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THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
SERMON
ON THE
GODHEAD OF CHRIST,

Preached at BALTIMORE, in the State of MARYLAND, on the
26th Day of December, 1784

BEFORE THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE
OF THE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

BY THOMAS COKE, L. L. D.
SUPERINTENDENT of the said CHURCH.

Published at the Desire of the Conference.

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TO THE

Rev. FRANCIS ASBURY,
SUPERINTENDENT,

THE

ELDERS, DEACONS, AND HELPERS,

OF THE

Methodist Episcopal Church in America,

THIS

S E R M O N

IS VERY HUMBL Y I N S C R I B E D,

BY

THEIR MOST DEVOTED SERVANT,

THOMAS COKE.

 S E R M O N, &c.

THE WORD WAS GOD.—JOHN i. 1.

IT is a ground of lamentation to every liberal and devout mind, that the Christian world has been ever running to extremes; that of *infidelity* on the one hand, and that of *gross superstition* on the other. The three first centuries are (I believe universally) acknowledged by the pious and learned, to have been the purest ages of Christianity. No sooner did Constantine the Great ascend the throne of the Empire, and profess himself a Christian, but *his Religion* became the established one of the Empire. And now, the pernicious influence of that baneful truth and holiness, a *national Church*, began to pervade the Christian world. Now the Overseers of the flock of the humble Jesus, were raised above the Princes of the earth. And now the great, and the rich, and the wise after the flesh, to whom *Christ crucified was foolishness*, pressed into the visible Church, which they treated as a mere *Leviathan*, (as Mr. *Hobbes* is pleased to call it) to frighten the vulgar, — the mere tool and stalking-horse of sinister and ambitious men. The natural consequence of this was, *infidelity* in all its various shapes. The religion of *Jesus* must be turned and twisted to coincide with the platonic philosophy, the favourite system of the age, and it soon became a common, but melancholy Proverb, *Athanasius contra mundum*, Athanasius against the world.

That great Defender of the Divinity of our Lord, had the whole stream of the Christian world to cope with.

Again, when the tables were turned, and the vast armies of *Goths* and *Vandals* over-ran the whole Roman Empire, and Ignorance covered the face of the earth, Superstition, with all her horrid attendants, unveiled her face, and rose by degrees to so enormous a height, that the deluded world was even prevailed on to believe,—that they could put their god into their mouths, and swallow him down their throats.

For several centuries past, the Christian world has been emerging out of darkness, and all the arts and sciences are rising to perfection by hasty steps. But through the abuse of that *knowledge*, which too generally *puffeth up*, Infidelity again rears up her head. O that she may never prevail in these rising Empires, but the simple truths of scripture be handed down in all their native, un sullied purity to the latest generations.

The increase of *Arianism* and *Socinianism* throughout Christendom, is so manifest to every close observer, that it calls for the greatest exertions from the true lovers of the Lord Jesus, to stop the growing plague. If *this* attempt may in anywise contribute towards it, an abundant compensation will be made for this labour of love.

The first step in every candid dispute is to concede to the adversary, every thing the truth enables him to claim. The grand argument of our Opponents, drawn from *Reason*, is this: "No man is obliged to believe what he cannot comprehend." This we allow. "Then you give up all the mysteries of the Christian doctrine." By no means; for the incomprehensibility of the mystery lies not in the *reality* or truth of the thing, but in the *mode* of its existence. And is not

not all Nature full of mystery? If we drive you to first principles, you will in every thing be at a loss.

Can you explain how the grass grows, or the sun shines? Can you unfold to us the nature of that union which subsists between Matter and Spirit? Can you discover how the small superficies of the optic nerve displays to the mind the whole hemisphere at once? Yea, can you account for the smallest motion of the smallest members of your body? And if *earthly* things be so full of mystery, how much more must *heavenly*? If the mode of the existence of things, the evidences of the reality whereof are interwoven in our very being, is so far beyond the reach of human understanding; how much more the nature of God and the mode of his existence?

But *Reason* may comprehend that God is eternal Truth, and therefore that any revelation proceeding from him must be infallibly true. *Reason* may comprehend the force of those arguments which arise from the accomplishment of prophecies, preserved by the greatest enemies of Christianity (the *Jews*) and acknowledged even by them to have been written at the times specified by the friends of our Religion; from the testimony of the Apostles for the miracles of Jesus; matters of fact in which they could not be deceived, and the truth of which they sealed with their blood, and could therefore be influenced by no sinister motive: *Reason*, in short, may comprehend the ten thousand arguments which may be and have been adduced for the authenticity of the scriptures. All this is level to the human understanding, and within the reach of human reason. I am speaking now of the *external* evidences of the Christian revelation, and not of the conversion of the soul, which I am deeply conscious, originates with the

Spirit of God alone. But these evidences being supposed sufficient, and consequently the Bible, the word of God, it then follows of necessity,— that the *reality* of every mystery in the Bible is level to the human understanding; and the point on which our credit is to be placed, is the *reality* of the thing, and not the *mode of its existence* in which alone the mystery lies.* Here therefore we join issue, and appeal to the infallible word of God as the proper test of the doctrine under consideration. And from this I hope to prove that the Lord Jesus Christ, *the Word that was made flesh*, John i. 14, is God in the fullest and highest sense.

To this end, we may first observe the several instances that represent our Lord as a most extraordinary personage; and secondly, the more pointed proofs of his supreme divinity.

Under the first of these heads, we may consider, First, The many signs and presages of our Saviour's becoming; and Secondly, The many evidences of his really being a very extraordinary personage.

First, We find in the sacred writings many remarkable signs and presages of our Saviour's becoming a very extraordinary personage. Such as the salutation of the Virgin, his mother according to the flesh: the interview between *Mary* and *Elizabeth*, when the babe leaped in the womb of *Elizabeth* at the approach of its Lord: the appearance of the angel to the shepherds on his birth, and the glorious anthem sung by the heavenly choir: the extraordinary star which appeared to the wise men in the East, and led them from *Jerusalem*, "till it came and stood

* See Mr. Wesley's Sermon on the Trinity.

over where the young child was:" and the message of the angel delivered to *Joseph* in a dream, that the child might be removed from *Bethlehem*, and escape the jealousy and fury of *Herod*.

These were undoubtedly wonderful presages of the approach of some most extraordinary personage.

Nor were the expectations which were raised by these remarkable signs, in anywise disappointed, when he entered on his most important sphere of action. This was clearly manifested by his disputations with the learned Doctors in the Temple, at the age of twelve: by the astonishing manifestation of the Spirit of God descending upon him, and the voice from heaven, at his baptism; and the beautiful testimony given by the Baptist thereupon: by his being led into the wilderness by the Spirit, fasting there forty days and forty nights, and conflicting with and conquering the Devil: by the divine spirit which ran through his discourses, so that never man spake as *that man*: by his surprising miracles; by turning water into wine; driving the multitude out of the Temple with the little whip of cords; healing a man with a disease of thirty-eight years standing, at the pool of *Bethesda*; feeding four thousand people at one time with seven loaves and a few fishes; yea, five thousand at another time with five loaves and two small fishes, multiplying the food to that amazing degree, that twelve baskets were filled with the remaining fragments; the raising of *Lazarus*, and the widow's son at *Naim* from the dead; the restoring of the sight of the blind, yea, of those who were born so; the cursing and withering of the fruitless fig-tree; curing of the lepers; commanding the winds and the seas, which immediately manifested the most entire obedience to his orders;

walking on the sea; and performing a variety of other most beneficent and amazing miracles.

Many other proofs of a similar kind, may be brought to evidence the dignity and importance of our Saviour's person and mission: as the voice from heaven at his Transfiguration on the Mount: the acknowledgement of the very Devils: the miracles which were wrought by the use of his name: the officers and men falling to the ground in the garden at his saying, "I am he." The dream of *Pilate's* wife, and the advice she sent thereupon to her husband; the wonderful circumstances attending his death; the extraordinary darkness; the dreadful earthquake which rent the rocks and opened the graves, and the resurrection of many saints from the dead, who appeared to many in Jerusalem. All these were so many wonderful proofs of a person of extraordinary rank and distinction.

So far as this the *Socinians* will go, and no farther. The *Arians* will allow all this and much more. They will grant that our Saviour existed before all worlds; but they will not allow that he is the Most High God, equal with the Father in glory and in eternity.

Let us therefore proceed, in the second place, to examine the scripture-account of this important point, from whence I trust we shall be able to prove that our Saviour is God in the highest and most absolute sense of the word.

And, first, we may argue *indirectly*, from plain consequences drawn from various texts.

Secondly. We may argue *directly* from such texts, where our Saviour is expressly called God, or JEHOVAH, or LORD of HOSTS: as also from such texts where such titles are adjoined to the word *God* when applied to our Saviour, as do restrain it to its highest and most proper signification.

First,

First, we are to prove that the Lord Jesus Christ is supreme God from plain consequences drawn from various texts; as, where he is said to be "in the form of God, and equal with God." Phil. ii. 6. To have all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily," Col. ii. 9. "To be, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person," Heb. i. 3.

But, to be more regular. What are the springs from whence all our notions and ideas of the Most High God proceed? I apprehend they all originate in his attributes, the inward and outward honours which are paid to him, and the operations of his hands. Let us then consider our Saviour in this threefold view, in each of which the scripture speaks of him in the highest and strongest terms.

First, In respect to the incommunicable attributes of the Supreme God.

First, Eternity. Secondly, Omnipotence. Thirdly, Omniscience. Fourthly, Omnipresence. Fifthly, Immutability.

First, Eternity. In the prophecy of *Micah*, in the fifth chapter and the second verse, we read, "Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from *Everlasting*." And in Rev. i. 8, compared with the 11th and 17th verses, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." And again, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." And again, "I am the first and the last, I am he that liveth and was dead." And in the xxii. chapter and the 13th verse, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last," which words were spoken by him, who in the 16th verse,

A 6.

says,

says, "I Jesus have sent mine angel." Now these are the common phrases which the scriptures use when they would set forth the Eternity of God.

Secondly, Omnipotence. Rev. i. 8, "Who is, and who was, and who is to come, *the Almighty.*" And Phil. iii. 21, "He is able even to subdue *all things* to himself."

Thirdly, Omniscience. Thus we read in St. John ii. 24, 25, "He knew all men. He knew what was in man." And John xxi. 17. St. Peter tells our Lord, "Lord, thou knowest *all things*, thou knowest that I love thee." And in John xvi. 30, The disciples say to him, "Now are we sure that thou knowest *all things.*" Our Lord, undoubtedly, if he was not Supreme God, or was not an Impostor, would never have suffered them to ascribe to him one of the incommunicable attributes of the Most High, without reproof or rectifying at least their mistake.

Fourthly, Omnipresence. This our Lord ascribes to himself in the most express terms. As for instance, in Matt. xviii. 20, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." And in Matt. xxviii. 20, "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Fifthly, Immutability. Heb. xiii. 8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." And Heb. i. 10. 12, "Unto the Son he saith, The Heavens and the Earth they shall perish, but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

Secondly. As the incommunicable attributes of the Most High are so fully ascribed to our blessed Lord, so are all the honours, whether internal or external, that are paid to his holy name, which is the second spring from whence we receive our ideas concerning the Supreme God. Our Lord
himself

himself says, John v. 22, 23, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son, *even as they honour the Father.*"

First. All internal honours are paid to him as their proper object, as faith, and hope, and love. He is the object of faith. John iii. 36, "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." And in John, xiv. 1, He says of himself, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." He is the object of Christian hope: 1 Tim. i. 1, "Jesus Christ, who is our hope." And he is the object of Christian love. 1 Cor. xvi. 22, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha."

Secondly. Outward acts of divine worship and adoration are also paid to him as their proper object. Thus we find from Luke xxiv. 52, "They worshipped him," that is, the Apostles and those that were with them worshipped the Lord Jesus, who had just parted from them, and ascended into heaven. And in Acts vii. 59. We read, "They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." St. Paul also prays to Christ, in 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9, "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me, and he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee, for *my strength is made perfect in weakness.* Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities that *the power of Christ may rest upon me.*" And in the second chapter to the Philippians and the ninth verse, we read, "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." And accordingly the angels themselves, and all the
hosts

hosts of heaven, are commanded to worship him. Heb. i. 6, "When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him." And in the fifth chapter of the Revelations, and the thirteenth verse, we read, "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."

Thirdly. As the incommunicable attributes of the Supreme God, and the internal and external honours due to his sacred name, are so fully ascribed to our blessed Saviour in sacred writ, so also are all the operations and works of the Most High. As

First, Creation. John iii. 3, "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." And Col. i. 14—17, "In whom" (that is, in God's dear Son, of whom the Apostle was speaking) "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." And the reason why he is *the first-born of every creature*, the Apostle proceeds to give, "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, 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 him all things consist." A most wonderful passage. All things were created *by him* as their fountain and origin, and *for him* as their great ultimate end; and *he is*—the self-existent God—before all things: and *by him*, as their preserver, all things consist. And again, Heb. i. 8. 10, "Unto the Son he saith, thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the

the heavens are the works of thine hands." Which words are a quotation out of the cii. Psalm, where the person to whom it is addressed, is expressly called *God*.

Secondly. The preservation of all things is ascribed to him, as in the before quoted passage, Col. i. 17, "By him all things consist." And Heb. i. 3, "And upholding all things by the word of his power."

Thirdly. The remission of sins is ascribed to him, Matt. ix. 6, "That ye may know," says our Lord to the Scribes, "That the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, then saith he to the sick of the palsy, &c." And in Luke vii. 48, He says to the woman who had washed his feet with her tears, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." And blessed be God, there are many in this congregation, I am persuaded, who can bear a glorious testimony to this precious truth by their own happy experience, and among the rest the feeble worm that now addresses you.

Fourthly. All his miracles were wrought *in his own name*, or by his own immediate power. When he cleanses the Leper, he says, "I will, be thou clean." When he heals the Centurion's servant, he says, "Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." When he heals *Peter's* wife, he touches her hand, and the fever immediately leaves her. To the nobleman of *Caper-naum*, he says, "Go thy way, thy son liveth." To the impotent man at the Pool of *Bethesda*, as in another place to the Paralytic, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk." To the woman diseased with an issue, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole." Which expression or another similar to it, "According to thy faith, so be it done unto thee," was a favourite phrase of our Lord's: but on whom was this faith to be exercised,

exercised, except on himself. To the man with the withered arm, he said, "Stretch forth thine hand." To the woman of *Canaan*, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." To the barren Fig-tree, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever." To putrified *Lazarus*, "*Lazarus*, come forth." To the devils, "Hold thy peace, and come out," or the like words, and they immediately obey. To the dead corpse at *Naim*, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise." He rebukes the winds, and says to the sea, "Peace, be still." To the deceased daughter of *Jairus*, he says, "Maid, arise." Agreeably to these, he says of himself, in John v. 19, "What things soever he," (that is, the Father) "doth, these also doth the Son likewise."

Lastly. To him the inspired writers attribute the works of grace and regeneration on the souls of men equally with the Father, Rom. i. 7, "Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ:" which is the ordinary salutation of St. Paul, in the beginning of his epistles. And in John xv. 5, Our Lord declares expressly, "Without *me* ye can do nothing." And that blessed Spirit, by whose sacred operations every thing good in the soul of man is wrought, is frequently stiled *the Spirit of Christ*.

As the evident consequences of these texts, among hundreds of others, which might be produced on the various divisions of the argument, are strong and effectual for the establishment of the important doctrine of Christ's supreme divinity, so the same may be proved *directly*, from those texts where he is absolutely called *God*, or *Jehovah*, or *Lord of Hosts*; as also from those texts where such titles are adjoined to the word *God*, when applied to our blessed Saviour, as do restrain the word to its highest and most proper signification, and

and do demonstrate him to be God by *nature*, and not only by *office*.

1. In the Old Testament we read, *Isai. vi. 1, 2, 3*, "I saw 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 in the 5th verse, the Prophet says again, "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." That these words were spoken of our blessed Lord, is most evident from *John xij. 41*, where the evangelist speaking of our Saviour, and having quoted a passage out of that very chapter of *Isaiah*, immediately observes, "These things said *Esaia*, when he saw his glory, and spake of *him*."

2. A learned writer of the present age, the late *Dr. Randolph*, Head of *Corpus Christi College*, in *Oxford*, in his answer to *the Essay on Spirit*, has beautifully shewn that in almost every instance where the word *Jehovah* is used in the Old Testament,* it respects the *Messiah*. But this would be a subject more suitable to a Divinity-Chair than a Pulpit. But we must not overlook the remarkable declaration of our Lord, recorded in *John viii. 58*, "Jesus said unto them, *verily, verily* I say unto you, before *Abraham* was, I AM:" ascribing to himself the incommunicable name of

* *Jehovah* is to be found about 4000 times in the Old Testament, though unhappily our Translators have substituted the comparatively insignificant word, *Lord*, in its place. *Dr. Lowth*, the present Bishop of *London*, was so sensible of this defect, that he uses the original word in every instance throughout his beautiful Translation of the Prophecies of *Isaiah*.

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the self-existent God. "Say unto the children of Israel," says God to Moses out of the burning-bush, "I AM hath sent thee." We must therefore suppose our Saviour to have been a greater Impostor than *Mahomet*, or allow him to be the supreme God. For *Mahomet* never attributed to himself the name of *Jehovah* or *God*. And our Lord would have shewn the greatest cruelty to his followers (if he were not the Most High) by trifling with such important points, and using such expressions as would naturally lead his Disciples in all generations to adore him as the Supreme. But to return.

In the New Testament, he is in various places absolutely called God. As in my text, "The Word was *God*:" in John xx. 28, "*Thomas* said unto him, my Lord, and my God!" In Acts xx. 28, "Take heed unto yourselves," says St. Paul to the elders of the church of *Ephesus*, "and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which *he* hath purchased with *his own blood*." In Rom. ix. 5, Of whom, (speaking of the Jews) as concerning the flesh, *Christ* came, who is over all *God* blessed for ever." In 1 Tim. iii. 16, "Great is the mystery of godliness: *God* was manifested in the *flesh*." In Heb. i. 8. "Unto *the Son* he saith, thy throne, O *God*, is for ever and ever." Which words are a quotation out of the xlv. Psalm, which all commentators allow to have been written of the *Messiah*, where the Psalmist says to him, verse 6, "Thy throne, O *God*, is for ever and ever." And in 1 John iii. 16, "Hereby perceive we the love of *God*, because *he* laid down *his life* for us."

Again. Such titles are adjoined to the word *God*, when applied to our Saviour, as do restrain the word to its highest and most proper

per signification, and do demonstrate him to have been *God by nature* and not only by *office*. As for instance, *the true God*, 1 John v. 20, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ: this is *the true God* and eternal life." *The great God*. Tit. ii. 13, "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of *the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*." *The mighty God*, Isaiah ix. 6, "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." In a word, the fullest titles of Divinity are ascribed to him; as *the Lord of Glory*. 1 Cor. ii. 8. "Had they known it, they would not have crucified *the Lord of Glory*." *The King of kings and Lord of lords*, Rev. xvii. 14. "The Lamb shall overcome them, for he is *Lord of lords and King of kings*." And Rev. xix. 13. 16, "He whose name is called, the Word of God, hath on his vesture and on his thigh, a name written, KING of KINGS, and LORD of LORDS." And as *Creation* is ascribed to him in the fullest sense of the word, so in respect to the creatures he is called *the everlasting Father*.

And now, having such a flood of divine testimonies for the establishment of the important doctrine of Christ's Supreme Godhead, well may we confess with St. John, that "the WORD was GOD"—GOD, not by *office* only, but by *nature*, not *figuratively*, but *properly*, not *made* or *created*, or (as some of the subtle *Arians* say) *derived*, but co-eternally existing with

with the Father. Haying, I say, such a flood of divine evidences for the confirmation of this important truth, it becomes a necessary article of the Christian Faith: and whosoever disbelieves it, calls in question the veracity of God or of the Holy Scriptures. Beware then how you listen to the subtle adversary of souls, and “deny the Lord that bought you,” and cast upon your Saviour an infinite affront. For there is no medium between the creature and the Creator; and therefore to rob him of his Godhead, is the highest insult that can be shewn him.

But he will not long be robbed. The day will soon arrive, when “every tongue shall confess him, and every knee bow down unto him.”* When those who have in heart or life denied him, and persevered in their impenitence, shall feel the power of his Godhead to their eternal sorrow. Now, therefore, kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.† Now come to him who alone can give you life; for “he that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.”‡

But whilst this sacred doctrine is filled with terror towards the unbelieving, and disobedient, it affords the sweetest consolation to the truly sincere. Thou poor, penitent soul, come to this depth of comfort, and try it. Consider that he who made thee, was *thy sacrifice*, and is now *thine intercessor*. He has engraven thee on the palms of his hands,§ and carries thee on his breast-plate before the throne. Behold him, behold him!—

* Phil. ii. 10, 11. † Psal. ii. 12. ‡ 1 John v. 12. § Isa. xlix. 16.

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He stretches forth his arms unto thee, he longs to espouse thee to himself, and "to rejoice over thee as the bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride."|| Thou canst not doubt his power, for he is God supreme, and canst thou doubt his love, when he died for thee on the cross? Surely, "as a Father pitieth his children, so Jehovah pitieth them that fear him."† "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will not the Lord forget thee." Draw near then to the throne of grace with full assurance of acceptance: "He is near that justifies."* "Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven, (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or who shall descend into the deep? (That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) For the Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart."† O trust to his faithfulness and love: suffer him to make thee happy; yield to be saved by grace. Listen to that delightful music of his voice, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee."

And you who taste his love, O! I need not tell you, that *the Word was God*. You know it, you feel it in your inmost souls. Who could have subdued your stubborn spirits? Who could have said with power to your benighted hearts, "Let there be light?" Who could have overturned the mountains of unbelief, and sweetly melted your wills, and changed your dispositions, and transformed your souls into the glorious image of God, but the *mighty God himself*—mighty to save, † *Christ in us, the hope of glory!*|| And is this all?

* Isa. lxix. 5. † Psal. ciii. 13. * Isa. l. 8. † Rom. x. 6, 7.
 † Isa. lxiii. 1. † Col. i. 27.

O! no, thou highly favoured, his will is thy sanctification.† Only enter into closer union with him, cleave to his bleeding side, and he will lead thee beside the still waters of comfort, and feed thee in his green pastures. He will guide thee through the valley of the shadow of death. He will love thee with an everlasting love, and thou shalt dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.* “He will circumcise thine heart, that thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart. He will sprinkle clean water upon thee, and thou shalt be clean: from all thy filthiness and from all thine idols will he cleanse thee. He will be faithful to cleanse thee from all unrighteousness; yea, thou shalt sweetly and experimentally know for thine own self, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth *from all sin*.‡ Thou shalt be one with him, and he will be one with thee; thou shalt dwell in him, and he will dwell in thee; thine heart shall be his constant home. He will enable thee to comprehend with all the saints, the length, and breadth, and heighth, and depth of his love which passeth knowledge, and he will fill thee with all the fulness of God.”§

The consideration of this single truth, That my friend and well-beloved is the God of heaven and earth, that nothing can happen without his permission, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love him, is sufficient to support the Christian's soul under every trial in human life. That *the human nature* should be filled with all the fulness of *Jehovah*, and sit on the throne of God—O! how does it awaken

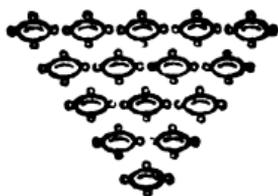
† 1 Thef. iv. 3: * Pfal. xxiii. Jer. xxxi. † Deut. xxx. 6. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. † John i. 9. 7. § Ephes. iii. 18, 19.

every

every spark of holy ambition, and open to us the most amazing views of the glory of the saints in heaven. Ye simple followers of the Lamb, bear up a little longer, and "he that shall come, will come and will not tarry."* *Your light afflictions* here are not to be compared to that *exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. For "he will make you drink of those rivers of pleasure,"† which eternally flow at his right hand, and seat you *on his own throne*, for ever and ever.‡

* Heb. x. 37. † Psal. xxxvi. 8. ‡ Rev. iii. 21.

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