, are performed by the Holy Ghost, it must prove to us to a demonstration, that the Holy Ghost is something essentially different, and to be distinguished, from the powers of gravitation, attraction, light, energy, or active force.

Again,—"he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of *himself*, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come." All these acts which our Lord promised the Holy Ghost should perform, are certainly acts of a rational and personal character, and of divine and infinite importance, to be spo-

ken, and shown, to apostate men, to rational finite and distinct personal beings, whom *he* is to "guide into all truth." Again, our Lord says, "he shall glorify me;" this act which the Holy Ghost was to perform, must be a distinct act of rationality, neither do we see how it can be performed without rationality and personality. Nor could any creature do all this. It must be a person unmade and eternal.

The objector, may ask, if we understand these passages, in a plain and literal sense, whether there may not things transpire in the mind of the Father, or Son, which are unknown to the Divine Spirit? We apprehend not; and we can see nothing in the above assertion of our Lord, "for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear," which will authorise us to draw any such inference. When our Lord was literally upon earth, he did what he see the Father do, and when the Holy Spirit spoke and testified, he did not speak of himself, but whatsoever, was in union with the counsel, act, and will of the conjoint persons of the Godhead; the High and Holy One. "It is universally allowed, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, dwell in all believers. And the internal agency of the Holy Ghost, is generally admitted." "The Father showeth, and doth, and the Son seeth and doth, and the Holy Spirit acts by the same unity of power." The Son saith, "though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me and I in him"—by the same unerring test, by the works of the Holy Ghost, we know, that the divinity is in him, and he in the Godhead, by unity of power, nature, will, testimony, counsel, and act. "Believe me for the sake of the works."

“The Son can do nothing of himself.” The Holy Ghost, “shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear.” All “this, is not their imperfection, but their glory, resulting from their eternal, intimate, indissoluble unity with the Father,” the unity of the Godhead, seeing the “three are One;” and to be *equally* honored. The Holy Spirit was “sent by Christ from the Father, as well as sent by the Father in his name.” “The Spirit’s *coming*, and being *sent* by our Lord, &c. to testify of him, are personal characters, and plainly distinguish him from Father and Son:” And declares his relation to the Godhead; “and his title, *as the Spirit of truth*, together with his *proceeding from the Father*,” as the Son, our Mediator, did, “can agree to none, but a divine person.”

A question arises, most naturally in the minds of many inquiring men, whether if divinity and rationality, are of the Holy Ghost, personality must not, also, belong to him? Although we have blended these things as received opinions and beliefs, we leave the reader to make his distinctions, and to judge for himself. By conversing with many, we have found some, who we believe, are firm in primitive trinitarianism, who here stumble, and dare not affirm, or admit, that the Holy Ghost is, a *person*. One Of the causes may be, that the personality of the Holy Ghost, may, and, no doubt does, essentially differ from human personality. Therefore, should we attempt to measure the personality of the Holy Ghost by our own personality, or the attributes of God, by our limited faculties, we are sure to fall into the grossest of errors. The most we ought to say, probably is, as to our own personality,

every rational soul or spirit, constitutes a separate identity, or distinct person, this fact our senses testify to, and our reason approves. And we are sensible our souls do act upon our bodies: and it is a belief equally consonant to reason, that the divine spirit may act upon our souls; and some how, and perhaps in the similitude, as our bodies are shrines for our souls, we become temples of the Holy Ghost. The nature of the Holy Ghost's spiritual operations, or union with our souls, or the Holy Spirit's union of nature, &c. with the Godhead, is to us undefinable, and our best endeavours are insufficient to sound its depths, or measure its altitude; still this does not enervate the fact, "that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, have some kind of union, and some kind of distinction; because both this union and this distinction are plainly pointed out in scripture."

The opposers of the doctrine of the Trinity may, and have stated, that if we give up the personality of the Holy Ghost, the doctrine of the Trinity must fall of course. We answer, by no means; nay, we proceed further; whether we call Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, person or persons, and have imperfect views of the distinctions to be used in the divine relation, it does not affect the main question at all. The great and important question in the christian religion is, whether there is not a real Father, and Son, and a Holy Spirit comprehended in the Godhead. As Trinitarians, we think there is, let them be called by what other terms they may: and that these *three are one God*, joined together in mysterious *union*, not "by office or investiture, but

in the intimate unity of the divine essence ;” and equal in honour and worship, and who cannot be known, or believed on separately, according to the revelation contained in the gospel, but in and through the divine unity.

The passage of the Saviour, “I and the Father *are one*,” has called forth some remarks from the Rev. Mr. Wesley, which apply with equal force, in our opinion, to the Holy Spirit. “*Are one*”—“not by consent of will only, but by unity of power, and consequently of nature.” The word “*are*” confutes Sabellius, proving the plurality of persons ; “one”—This word confutes Arius, proving the unity of nature in God.”

Should it be asked, how far these are united in one, or how far the three subsistences are to be distinguished from each other ? we are ready to answer, how they exist, we enquire not ; we cannot tell, for it is not told us. That there is a real distinction between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is evident, and abundantly clear, from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament ; the limitations, extent, and intimacy, whether of the union or distinctions of the Godhead, is not a subject of our narrow understandings, any farther than the gospels have afforded us information. On the weak pinions of human reason we cannot lift ourselves to a knowledge of infinite being ; Through “the work of faith, which is the seal of heaven impressed upon our human understanding,” we may, under the agency of the Holy Spirit, raise ourselves, through this method which God has appointed, into a sphere of greater knowledge. As through this medium, he pleases to reveal himself, so far as is necessary for us. And yet it is

quite probable, it cannot be revealed to us in our present state, we must of course bound our inquiries by the sacred rule which God hath given. "We are sensible we have very inadequate notions of it" says a distinguished writer upon the divine economy, "but my incapacity is the ground of my expectation, and confidence. Could I perfectly comprehend it, it would argue its resemblance to some of the present objects of my senses or its minute proportions to the present operations of my mind;"—and, "I should suppose that partaking of the nature of present objects of my senses, and present operations of my mind, they partook of their vanity, and weakness."

It may be objected, again, that, *Trinity*, is not a Scripture phrase.—We answer—We do not read in the Sacred Scriptures, of any sect of people or christians who, distinguished themselves by the names of Unitarian, or Trinitarian. And some have vainly imagined, from hence, that *names* and *articles*, in the churches, have been the great causes of the schisms, discords, and animosities, which have abounded in the Christian world. Could we be convinced of this, we should be readily inclined, to give up the name *Trinity*.—But we are far from supposing, that the differences between us, consists, in *names* or *words*; but in points of *faith* and *doctrine*. We could wish that charity might much more abound, and that these points, which are the cause of such asperity of feeling, and frequent schisms and disputes, at the present day, might be so attempered as not to alienate the affections of real christians.

The Unitarians who have written upon this subject, have contended, that the name, *Trinity*,

did not come into use in the christian church, until the fourth century, or until after the christian religion was established by law of Constantine, the great. But if we can credit the celebrated Mr. Fletcher, who it is evident, was well acquainted with the writings of the Fathers in the church of Christ, who lived in the three first centuries of christianity, we must believe, that this word came into use, long before that time. Mr. Fletcher informs us, that one of the Fathers in the second century, in a dialogue with a Jew, on this subject, used the term persons, and directly afterwards, the word *trinity*, came into use in the Latin church. And the same divine, informs us for what reason, the word *Trinity*, was used in that age, viz. "for the sake of brevity and conveniency." And should it be asked why we make use of the same word, we answer for the same reason, "brevity and conveniency." Should it be found to give offence to the christian world, we can renounce this convenient, and comprehensive word, and on all occasions say, we believe in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the three subsistences united in one divine union; and these *three are One God; are one*, in the unity of the Godhead.

Again, should it be asked, wherein is the conveniency of using the word Trinity? We answer, we have ever considered, that every denomination, or sect of people, person, or things, ought to have a name or names, in order to designate them. And, that name, should be significant as far as possible: for instance, God's children, in the first ages, were called, *Saints*. And in the Acts of the Apostles, we learn that *Saints*, were called

Christians, we believe were first so called in Antioch. No doubt, because saints in that day, believed in Christ.

It is contended by some, that the name, *Christians*, is sufficient to designate the children of God, at the present day. We reply, that if there were but one denomination or sect of christians, in the world, all agreeing in the same strain of truths, and giving light and harmony to each other, it would be sufficient to designate them, in this way, from the rest of mankind. But as there are many sects, and much diversity and discord of beliefs, in the Christian world, at the present day, we think under every rule of reason and propriety, there ought to be some simple and expressive designation, by which each should be known by their kinds, in plain and legible characters

This word triune, or three-one, or *Trinity*, distinguishes us, from the Sabellians, Arians, Socinians, Unitarians, Tritheists, and Ditheists, of every sect. To speak more plain, it distinguishes us from—1st. The Sabellians, a sect of Christians of the 3d century, who embraced the opinions of Sabellius an Egyptian philosopher, who taught, there is but one person in the Godhead, who exercised three different offices.

2. It distinguishes us from the Arians, Socinians, Unitarians, of every sect, and sub-division of them; who believe in the Unity of the Godhead, and deny the divinity or Godhead, of the Son and Holy Ghost.

3. It distinguishes us from the Tritheists, who so unscripturally separate and divide the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as to make three separate, and co-ordinate Gods.

4. It distinguishes us from Polytheists, who believe in a plurality or multitude of Gods.

5. Again, we think that this comprehensive word *Trinity* distinguishes between the pure doctrines of the Trinity, and the mis-named, or mixed doctrine, which we think is frequently taught for the doctrine of the Trinity. And which we view, not only erroneous doctrine, but a perversion in name, and an obvious abuse of the meaning of the word Trinity.

Therefore, we are persuaded, that unprejudiced minds, will at once discover, utility and propriety in our using the word Trinity, to designate our belief in the God we worship; the foregoing different systems of doctrine and belief, which we conscientiously consider, unsound and unscriptural, we apprehend, afford abundant grounds for distinctions by names.

We remark, that if Mr. Fletcher is to be accredited, this word Trinity, was used in the second century, to designate those christians, who believed, that this *divine unity*, consisted of, or was constituted of these three subsistences, namely, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. From this statement, if found correct, as we presume it is, every unbiassed mind, may plainly discover, that this class of professors, who assume to be Trinitarians, and deny that Jesus Christ is the *Son of God in his divine nature*, cannot, from the definition of the word Trinity, neither from any analogy of faith, be accounted Trinitarians, in the primitive sense and understanding of the doctrine. The reason is very plain; Primitive Trinitarians believed, that this divine union, which constituted the Godhead, involved, and comprehended, three subsistences, characters, or persons, viz. Fa-

ther, Son, Holy Spirit, and that these "*three are one God*;" but those who deny that God has such a *divine Son*, hold that this *divine union* is constituted of something, different from Father and Son; as we before have had occasion to remark.

We close these cursory remarks on the Holy Ghost, by that passage of Holy Writ, which brings to us the testimony of John the Baptist.

"And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

"And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." And "*if with*, in some sense distinct." Let none presume "to lift the mysterious pall" which veils the unrevealed mode of existence of these divine subsistences; we have only assumed, to hold forth, that the scriptures teach, that the Holy Ghost is comprehended and contained in the divine nature; and the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are the Holy One or Godhead. The union of these three persons, of "*one substance, majesty and glory*," is ineffable. But the existence of the *facts*, that there is a real difference, and that these three persons exist in union; as christians, we may not doubt.

BRETHREN,

The promise, and prefiguration, by a long train of prophecy, and the transfiguration, interlocution and agency of our Lord, and the Holy Spirit—the miracles, sufferings, divine displays,

and infinite love, were not in a solemn series of representation, to achieve acts which history accounts heroic. It was not a mighty state, a victor people, that was worthy to enter into the contemplation, and ultimate plan of the Godhead.— It was a far sublimer purpose, a purpose high as heaven is above earth. It was not to accomplish the poor, and little policies and performances of man. It was, to rescue and ransom, a world of rational beings, in all their generations, from ruin, from sin, from death; through divine grace and pardon, and acceptance; and to dissolve the dominion and power of satan, sin, and apostacy; and to exalt us from death to endless felicity, life, blessedness, and to the love and liberty of righteousness, goodness, and holiness. We should, therefore, strive in the appointed way, to advance in all knowledge of divine truth and dispensations, and the good pleasure of our Redeemer, through the agency of the divine spirit, who will “lead us into all truth.” To do this we must build on the rock of Scripture; we must rely upon the testament which makes us heirs; and upon this, for a system of religion, which our most enlarged understanding and faith approves. Upon this foundation we must build, if we would place our welfare, high and secure from injuries and assaults of enthusiasts, of unbelievers, and of all those who have no analogy of faith and christian charity. Strive to be rich in all christian faith and love, and in constancy with the Spirit which is Holy.

BRETHREN,

Are any wavering in the faith, we say remember Paul's argument to the Thessalonians

“For our gospel came not to you in Word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost.”

Are any dissatisfied with the manner of teaching, as “there are many things to say, and hard to be explained;” and slothfulness, &c. in hearer and reader, we say, consider the appeal of Paul to the Corinthians, “My speech, and my preaching, was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power.”

Are any falling off, or halting, having set out under the light and power of the Holy Spirit, we refer such to Paul’s remonstrance to the Hebrews, to learn how great their condemnation will be, if they deny or desert the pure doctrine to which the Godhead had borne “witness, with signs and wonders, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.” And we invite a return to the witness and fruits of the Spirit, and a renewal of their influence again “unto repentance, and faithfulness;” because once they had been “made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and had tasted the powers of the world to come.”

Are there any who have deserted the pure doctrine of the gospel, we inquire as he did of the “thoughtless Galatians.” “Who hath bewitched you? received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of the faith?”

And are there any slothful, and barren, and unfaithful, we quote for them, “wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith) to-day,” &c. Seeing Christ is faithful, be ye not unfaithful. “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Say one to another, “I will pray with the Spirit.” “I will sing with the Spirit;” “with the understanding also.” Ask one of another, “what thing is it,

brethren, that when we come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation?" Say also, one to another, "Let all things be done unto edification." "What the Holy Ghost taught concerning Christ, the very Angels long to know." And how much more we? It was for us, it was made known; it was for our everlasting benefit, it was planned; it was infinite love, that opened the way of righteousness, and the door of hope unto salvation. And it is our duty to see to it, that our faith is a living faith; and that our very *hope* of an interest in our Lord, is consonant to "what the Holy Ghost taught concerning him," and in no respect a stupifying influence. And as to this life observe the rule, "to use the world so as not to abuse it."

BELOVED BRETHREN,

PERMIT me to address you in all lowliness and meekness of heart. We are in some respects, as a new order of people. Our name of Reformed Methodists, denotes, that we have become sensible of our wanderings and backslidings, and have made up our minds to reform, and turn unto the truth as it is in the Gospel; looking also, more to Apostolic and primitive examples of practice and doctrines, than to the modern fashion of these concerns; and looking to our Head and Master who is in Heaven, and the Testament he left us, for counsel and direction, and not to any sublunary, and creature devices and notions, however gilded, and alluring in their character, and specious in their appearance. I beseech you, to weigh in all commendable solemnity and earnestness, the evidences in favor of the doctrine I have advanced, and endeavoured to defend, viz. "the proper Sonship of Jesus Christ, and his real divinity." Weigh the testimony, I entreat, in the balance of the sanctuary, and if they are found to bear the test, when fairly scrutinized, and fully brought to the balance and the light; need I ask, shall we contend for them? or shall we yield them up?

I trust, we shall all be of one mind, as the Apostle Jude, expresseth it, "to contend earnestly for the faith, once delivered to the saints"—that is to contend humbly, meekly, and lovingly, that the fundamental truths "which were once delivered to the saints, should remain unvaried forever." Should brethren ask us, if there is not a necessity of reforming on the points of doctrine herein considered? I answer, for one, I think there is not. All we need to qualify us to be useful members of the body of Christ, or ministers of a full and complete gospel, is, that anointing of the Holy Ghost promised to Christians, which transforms into the nature and image of Christ, so far as that nature and image is communicable to us, and sufficient for our needs.

Should any be curious to inquire, why we became a separate people, from the Episcopal Methodist Church? the answer should not give offence to any, and is very plain; the Episcopal mode of church government, as exercised in our day and age of the world, in my humble opinion, is not scriptural; neither congenial with the natural or christian rights of man. I would say, however, on this point, as on all others, that I would by no means set myself up as an infallible judge, but conceding at all times, the most perfect freedom; and that all men have a right to enjoy their highest and most endeared privileges, provided, they are careful, so to exercise them, as not to infringe upon the rights of other men.

I again exhort you to all diligence in respect to these fundamental doctrines of faith unto salvation, once delivered to the saints. I most a

fectionately and earnestly intreat you, also, to watch for me, for yourselves, and for one another.

I fellowship you all,

In the bonds of love,

Peace, and good will,

ELIJAH BAILEY.

SERMON.



THE following is the substance of a Sermon delivered at one of our Annual Conferences, held at Manlius, in the year of our Lord A. D. 1822. By the author of the foregoing work. Being requested to pen and exhibit to the public view, some of the leading principles of that discourse, I hereby comply with their requests by collecting together some of the leading views which I had on that subject at that time, and which I endeavored to exhibit from the following Text.

The Acts of the Apostles 3d Chapter and the 19, 20 and 21st verses which are as follows :

“ Repent ye, therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

“ And he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you.

“ Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began.”

THIS subject unquestionably must be considered as one of the most weighty and sublime subjects which is contained in the sacred oracles of God, as it was delivered on one of the most important occasions, and contains many of the most weighty points of man's redemption ; and almost all things necessary for us to know concerning salvation. Consequently, it cannot be expected that every point in the text, will be delineated in its full length ; and possibly, some points which may be considered to be contained in it, may be omitted and left untouched. All I intend from this subject is, to give some leading views of some of the most important and weighty points which are the most immediately connected with our present and eternal salvation. And by reviewing the subject, I can discover no particular

advantage in dividing, or subdividing the subject ; consequently shall take notice of the most obvious points, contained in the subject, as they most naturally present themselves to our view.

The first thing we shall take notice of is the doctrine of *repentance*. This doctrine is as frequently inculcated and taught in the most plain and pathetic manner, as any point in the Scriptures of truth. And although it cannot be termed meritorious in its nature, yet it may be considered absolutely necessary to man's salvation. Therefore to exhibit right views on the doctrine and importance of repentance, is one of those points which may be considered momentous and weighty to preachers and people.

Repentance implies a wrong done by us, or those to whom this command is enjoined, and if it implies a wrong, it is evident there must be a retraction of that wrong, so far, as it is in our power to repair the injury done by us.

Secondly, in order for us to exercise rational repentance, there must be a conviction in the understanding, of the wrongs and the evils which we have done, and not only a willingness to forsake the evil and choose the good but a full determination to carry those desires into effect, to the utmost of our power.

But should we vainly imagine that sin and iniquity will finally terminate in the highest good, that is, for God's greatest glory and our highest happiness, and salvation, then in this case, there can be no ground for rational repentance, for whatever will ultimately produce the highest good, must be esteemed by the rational mind good and valuable, so far as it is calculated to produce that excellent end and object. But should it be contended, that sin has been the procuring cause of the greatest good ; I answer, this we may term a plea in favor of sin, rather than an argument against it, and to show the fallacy of this argument, we shall take notice of a few passages of Scripture, which some have supposed may be advanced in support of the idea, that sin is the procuring cause of the highest good.

The first passage we shall notice, is found in Paul's epistle to the Romans, chap. 5, verse 20, and 21. "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound, but when sin abounded, grace did much more abound ; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ." Our Lord remarks, first I think it will appear to the rational and candid observer that in this passage the apostle has given no countenance to sin ; neither has he informed us that sin was in any sense the procuring cause of these inestimable blessings, viz. grace and eternal life ; but quite to the reverse. For the apostle has informed us that grace hath reigned through righteousness

by Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore we may safely conclude that sin was in no sense the first, second or in any sense the procuring cause of eternal life, or happiness. The next passage we shall notice, is found in Romans. 6, 17. "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin; but ye have obeyed from the heart, that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

When we take a cautious survey of this subject, viewing the text, in the light of the context, we may plainly discover, that it was not sin, which the apostle thanked God, not for their obedience to sin, but it seems he wished to inform his brethren, that he was truly thankful to God, that whereas, they were once strangers to God, and holiness, that now they had become obedient to those divine and holy precepts, which were delivered to them in the Gospel of Christ. And I think the most learned Divines will acknowledge that the word, *Whereas*, might be inserted in the Text without deviating from the sense of the original, and then the text would read as follows, "But God be thanked, that *Whereas*, ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." This seems to be the sense which the apostle wished to exhibit to his brethren through this chapter, which was to rivet the most rational convictions on the mind, of the evil nature of sin, and its most fatal consequences; and to inflame their hearts with divine love and gratitude, to the Father, and son, who had made such rich displays of grace towards them, in bringing them to the knowledge of the truth by the gospel, and saving them from that state of wretchedness and misery, in which they were involved, and continually exposed to.

The next passage we shall take notice of, on this subject is, found recorded in saint Luke, the 7th, beginning at the 37th verse, I shall transcribe this passage at full length, that we may have a more full and perfect view of the subject; for there is no one passage in the sacred scriptures which can be quoted, which would seem to favor the idea that sin is the procuring cause of the greatest good, than the one now under consideration; The passage is as follows:

"And, behold a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she saw that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment.

"And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

"Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him, saw it, he



spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner

“And Jesus answering, said unto him Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, master say on.

“There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

“And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

“Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, thou hast rightly judged.

“And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

“Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet

“My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

“Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”

Remark first—We frankly acknowledge we are indebted to God, according to the riches of his grace displayed towards us; and by the same rule, if God has frankly forgiven a debt of five hundred pence, we owe to God a greater debt of love, and gratitude, than we should have done, if he had forgiven us but fifty. And if our hearts are rightly exercised by grace, we surely shall love God with a greater fervour, for this display of his goodness towards us, in forgiving us this great debt.

Notwithstanding, when we take a survey of God's universal goodness, we may discover that sin is not the procuring cause of good; nor the foundation of our love to God; neither will it terminate in our highest felicity and happiness. And for these assertions, I shall offer two particular reasons. First—It is by grace we are preserved from sin, every moment; and to illustrate this idea, let me ask the candid christian, whether he would not esteem it a greater act of divine grace, for God to preserve him in the sweet enjoyment of love and grace to his dying moment, than he would if he should fall into sin, and live in that wretched state till his last moments, and then receive a pardon for his crimes? I think the candid christian will not be at a loss one moment, on this question, but will frankly acknowledge himself the most indebted to God, for his divine

goodness in preserving him from evil, and in the enjoyment of his love.

The second reason which I would offer for the above assertion is; God through grace has promised to reward all the acts of obedience done to the gospel of Christ, at the great day of account. Which rewards will be eternal.

So saith the apostle, "our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more, exceeding, and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen," &c

Again, saith the apostle, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that which he hath done; whether it be good or whether it be evil."

Therefore, we think we may safely conclude, that we are not indebted to sin, for our happiness, love to God, or eternal salvation.

Totally the reverse; and every one ought to consider our highest happiness consists in our union with God, and our obedience to his divine precepts, which he by grace, enables us to perform and which he has condescended to promise, and to reward us with the highest state of felicity in glory.

Therefore, under this consideration of the subject of repentance, we may urge with rationality the importance of repentance; and more especially, when we consider that sin is the procuring cause as all evil which is in this life, and that which is to come, and is in its nature opposed, to all that is intrinsically good.

Having made a few brief remarks on the doctrine of repentance, we shall turn our attention to the declaration of the apostle, made use of in the text. viz. "And *be converted*, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come, from the presence of the Lord."

Here it seems the apostle places conversion, before the remission of sins. And it is seldom, if ever this term is used in scripture in the sense which it is used in the church at the present day. That is, to signify a person regenerated, or born of God, but it seems the apostle Peter, makes use of the term *convert*, in the same sense which our Lord used it, in speaking to Peter, that is, "when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." And in the same sense, which the apostle James uses the term, in his epistle, the 5th chapter, and 19th and 20th verses, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and *convert* him, let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

Consequently, we may suppose that some errors with th

practices connected with them, become a fatal bar to the forgiveness of sin. And therefore must be removed, in order to receive pardon. Therefore we shall inquire after those errors and practices, which seem to be the most fatal hindrances to our receiving remission of sin. First, one of the most general causes appears to be unbelief, and especially unbelief under the glorious light of the gospel; for God has made such rich discoveries of his power, wisdom and grace, by the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ; and especially when it is accompanied with the energies of the Holy Ghost to the consciences of men, that this sin is as much spoken against, as any in the whole volume of God's Word. This sin of unbelief, is generally accompanied with hardness of heart, and almost every abomination is the natural fruit of this soul damning sin, unbelief. But may we not inquire whether there were not some sins committed by those characters whom Peter was addressing which was at least some of the causes of their darkness and unbelief? We shall answer the question, in the affirmative, we think there really was; for Peter, although he acknowledges their ignorance in crucifying the Lord of glory, yet the apostle does not fully excuse them; for if the apostle had fully excused them, there would seem to be no propriety in the apostle's exhorting them to repent and be converted, for there can be no ground for repentance, where there can be no knowledge of wrong done.

And when we take into consideration the situation of the Jews, we shall not be at a loss to know wherein their guilt consisted, that is in their former obstinacy, for our Lord informs us, that if he had not come among them and done the works that no other had done, they had not had sin, but now, they have no cloak for their sin. This must at least intimate to us, that this sin was their capital or damning sin. That is, in rejecting the light manifested to them—consequently sunk them into a state of darkness, and hardness of heart.

We shall now for a moment consider the two expressions connected together, viz. *Repentance* and *conversion*. From the error of our ways, as we have explained the expressions, great caution should be used by us, not to make a self-righteousness of repentance, and turning from the error of our ways, for these cannot be esteemed so excellent in the sight of God as innocency. If repentance and conversion were as eminent qualifications to prepare us for heaven as innocency itself, we should stand in no need of the righteousness of Christ, and his atoning blood, to prepare us for that state of felicity and glory.

But we must be esteemed guilty in the sight of God, notwithstanding our deepest penitency of soul, and our most so-

emn determination to renounce all our former practices, and to turn to God with a full purpose of heart. I say all this cannot purchase pardon for past offences, nor purge the conscience from guilt, nor prepare the fallen soul for the solemn and ravishing delight of heaven. And when we have said all this, we must leave this subject almost untouched, as to the evil nature and most dangerous consequences of sin.

Therefore we ought to feel the most deep humiliation of heart, for past offences, in that it has brought such a blot upon our consciences, that nothing but the mere blood of Christ, can erase it from the soul, and purge the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. And when we consider our nonconformity to the just and gracious requirements of the gospel in times past, under all the peculiar privileges and advantages which we have enjoyed, which are no less than the purchase of the blood of Christ, and when we consider our non-compliance and nonperformance, of all those evangelical precepts for which nothing can make amends but the righteousness of him who died for us and arose again. Under all these considerations, we ought to consider that no cross is too great for us to bear, nor no labour too hard for us to endure, which grace will enable us to perform; when we consider ourselves so much involved by sin, and so much indebted to grace, for those inestimable privileges which we have been made the partakers of.

Notwithstanding all your tears of contrition, and your briny tears of sorrow, and your pungent sensations of guilt, joined with your best endeavours for a reformation of life, and your most solemn surrender to God, in the deepest state of humiliation, can never, never purchase pardon for a guilty soul.

Yet, sinner, you need not despair one moment; although your case may seem to be desperate, yet you may join in part with the disembodied saints of glory, in "Crying glory to him that sitteth on the throne and the Lamb, for ever and ever; for thou hast redeemed us with thine blood." And this blood is infinitely precious and ready to be applied by the power of the Holy Ghost, to the blotting out of your sins; and the washing and purging your consciences from all pollution, although they be of a scarlet colour, and of a crimson dye, they shall be made white as the snow, and the wool.

☛ Therefore, "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come, from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ who was before preached unto you;" for he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. For whom the Son shall make free shall be free indeed. 1.

this life we may be made free from the guilt of sins that are past, which lay as a mountain upon the conscience. And if thoroughly purged by the all-efficient blood of Christ, may be sanctified and purified from in-dwelling pollution so that we can bear witness, experimentally, with the great apostles Paul and John, "that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus; who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit—for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh. God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, and we may add, by blotting out our sins, and purging our consciences, he hath condemned sin in the flesh, both in its practice and nature one; we could witness by our present experience that the carnal mind was at enmity with God; it was not subject to his law, neither in deed could be, whilst we yielded ourselves as servants to sin; but having our sins blotted out by the all atoning blood and merit of Jesus Christ the spirit witnesses with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled. And have our fruits unto holiness, and the end thereof everlasting life; for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." And again, "the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature—old things are passed away; and behold all things are become new." A new bend of the will, the understanding enlightened, and the exertions changed, new hopes, new joys, new fears, new desires, new treasures, new views, new objects, and new companions. Therefore it may be said with the greatest propriety, as to the new born soul, all things are apparently new; he loves God with a flame inexpressible and full of glory, and in many things, which he once hated, he now loves, and takes the greatest delight.

We shall now proceed to make more particular remarks on the "*divine refreshings*," referred to by the apostle. First, I think the times of refreshing which the apostle had particular reference to, may be divided into *three* particular periods or seasons. The first period frequently spoken of by the prophets, unquestionably had reference to the time in which Peter delivered this great discourse, or in other words, in the first ages of christianity. And the second, the last ages of christianity; when Satan shall be bound a thousand years. And the third, at the restitution of all things. These three periods of divine refreshings, have been spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets, since the world began; but perhaps, it would

be impossible for any divine, at the present day, to divide and explain those prophecies, so as to decide in all cases which of those times they referred to, but some of those prophecies are clear and distinct.

These three times of refreshings, are so peculiar, and shine so illustrious under the reign of the Messiah; after all power in heaven and on earth, is given unto him, to rule and reign in his mediatorial capacity, that all of the prophets have spoken of them. Either collectively, or individually, for the strengthening and confirmation of our faith, and hope, in God our Saviour. Consequently, we shall turn our attention to a few leading passages of scripture, which Peter seems to allude to in his discourse. The first passage we shall take notice of, is quoted by Peter, on the day of pentacost, from Joel the prophet, and recorded in the 2d chapter of the acts of the apostles.

“But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words :

“For these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

“But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.

“And it shall come to pass in the last day, (saith God) I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams :

“And on my servants and on my hand maidens, I will pour out in those days of my spirit, and they shall prophesy.

“And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in earth beneath; blood and fire, and vapour of smoke.

“The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come.”

That this prophecy in part has reference to the first days of refreshing, is evident, for the apostle quotes it in defence of the church in its infantile state which was abundantly blessed with the fullness of the divine spirit at the opening of the christian dispensation, which unquestionably was intended by the wise Ruler of the Universe, to raise a proper criterion of the christian faith, and to exhibit to the world a proper specimen of the wonderful displays of divine wisdom, power, and grace, under the fullness of the gospel of Christ.

The next passage we shall take notice of, is recorded in the 40th chapter of the prophesy of Isaiah.

“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

“Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that the warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned ;

for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high way for our God."

"Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:

"And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God!

"Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold his reward is with him, and his work before him.

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

"Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord the creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

"Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

We shall now turn our attention for a moment to some prophecies found recorded in the 3d and 4th chapters of the prophet Malachi.

"Behold I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: Behold he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

"But who shall abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.

"And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

"Then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem, be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

"And I will come near to you in judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his way, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts."

"And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts."

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often to one another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name.

"And they shall be mine, said the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him

"Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; and between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not."

"For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

"But unto you that fear my name shall the son of righteousness arise with heating in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall.

"And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be as ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts.

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:

"And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

The above quoted passages are but very few in comparison, with the whole of those divine prophecies found recorded in the Old Testament, which have immediate reference to the first divine refreshing which God promised to pour upon his infant church, in the first ages of christianity, which was abundantly fulfilled on the days of Pentacost, and in the apostolic age; and some of those passages, not only have reference to the first ages, but reach forward to what some divines have been pleased to call the Millenium; and even to the restitution of all things, as it is termed in the words of our text.

We shall now turn our attention to a few passages which

have more immediate reference to those refreshings, which God has been pleased to promise he would pour on the church of Christ; in the latter days, we may truly say we can take notice of but a few of those divine promises, recorded by the prophets, for perhaps not one of the prophets which have spoken in the name of the Lord, but what have foretold of the rich displays of God's grace, love, and power, which he will accomplish in the world in the latter day, when the Messiah's kingdom shall be established to the utmost parts of the earth, and all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, and when God shall sprinkle clean water in abundance upon the church, and cleanse them from all their filthiness and idols.

We shall first take notice of a few prophecies found recorded in Isaiah who has been called the Evangelical prophet; the first of these prophecies are found in the 2d chapter.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

"And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jesus, amen.

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

And that this prophecy is not as yet fully accomplished is evident, for it appears that the prophecy includes, the nations in general, if not all the human family, and a period of his description, I think will be acknowledged, cannot be found in the annals of history; consequently must have its more full accomplishment in the latter day glory, of the church.

And again in chapter 4.

"In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem;

"When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

“And the Lord shall create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a defence.”

From this we shall pass to the 9, 11 and 12 chapters, and select a few passages from them which most evidently point us to those divine refreshings, which God has reserved for the Church in the latter days.

Chapter 9th.—“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the prince of peace.

“Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment, and with justice, from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.”

And Chapter 11th.—“But with righteousness shall he judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

“And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the guide of his reins.

“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child lead them.

“And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

“And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice-den.

“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

“And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign for the people; To it shall the gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious.”

And again in chapter 12th.—“And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: Though thou wast angry with me thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

“Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out the wells of salvation.

“And in that day shall ye say, praise the Lord, call upon his

name, declare his doing, among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

“Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things; this is known in all the earth.”

And Jeremiah, has borne witness to the same divine refreshing, which God hath promised to pour upon the christian church, in the latter days; we will take one declaration in particular from this prophet. Chapter 31 beginning at the 31st verse.

“Behold the day is come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah;

“Not according to the covenant that I made with their Fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;)

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

“And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more.”

Zechariah bears testimony to the same fact where he says “the Lord shall be king, over all the earth in that day shall there be one Lord and his name one.”

We shall now turn our attention for a few moments to a declaration found recorded in the New Testament. The first we shall refer to is in the 6th chapter of Matthew, where our Lord teaches us how to pray, “Our father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name,—thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven”—Which perfectly agrees with the vision, which the apostle John saw, respecting the divine refreshing, God would pour upon the church in the latter days, under the reign of the Messiah.

“And I beheld,” said John, “and I heard the voice of many angels round about the Throne, and the Beast and the Elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

“Saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Widom, and Strength, and Honor, and Glory, and Blessing.

“And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are

in them, heard I saying, Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

And in Revelation 14th, saith the same apostle, "And I saw another angel fly, in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, "saying with a loud voice, fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountain of waters.

"And there followed another angel, saying Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the Holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

This is followed by a long description of the downfall of spiritual Babylon, and the weepings and lamentations of every class of people which had been so long duped by her wickedness, and spiritual lewdness. And this is followed with acclamations of praise and thanksgiving to God for thus judging this great city, whom John has described as the mother of spiritual harlots. In these words, "After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

"For true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

"And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

"And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

"And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thun-

derings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

“And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.

“And he saith unto me, write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, these are the true sayings of God.”

Then, in the next chapter, we have the following account:

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand.

“And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and satan, and bound him a thousand years,

“And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

Then follows a description of the first resurrection, and that these prophecies in general have reference to the great outpouring of God's divine spirit upon the earth in the latter days, is evident; for many of them will not apply to any period past, neither will they apply to that glorious state of things, which we believe will exist after the general judgment.

Or, to speak in the language of our text, “the restitution of all things.” And the greatest care ought to be taken by divines, not to blend these times of refreshings, and restitution together, for there is scarcely any thing which is more calculated to mislead the mind as to the plan of redemption, than for us to blend these points of doctrine together. But when we compare the prophecies with the plan of redemption, we find they most beautifully harmonize and open progressively to the mind, the wonderful works of God.

Once more let us remark, it is evident that many, if not all, of the prophecies which we have quoted from the Revelations, will take place successively one after the other, as they stand recorded, that is from the 13th chapters, to the close of the book, with very few exceptions at most. Some divines, by blending these times of refreshings together, have supposed that Christ will come personally and set up his kingdom at Jerusalem, in the latter day glory of the church, but this seems to contradict some express passages of scripture: for our text informs us that the heavens must receive him till the restitution of all things. Perhaps the inquiring mind by this time is

ready to ask, what means and measures God will take to bring about these great events? and we are ready to answer as far as the scriptures have given us information on this subject. And I think that Peter's sermon is full on this point. First, "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come," "and he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you." And in the second verse following our text says the apostle, that "it shall come to pass, that every soul that will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."

Unquestionably we may expect great displays of God's judgments amongst the people, as well as the abundant out-pourings of his divine spirit, in order to accomplish this great event on the earth, in order to bring down all usurped power, which has been usurped contrary to the mind and will of God, both in church and state. But should we attempt to inquire when the great event last referred to shall be fully accomplished, we acknowledge would be a question perhaps too hard for us to define; and should we enter on that part of the subject it must swell this discourse far beyond what we should be able to attend to at present.

Therefore, it must suffice to say, we think the time is not far distant when God will make rich displays of his power and grace for the salvation of his people; and I think the period is already arrived spoken of by Daniel the prophet, "when many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," and that the dawn of the latter day glory in some small degree has already appeared.

We shall now turn our attention to the latter part of the subject, which is still more weighty, interesting, and sublime, when the Messiah shall fully accomplish and complete his mediatorial kingdom and reign; or, to speak in the language of the text, when the "restitution of all things," and the last general "refreshings" of the Zion of God, which is to be eternal, "shall come."

And this we find has been spoken of by the mouth of all the Holy Prophets since the world began. Notwithstanding these solemn and weighty events have been so frequently spoken of by the prophets, yet time will not admit of our reciting but a few of them on this occasion; consequently, we shall attend to those passages which clearly speak of this most solemn and awful event. We shall begin with the epistle of Jude.

This apostle informs us that "Enoch the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their un-

godly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches*, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." That this passage has reference to the general judgment, which is emphatically called the great day, I think is evident for the same apostle in the same epistle, speaks in the following manner, in verses 6th and 7th.

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

I think Daniel must have reference to the same period which Enoch referred to; which passage is found recorded in the prophecy of Daniel, 12th chapter, and the three first verses.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

We will now compare the declaration of Daniel, which we have just quoted, with the latter part of the 20th chapter of the Revelations; and I think we shall be convinced that they refer to one period of time.

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

"And shall go out to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sands of the sea.

"And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

"And the devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophets are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it,

from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works.

“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works.

“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death.

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the fire.”

And these prophecies perfectly agree with the declarations of Paul, in his two epistles to the Thessalonians, for saith the apostle, “the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

“Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

And again, saith the apostle, “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you;

“And to you which are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

“In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;

“Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

“When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.”

And Peter, it is evident, has reference to the same period, when he saith, “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.

“Seeing then that all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness;

“Looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the day of God wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?”

“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

These passages also coincide with the apostle's remarks, in the first chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews, where he says;

“And thou Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands.

“They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they shall wax old as doth a garment;

“And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.”

We shall proceed to take notice of one more passage of scripture on this subject, that is, Paul's observations on the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, found recorded in his first epistle to the Corinthians, and the 15th chapter.

“Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead;

“But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.

“And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.”

“But now is Christ risen from the dead and became the first fruits of them that slept.”

Then the apostle proceeds to confirm his declaration by a few weighty arguments, and then proceeds to show the excellency, glory, and importance of this change; and in illustration of these points he informs us, “There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another star in glory.

“So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption:

“It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power:

“It is sown a natural body, it is raised in a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.”

“Now this I say, brethren that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

“Behold I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed,

“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

We shall now spend a few thoughts in contemplating on the

continuance of the chain of evidence we have collected, from the prophets and apostles, on the last point of doctrine contained in our text, or to speak in the language of our text, "Whom the heavens must receive till the restitution of all things."

Remark first—In comparing these passages together, we find they generally centre in two important points, viz. God's wonderful displays of justice and judgment, as well as mercy and grace, in order to bring about this great event, "the restitution of all things."

Remark second—We find by critically comparing these passages together, the order of that tremendous day is clearly pointed out to us, so far as it is necessary for us to know.

Thirdly—We learn from the above quoted passages, that after a long period of time, in which the church of Christ shall enjoy the highest state of prosperity in both spiritual and natural things, satan shall be loosed out of prison, and shall go out into the world, and once more deceive the nations of the earth; and gather them together Gog and Magog to battle; the number thereof shall be as the sand of the sea, and they shall go up on the breadth of the earth, and shall compass the camp of the saints, and the beloved city, in order to make their last and general effort against the church, with all their hellish rage, and malice, in order to destroy them from the face of the earth. Then "there shall be a time of trouble such as there never was, since there was a nation." Which I think the destruction of Jerusalem, and the nation of the Jews will bear but a faint resemblance. And John informs us, that "fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them; and at this period, the earth will be fully ripe for the general judgment.—And in this hour of trouble, the prayer of the church will centre in one point, and in one voice, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." And Paul informs us that "Christ shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire." And again says Paul, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." And the same apostle tells us, that "we shall not all sleep but we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump."

And John informs us, he "saw a great white throne, and him that sat on the throne, from whose presence the heavens and the earth fled away," &c.

Then the apostle informs us, that he "saw the dead, small and great, stand before God," &c. Then the apostle proceeds

to inform us, that "those whose names were not found written in the book of life were cast into the lake of fire."

This seems to be the exact order of things exhibited by the apostles, and prophets, respecting the great events which will transpire before the new heavens and the new earth shall be created.

And in the 21st chapter of the revelations and the seven first verses, which immediately follow the description of the general judgment, and awful state of the wicked, then the apostle proceeds to give us the clear description of "the restitution of all things," or in other words the new heaven and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, but does not give us the least intimation, that those characters which had their portion in the lake of fire, had, or should have any right in the holy city, or in the new heavens, and the new earth, but absolutely declares to the reverse: For these are the express words of the apostle,

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

"And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

"And I heard a great noise out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

"And God shall wipe all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said to me, Write; for these words are true and faithful.

"And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my Son.

"But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."

Therefore it appears that the apostle is clear and express on the point, that "the fearful and unbelieving," &c. are excluded from any right or inheritance in the new heavens and the

new earth ; neither hath the apostle given us the least intimation, that the state of the wicked is limited to a shorter period than that of the righteous.

And it is evident, I think, if we candidly and cautiously weigh these conclusions, and the last quoted texts with the declaration of our Lord, recorded in Matthew 25, that they perfectly agree, for saith our Lord, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his kingdom, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them, one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats, on the left.

"Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you," &c. "For I was an hungered and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink, a stranger and ye took me in.

"Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels : for I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink, &c.

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

"Therefore, seeing all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all manner of holy conversation and godliness, that we may be found in Christ at his coming without spot and blameless ; having our lamps trimmed and burning ;" and our virgin souls fully prepared to enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb. For nothing short of this divine union with Christ, our living head, can support us in that "tremendous day when the heavens above us shall be on fire, and the elements beneath us shall melt with fervent heat, and they that believe, and sleep in the dust, shall awake and shine as the brightness of the firmament."

What tongue can describe, or what pencil can paint, or what pen can portray either the horror of the wicked, or the joys of the righteous. All scenes may be exaggerated, by the pen of the learned, and the tongue of the orator, but this day, which is emphatically called the *Great Day, and the day of God Almighty* ; must remain indescribable until the awful period shall arrive. But, says Doct. Watts,

"That awful day will surely come,
The appointed hour makes haste,
When I must stand before my judge,
And pass the solemn test."

Again says the same divine, in describing this tremendous day;

“ What shall the wretch the sinner do,
Who once defy'd the Lord;
But he shall dread the thunderer now,
And sink beneath his Word.

“ Trumpets of angry fire shall roll,
To blast the rebel worm,
And beat upon his naked soul,
In one eternal storm.”

The apostle John informs, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.—And says the poet,

“ The holy triumphs of my soul,
Shall death itself out-brave,
Leave dull mortality behind,
And fly beyond the grave.

“ There where my blessed Jesus reigns,
In Heaven's unmeasur'd space,
I'll spend a long eternity,
In pleasure and in praise.

“ Millions of years my wand'ring eyes,
Shall o'er thy beauties rove,
And endless ages I'll adore
The glories of thy love.

“ Sweet Jesus, ev'ry smile of thine,
Shall fresh endearment bring,
And thousands taste of new delights,
From all thy glories spring.”

What remains, is a few words of address to preachers, and people. As it has fallen to my lot to address this concourse of people, with a large number of preachers from different parts of the United States, on the sublime subject of religion, none sure can be so momentous; no affairs of state, in the legislative department, can equal the concerns we are now engaged in; in reality it is no less than the declarative glory of God, and the eternal salvation of souls. The nations yet unborn

may derive advantages, or disadvantages, by the labours of this Conference, and the exercises of this day.

Suffer me as a labourer with you in the gospel of Christ, to address you. As this cause in which we are engaged, is a cause of the first magnitude, no doubt but our trials and conflicts in some sense will be in proportion to the cause we are engaged in. Therefore, we may cry out in the language of the apostle, "who is sufficient for these things." But may we not reply, notwithstanding all we may be called to endure, that in a comparative sense, "these light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; whilst we look not at the things that are seen but at the things which are not seen which are eternal."

And when we consider the infinite love of God manifested through his only begotten Son towards a guilty and rebellious world, and the great condescension of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in leaving the bosom of his Father, to be clothed with mortality, that he by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. And when we consider our responsibility to God for the talents he has graciously bestowed on us, and the awful events which await us; I say, under these considerations, we ought never to esteem any cross too great for us to bear; nor trials too severe for us to endure for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls; therefore, let us put on that charity which is not puffed up, but hopeth all things, beareth all things, endureth all things and never faileth.

2. I shall address you, my hearers, as those bound with me to the tribunal of him who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his coming. We are informed, that "every eye shall see him, and that they which have pierced him shall mourn." "And the books shall be opened." By which we understand, as the apostle expresses it, he shall judge the secrets of men according to the gospel, and as expressed by our blessed Lord, "Verily I say unto you, that every idle word which a man speaketh, shall he give an account thereof, in the day of judgment."

Consequently all the privileges and the advantages we enjoy, under the glorious gospel of Christ, and as so many jewels and precious diamonds, which we must render a scrutinizing account of, the judge of all the earth, before men and angels; and in that tremendous day be eternally rewarded according to our works. And when this tremendous day shall come, we may truly say, "the great day of his wrath, as well as mercy, is come; and who shall be able to stand, for he shall judge ru-

lers as well as the ruled, without partiality ; the high and the low are equally interested in this awful event."

Although some of us may have been called to fill important stations in the legislative, judiciary, or executive departments of temporal government, yet we which have sit and had others arraigned at our tribunals, now must be summoned, not by a human officer of state, but "by the archangel, and the sound of the trump of God, and the voice of Jesus Christ, whose voice the dead shall hear, and come forth, and they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." O, my hearers, no pen can describe, no pencil can paint, the feelings of my heart, when I consider that the eyes which now behold me, and the ears which hear me, although they may sleep long in the dust, yet they shall be once more awaked and never to sleep again. Saith Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and shall stand at the latter day on the earth ; though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." There "we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Therefore, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all manner of holy conversation and godliness, looking for the coming of our blessed Lord, when all these things shall be dissolved."

Then under all these considerations, may I not with propriety address you once more in the language of the text, "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, and the day of refreshings will come, and you will be able to stand, clothed with white robes, and palms in your hands, ready to enter into the marriage feast of the Lamb."

Which may God grant, through the merits of Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son. AMEN.