

DISSERTATIONS

Relating to the

Christian Doctrine

O F T H E

T R I N I T Y.

The FIRST PART, viz.

- I. The ARIAN invited to the orthodox faith.
- II. God and man united in the person of CHRIST.
- III. The worship of CHRIST as mediator founded on his godhead.

T H E
P R E F A C E.

WHILE I was writing the little treatise of the "christian doctrine of the trinity," the subject carried my thoughts away into several occasional sentiments, and incidental truths. These would have interrupted the thread of my designed discourse too much, if they had been mingled with the several propositions to which they belong. I thought it proper therefore to throw them into distinct dissertations, several of which I had concluded before that treatise was made public.

It was my design to have finished them all at that time; but some providential occurrences broke off those studies, and I have been farther prevented by other requests of my friends, and my own promised engagements of various kinds, from resuming that subject again, till a few months ago this last winter. A man who through long weakness of body is rendered sometimes incapable of applying himself above six or seven hours in a week to any peculiar study, distinct from his necessary work, may be well excused if he is slow in the publication of any thing upon such a controverted doctrine.

I confess when I wrote that little book, I had no purpose of engaging myself in controversy. My intention was only to exhibit the plain naked doctrine of the trinity, viz. "That the Father, Son, and Spirit, are represented in scripture under three personal characters, and yet as having communion in one godhead," without entering into any particular modes of explication, and without pretending to say new things on that article, either by way of position or argument. My chief view and design was to establish plain, unlearned christians in the faith of that doctrine, by those scriptural evidences, which seemed to me strong and convincing; and to lay a foundation for extensive charity, by making it appear that no particular mode of explication was plainly and evidently determined in the word of God: And that the scripture has made our salvation to depend on those offices which these divine persons sustain, and on the honours due to them according to those offices, rather than upon any deep philosophical notions of their essence and personalities, any nice and exact acquaintance with their mysterious union and distinction.

I presumed therefore, that if any persons who disbelieved the proper deity of the Son and Spirit, had a mind to signalize themselves by an opposition to the common faith, they would have chosen some author of superior rank, who had entered more largely into the merits of the cause, and by a full and particular explication of the scriptural proofs thereof, had vindicated that doctrine in a more complete and controversial manner. But I found myself mistaken; for some months after my treatise appeared in the world, there was published a professed answer to it, bearing this
title,

title, "A sober appeal to a *turk* or an *indian* concerning the plain sense of scripture relating to the trinity, being an answer to Mr. *I. Watts's* late book, intitled, The christian doctrine, &c." I have a very great disinclination to handle the saw of controversy, especially in matters so divine and sacred; and my imperfect health does by no means permit me to lay out many hours in such work. My life itself, that is, all the useful moments of it, are so shortened and diminished hereby, that I find them all much too few for the more agreeable parts of that service to which *Christ* has called me; and upon this account I shall not think myself obliged to enter the lists with any antagonist whatsoever, upon matters of dispute and intricacy, either now or hereafter.

Yet since I had promised some occasional dissertations on this subject, I found it was much expected by the world, that I should then take some notice of this author and his work, which I have now done in several of the discourses which I have written, and endeavoured to lay a foundation for the support of the common doctrine of the trinity, by obviating some of his most plausible objections.

And since I never designed to give a large and particular answer to the "sober appeal," for the reasons already mentioned, I think it proper here to make a few general remarks on the style and manner of that writing.

And first I acknowledge my obligations to the author, for the terms of decency and respect, and the language of friendship with which he treats me, both in the preface and in the greatest part of his book. I receive them as the unmerited civilities of a courteous stranger: And had I the happiness of knowing his name, perhaps I should find just occasion to make an equal return. But while I am permitted to learn his character no otherwise but from his writing, I can only treat my unknown friend with all that esteem which his writing deserves. For I must confess, how superior soever others may appear in learning and argument, yet I am not willing any writer should exceed me in the practices of a christian temper.

But I hope my respondent will not take it ill, if I mention a few instances, wherein he seems to have been awakened by his zeal to forget his usual style: As when he takes occasion to pity me and all my friends, for the shifts we are put to in the defence of our doctrine. When he tells me he will not triumph over the weakness of my arguments, and yet affects a triumph in several places; with some other such superior airs, which he assumes in the course of the debate. This language carries a sort of sovereignty and contempt in it, but adds neither force nor ornament to the paragraph or the cause.

Again, He seems to indulge the same insulting strain, when he repeats so often the words resistless and over-bearing, which I think I had never used but once or twice at most. This represents me as though I had supposed every single argument of mine to be over-bearing and resistless; whereas in those places where I use either of these words, they refer chiefly to the whole strength of all the arguments put together, and which, I confess, still I cannot resist; and multitudes of christians have confessed the same. If I any where use such language on slighter occasions I receive the reproof.

He seems again to forget his usual candour, when he construes my words in his preface, and his appendix, as casting damnation on all those who disbelieve the eternal deity of *Christ*, by my citing the words of the apostle, 2 *Pet.* ii. 1. "Damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them, page 489. I must confess, I do not think that scripture particularly refers to those that deny the godhead of *Christ*; but rather to those that deny him as a holy governor of his people: Or else it re-

proves

Proves in general all those that deny *Christ* in any of those powers, properties, offices, or characters, the belief of which is made necessary to salvation. Now when the first part of my book is spent in proving the deity of *Christ* and the Spirit, the second part of it in declaring their personality, and the third or last part in surveying their several offices and relations in which they stand to us, and upon a recapitulation I make this conclusion, "That there are such things as damnable heresies, when persons deny the Lord that bought them;" this should, with much more justice, be referred, as I designed it, to the denial of all or any of these preceding properties, characters, or offices of *Christ*, the belief of which the scripture makes necessary to salvation, and not merely be confined to the single doctrine of his deity.

Another thing I am constrained to take notice of is, that my unknown friend the appellant had written with a greater degree of open fairness and evidence, if he had attacked my propositions in the method in which I have placed them, wherein they give mutual light and force to each other: But he has chosen rather to single out for his first attacks some special paragraphs out of distant places of my book, whereby he seems to insinuate to the reader the weakness of my whole argument; and he spends above sixty pages upon these, till at last he himself confesses, that he "thinks it high time to enter upon the arguments I have used," page 62. And even then he "intreats patience once more" for three pages, ere he enters upon a regular form of objection, page 65. But however it be, I have this advantage by it, that as other circumstances permit me not to engage in any regular or continued controversy, so I am the better justified to all the world in taking notice of what this author hath objected, in several unconnected dissertations.

I have not much reason to complain of misrepresentations of my sense by the appellant, in the matters of argument. One of the most remarkable instances of this kind is, when he supposes me to believe a "greater distinction between the sacred three in the godhead itself" than my words amount to, as page 10, and other places. For though I confess the scriptural representation of personal distinctions in some places is pretty strong, yet I have no where asserted three literal and proper distinct personalities to be internal and essential to the godhead itself. In general I must own he has written with a degree of impartiality and fairness in this respect beyond what is usual in such controversies; and if ever he has mistaken my sense, I persuade myself that it was not done with design, because, except the places mentioned, there is a general appearance of justice and candour running through his arguments. Yet I cannot but take notice of one passage, wherein has not done the reverend doctor *Walterland* the same justice, in a citation, pages 12, and 153. where he twice represents him as declaring, that "the doctrine of the trinity is thoroughly understood but by few in comparison," whereas that learned author had only asserted, that "the controversy of the trinity is thoroughly understood but by few in comparison," which makes a great difference in the sense: for multitudes of the vulgar rank of mankind may understand the doctrine of the trinity, sufficient for their own salvation, while the learned controversies that relate to it are much unknown by them.

I own the light I have received from this author in the different turn he hath given to some few of those scriptures which I had brought as proofs of my doctrine, which I must acknowledge carries such a degree of probability, as to weaken the force of my arguments derived from thence; such are *John* iii. 13. *Zech.* xi. 12, 13. and perhaps, one or two more; for I would not willingly pervert one text of scripture from it's native and sacred sense, to support any article of my faith.

I take this opportunity here also, together with my thanks to this author, to acknowledge the goodness of some other friends, who by their obliging letters have made other occasional exceptions to any uncautious sentences which I had used in some part of my treatise; which being written chiefly for private christians, had not all that strict accuracy in it that controversy required. But these expressions I shall endeavour to correct in the next edition, which my booksellers tell me will be quickly wanted.

With regard to the business of charity, which I mentioned before, as well as the matters of argument for the defence of the deity of our blessed Saviour, I have other dissertations lying by me, which give some general solutions to the chief scriptural difficulties in this controversy, and make it appear that the common doctrine of the trinity stands firm upon the greatest part of those scriptural proofs by which I have endeavoured to support it. And I hope it shall also be sufficiently proved, that the zealous contenders for this doctrine are not always so deficient in their charity as they are too often represented.

I know there are some things will be objected to these dissertations, viz.

Objection I. Since I have several more discourses by me already finished, it will be naturally demanded, "Why I have not published them at once? Why I have given the world at present only these three?" To this I answer, That these three essays enter not so far into the particular distinctions between the sacred persons, but chiefly maintain their communion in the same godhead: I thought therefore it was much more proper to send these abroad first; hoping that if my labours of this kind find acceptance among my friends, I might then be better encouraged to publish the rest in a few months time; in some of which I found myself constrained to speak more largely, and particularly of the "distinction of persons in the sacred trinity."

But on the other hand, if the general doctrine of the communion of *Christ* in the deity; or the union of two natures in one person, or divine worship paid to *Christ* the mediator, cannot be supported, our particular modes of explaining the distinction of the divine persons are all destroyed and rendered useless.

Objection II. It will be censured as a fault by many, "that I repeat the same things." Truly the reason is, because these essays were written at distant times: And besides, in such a controversy it is necessary sometimes to set the same things before the view of the reader, which would have but little force, or perhaps be forgotten, if they were only intermingled with other parts of the controversy, and by that means were out of sight.

Objection III. Some will make it a matter of offence and scandal, that "I do not write with that full assurance of every thing as others would do in the like case." To this I answer, That since the studies of these last years I think I am established afresh in the belief of the deity of *Christ*, and the blessed Spirit, and assured of it upon sufficient grounds, that they are one with the Father in godhead, though they are represented in scripture as distinct persons. But as to the various particular explications of this doctrine, and incidental arguments that attend it, I desire to believe and to write with a humble consciousness of my own ignorance, and to give my assent but in proportion to the degrees of light and evidence. I am persuaded, if every man would proportion his assent by the same rule, much of our modern assurance would be abated; we should have but few dogmatists amongst us, even in some important doctrines; and by this method perhaps the most positive and confident assertors of their own opinions would become the most doubtful and modest of all men.

Besides,

Besides, when I consult the scripture, or human writers, on so sublime a subject, I do not come with all my opinions fixed and determined, but I read in order to receive further light, and therefore I would write as one who may be mistaken, and who is honestly seeking truth. I know the weakness of human understanding, and how easily we are led into error. I have often seen occasion to retract my former sentiments, and correct them by further discoveries; and I esteem a modest and cautious manner of speech, in most of the controverted points, to be one excellence of a fallible writer, and retraction of an error to be yet a superior attainment: And though this is made sometimes a matter of scoff among vulgar souls, it is always a honour among the wise.

Objection IV. "Some think, that I do not write with indignation and zeal enough, and that I treat the adversaries of the divinity of *Christ* with too much gentleness for any man who professes to be a friend to that sacred article, and a lover of the blessed Saviour."

I might make several replies to such an objection. As,

Answer I. If my blessed Saviour has loved his own enemies so as to die for them, and to intreat them in the gentlest manner to be reconciled to God the Father by him, I persuade myself he will never be angry with me, if I shew so much love to those who dishonour him, as to intreat them in a gentle manner, after his example, to be reconciled to God their Saviour, to confess his sublime character, and to pay him divine honours.

Answer II. I would not willingly call every man an enemy to *Christ*, who lies under some doubts of his supreme godhead. My charity inclines me to believe that some of them, both read their bibles carefully, and pray daily for divine instruction to lead them into all truth: That they honour and adore that glorious person whom they believe to be the brightness of his Father's glory, and by whom he created the worlds, who condescended to take a human body, and to die for sinners; and that they trust in him, and love him above all things, beside God the Father, though perhaps some culpable prejudice may cleave to their minds, whereby they are prevented from receiving that light and evidence of his divine nature, which, in my opinion, shines clearly in the word of God: And I cannot but hope, that such humble and sincere enquirers will not miss any of the necessary articles of faith.

Answer III. I am well assured that the wisdom which comes from above is first pure, and then peaceable; that we are required in the gospel not to call for fire from heaven, even upon such *samaritans* who will not receive *Christ* at all, but with all meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves, that they may be recovered out of any dangerous snares. The methods in which divine controversy has generally been written, have proved fatal to religion, and utterly improper to promote the truth. When we rail we set our opponents a railing too; and in such a frame of spirit, we are neither fit to instruct others, nor are they fit to receive instruction. The wrath of man works not the righteousness of God, nor the knowledge of *Christ*. These angry fits of zeal do but awaken the disorderly passions of men, and tempt them to resist every argument that comes armed with such assumed sovereignty and fire. It is God only who has a right and a power to convince the obstinate by a spirit of burning: He may clothe an angel in flame, or inspire a prophet to be the minister of his shining vengeance, but I had rather be made a humble messenger of his light and love. The great God can send conviction in the language of death and ruin, but he does not exert this power till gentler methods have been tried in vain.

Besides, in contests and debates among men, much darkness is consistent with vehement heat. These qualities are found in greatest perfection in the nether world; and sometimes on earth the fiercest heat has the deepest darkness attending it. Light itself, when joined with noise and fire, has not the most happy influence to improve and refine the mind. A flash of lightening rather affrights than guides us: The voice of thunder carries more terror than instruction in it: The soul bars up all the avenues of it's understanding against truth itself, when it demands entrance by such human methods of violence. It is only the gentle approaches of truth, like the morning light, which open the windows of the soul; and make it willing to receive all further discoveries. I add in the last place,

Answer IV. That if by such methods as these I shall be so far honoured of God, as to recover any who have departed from their former principles, or establish those who doubt, I am well assured that my blessed Lord will esteem it as a better service done for himself, than if I had guarded his sacred doctrines by scattering all the terrors of hell round about them, than if I had thundered out damnation against disbelievers, and awakened the rage of every gainsayer without the least hope of conviction. There was once a "great and strong wind that rent the mountains, and brake the rocks in pieces, after the wind an earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire, in the earthquake, or in the wind; then a still small voice was heard; God was in that voice, and visited his prophet who was jealous for the Lord of hosts." 1 Kings xix. 11—13.

I conclude the preface with one request to my readers of every kind, whether *arian* or *athanasian*; and that is, that they would not make all their former, nor their present opinions an everlasting standard of truth, and a test whereby to judge of every thing they read: And that they would not suddenly pronounce nonsense or heresy upon every sentence that differs from their former belief.

I entreat them on one side, that they would search and examine honestly, whether it be not possible that such a sublime and mysterious doctrine as the deity of *Christ*, may be true, when some of the more indefensible appendages of it are lopped off; which doctrine, when mingled with these appendages, was very hard to be believed or defended: And on the other hand, I desire that my readers would consider impartially, whether so difficult a doctrine as this of the sacred trinity may not be better defended in itself, and more effectually let into the mind of disbelievers, by granting those things which seem to be the obvious sense of some scriptures, and removing other things which scripture does not assert, and which were some of the chief bars against their belief of it.

In the mean time, while we all employ a diligent and impartial search after these sacred truths, and are seeking to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of *Christ Jesus* our Lord, let us with daily and importunate requests implore the assistances of the blessed Spirit, since our Saviour has promised to send him as a guide into those very truths which relate to himself. *John* xvi. 14. "He shall glorify me: For he shall receive of mine and shew it unto you."

DISSERTATION I.

The *Arian* invited to the orthodox Faith:

O R,

A plain and easy method to lead such as deny the proper deity of *Christ*, into the belief of that great article.

S E C T I O N I.

WHEN christians are divided in their sentiments, and break out into party quarrels, the names of their opinions will be tossed to and fro, as terms of reproach and scandal. *Arian* is made a word of infamy, and orthodox on the other hand is turned into a jest, a matter of mere ridicule. But I have no inclination either to rail or laugh; nor would I use one of these words in a reproachful sense, nor the other in a ridiculous one; and therefore it is proper that I should here explain my meaning, that wheresoever these words occur in the following papers, the reader may have just ideas of them.

I do not love to affix such names to any party of men as they themselves utterly disown: This has a tendency to irritate the spirits of those whom we design to enlighten, and reduce to the faith and profession of our own sentiments, and therefore it should be avoided as much as we can. Yet it often so happens in the affairs of mankind, that it is hardly possible to describe the followers of any particular sect or opinion, when it is necessary to speak of them, without using the same names which the world generally gives them: And the world generally gives them the name of those who have been the most famous assertors or professors of such kind of doctrines.

As it is therefore my design in the present essay to address those who may have entertained scruples or doubts about this great doctrine of the "deity of *Christ*," or have departed from their former principles, I would treat them with all gentleness: And I freely declare, that I believe the name of *Arian* hath been often of late given to such as have by no means deserved it, and are no abettors of the old principles of *Arius*.

An ancient *Arian* is one who believes the Son and holy Spirit to be mere creatures: He believes our Lord *Jesus Christ* to be a glorious person, but still as much inferior to

to the true and eternal God, as a creature differs from the Creator; for he believes his human soul, or that spirit which supplies the place of it, to be his highest or divinest nature, and that it was produced by the power and arbitrary will of God the Father, some time before the world was made, and thus he believes it to be properly a creature, utterly denying the true and proper godhead of *Christ*; yet he owns him to be sometimes called God in scripture, on the account of his great likeness to God, his acting in the name of God, and his government of the world. And thus by changing and diminishing the idea of the word God, and reducing it to an inferior sense, he allows an inferior godhead to belong to *Christ*. He believes also this glorious spirit did take upon him a human body, was born of the virgin *Mary*, and thus became a complete man, in the fulness of time appointed by the Father. This is usually represented as the general sense of the ancient followers of *Arius*.

Now it is evident that the modern disbelievers of the divinity of *Christ*, or most of them at least, have refined the ancient doctrines of *Arius*, and thereby, perhaps, rendered their sentiments more defensible, at least in their own opinion: But if through divine assistance I shall become so happy as to lead any that believe even these ancient *arian* principles, into the doctrine of the divinity of *Christ*, by natural and easy steps, I would fain persuade my self that some of the moderns will not shut their eyes against the evidence of light, nor resist the force of such attraction, but yield to it with greater ease.

But if this expectation be too presuming, and no disbeliever be recovered to the common faith of the deity of *Christ*, yet I must indulge my hope thus far at least, that some wavering doubtful, and unsettled christians may be established in their faith by some of these attempts.

Before I proceed, it is necessary also that I should tell what I mean by the word "orthodoxy." For several centuries past, this word has been applied to that explication of the doctrine of the trinity, which supposes the divine nature to be but one numerical or individual essence or being; and that this essence is the same in the Father, the Word, and the Spirit. That these three are so far distinct as to lay a foundation for the scripture to speak of them in a personal manner, as I, Thou, and He; and upon this account they are called three persons: But that they are not so distinct as to have three distinct consciousnesses, for they are only supposed to be three incomprehensible differences in one and the same numerical essence of God; or in one and the same individual spirit. That in the person of *Christ* two distinct natures are united, God and man; whence it comes to pass that some proper divine characters, and some human, are attributed to the same person.

Now I ask leave to try whether it is not possible to lead one who has favoured the *arian* sentiments toward a belief of the chief parts of this doctrine, which for some ages past has obtained the name of orthodoxy, though I confess there are some other parts of it which are not so defensible.

S E C T I O N . II.

THE method which I shall pursue in my present attempt, is to propose these following queries.

Query I. Is it not a principle of natural religion, and universally confirmed by reason and scripture, that there is but one God, one true and living God, one eternal

nal and almighty Creator and supreme governor of all things, one infinite being, who is the first cause and last end of all?

Query II. Have you not always believed this God to be one Spirit, one single spirit, one conscious mind, and not made up of two or three conscious minds or spirits? Nor am I going to lead you into any other idea of the great and blessed God, or to give you any occasion to imagine that we believe two or three Gods.

Query III. Has not this great and blessed God assumed to himself in his word some peculiar names, titles, characters and prerogatives, whereby he will distinguish himself from every thing which is beside and beneath him, that he might give his people a distinct knowledge of himself, and secure them from the danger of paying divine honours to any thing that is not God? See "christian doctrine of the trinity," Propositions iv. v. vi.

Query IV. Are not *Jehovah*, the true God, the great God, the mighty God, and God blessed for ever, the God of *Abraham*, the Lord of hosts, the king of kings, the Lord of Lords, the first and the last, some of these distinguishing names and titles of God?

Are not the searching of the heart of man, omnipresence, omnipotence, and the works of creation, and the conservation of all things, some of these divine characters or prerogatives? See "christian doctrine," Propositions vii, viii. which propositions, with the greatest part of their explication, may be vindicated against all reasonable objections.

Let it be observed, that the enquiry here is not, how far, or in what degree some of these titles, characters, powers, and operations may possibly belong to an exalted creature, in the abstracted nature of things, or by the favour of God? But whether God in his word has not made these titles, operations, and characters, his own appropriate prerogatives, to distinguish himself from inferior beings? And has he not expressed himself with a divine solicitude and sacred jealousy in this matter, that *Jehovah* is his name, and he will not give his glory to another?

Query V. Are not these names, titles, and prerogatives ascribed to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, in several places of scripture, in such a manner as would naturally lead the unlearned and common christian into a belief that they are the very same characters whereby the great and blessed God has distinguished himself? Are they not often attributed to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, without any such evident limitations or restrictions as to distinguish them from the prerogatives of the one true God?

Nay, let me add further, are they not expressed in such a manner, and so applied to *Christ*, that would lead even the wise, the learned, and the cautious reader, into the same sentiments, if he had not imbibed some other opinion, and upon that account endeavoured to evade this sense? See "christian doctrine of the trinity," Propositions viii. and ix. The multitudes of pious christians, learned and unlearned, that in all ages of the church have honestly read their bibles, and have fallen into this sentiment of things, after the strictest search to find the truth, are a sufficient answer to this query, and a proof of the affirmative.

Query VI. Is here not then the appearance of a very considerable difficulty, how to reconcile these ascriptions of divine titles and prerogatives both to God the Father and to *Jesus Christ*, without breaking in upon the sacred doctrine of the unity of God, which is established both by reason and scripture? And how shall this difficulty be removed, but by a consultation of those sacred writings wherein we find the same divine characters ascribed both to *Christ* and to the Father.

Query VII. Does not the scripture give us a very natural and evident solution of this difficulty, when it assures us that there is a most peculiar and intimate union, or oneness,

oneness, between the great God and his Son *Jesus Christ*? *Col. ii. 9.* "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily." *John x. 30.* "I and my Father are one." *John xiv. 10.* "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me." *John xiv. 9.* "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." *John xiv. 10.* "I speak not of my self,—the Father that dwelleth in me doeth the works." *1 John v. 7.* "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one." *Exod. xxiii. 20.* "I will send an angel before thee, beware of him, provoke him not, &c. for my name is in him."

Query VIII. Are there not other scriptures that express evidently both a divine and a human nature in our Lord *Jesus*; as *Rom. ix. 5.* "*Christ* of the seed of *David* after the flesh, and yet he is over all God blessed for ever?" *1 Tim. iii. 16.* "God manifest in the flesh, who was seen of angels, and received up into glory." *Rev. xxii. 13, 16.* "The beginning and the end, the first and the last, the root and the offspring of *David*." *John i. 1, 14.* "The Word, who was with God, and who was God, was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

Query IX. May there not be such a close and intimate union or oneness between God and a creature, as that the actions and characters of either of them may be attributed to the whole compound being? And may not this lay a foundation for such divine expressions concerning *Christ*, viz. That he is *Jehovah*, the great God, over all God blessed for ever; *Jesus Christ* the same yesterday, to day, and for ever; and let all the angels of God worship him, which are characters belonging to the true God; And yet concerning this same person *Jesus Christ*, is it not said also, he eat, drank, slept, walked, groaned and died, which are characters belonging to man?

Query X. May not this intimate union or oneness between God and a creature, give occasion for the actions and properties of the man to be attributed to God? And may we not this way account for such expressions as these, *Acts xx. 28.* "God hath purchased the church with his own blood." *1 John iii. 16.* "God laid down his life for us. God manifest in the flesh, was received up into glory." *1 Tim. iii. 16?*

Note, This figure of speech, whereby the peculiar attributes of one nature are ascribed to another, is called a communication of properties: And it is usual in all languages, and in all nations, when two distinct beings, are united into one common principle of action. So we say of a wise woman, she is a prudent body; so of a drunkard, that he is a thirsty soul: We often call a witty or skilful man, an ingenious headpiece, and we give the name of a sleepy soul to a sluggard; because soul and body being united compose a man, therefore some property of body is oftentimes attributed to the soul, and some property of soul attributed to the body.

Query XI. Is not this a more natural, more easy, and more scriptural method of accounting for the attribution of divine names and properties to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, than for us to take the peculiar and distinguishing names, titles, characters and properties of godhead which are applied to *Christ*, and sink them to a diminutive and inferior sense, and thus apply them to the man *Christ Jesus*? Would not every reader, even a *Turk* or an *Indian**, readily believe these names and characters to be incommunicably divine, and appropriate only to the great God, if they did not read them applied also to *Jesus Christ*? And would they not rather chuse to account for this

* I will allow the author of the "sober appeal to a *Turk* or an *Indian*," to have given as fair a gloss to his construction of those scriptures in another sense, as any writer has done: But in several places it is evident with how much difficulty and hardship those texts are strained to any other meaning than what the *trinitarian* writers have generally given them. Where the gloss of that author is fairest, and most likely to prevail on readers, it shall be considered in some future papers, if the present essays are well received by the world.

this application of them by the personal union of the man *Jesus Christ* to the divine nature, than by denying these characters to be appropriate to God? Is it not more rational and more scriptural to suppose the man *Christ*, by his union to God, capable of these names and characters in their sublime and exalted sense, than to run counter to so many places of scripture, which at least seem to appropriate these names and characters to God.

Query XII. Does it not tend to take away the distinction betwixt God and his creatures, which ought always to be sacred and inviolable, if we make such names and characters as *Jehovah*, the great, the mighty, the blessed God, the Creator, the preserver of all things, and the object of worship, to be attributed and applied to any thing that is not God? Or if we sink them into a low and diminutive sense, in order to make such an application of them? Is a mere distant resemblance of God in some of his properties, or a being appointed under God a deputy governor of the world, a sufficient reason to have all these glorious and incommunicable divine titles, characters, and worship attributed to a mere creature?

Query XIII. Would not such an attribution of divine names, titles and characters, to a mere creature, have a plain and strong tendency to introduce a polytheism and idolatry, too near akin to that which is often condemned among the heathens, viz. The owning and worshipping heroes, departed souls, inferior and superior gods? Would it not have an apparent aspect of God's giving his name, and his glory to another, contrary to *Isa.* xlii. 8. And has it not a manifest and dangerous appearance of breaking the first commandment, which says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me?" Is not *Christ Jesus* in the *arian* scheme represented as another and an inferior god? Another and an inferior object of worship? Nor do I see how it is possible, upon that hypothesis, to answer what the learned doctor *Waterland* has urged so often, and so successfully against his opponents, viz. That the *arian* writers, by their hypothesis, introduce more gods than one.

Query XIV. As the holy scripture leads us into this method of solving the proposed difficulty, of both divine and human properties ascribed to *Christ*, so does not reason it self dictate and confirm the same? Since we find two distinct and seemingly inconsistent properties ascribed to the person of *Christ*, viz. divine and human, is it not far better to suppose the single subjects of these properties united into one compound subject, viz. God and man? And then each single subject may keep its own properties. Is not this easier than to join two inconsistent properties in the same single subject, which scripture doth neither necessitate, nor encourage, and philosophy and reason will not allow?

Query XV. Since the modern refiners of the *arian* scheme have granted, that there is a peculiar, strict and perfect union and communion, between the Father and the Son, and cannot deny, but that several of the texts I have cited may have a secret reference to some mysterious, incomprehensible instances of union and communion between them, see doctor *Clarke's* "scripture doctrine of the trinity," part the first, number 594 and 600. Where is the inconvenience, or difficulty, of allowing this to be called a personal union, whereby what is proper to God may be attributed to *Christ*, and what is proper to the man *Christ* may be attributed to God; and what is proper to either part of the compound person may be applied to the whole? Thus God manifest in the flesh was seen of angels, and ascended to heaven, may signify the same, as that *Jesus Christ*, or the man united to godhead, was seen of angels, and ascended to heaven." *1 Tim.* iii. 16.

S E C T I O N III.

Suppose a person, who had before indulged the *arian* error, and denied the proper divinity of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, should by these steps of enquiry be led on thus far, to believe that *Christ* is called God, *Jehovah*, the great God, and blessed God, in the true, proper, and exalted sense, he might be yet led farther onward into this doctrine, and quickly learn how to explain, in clear ideas, several other propositions which are asserted and maintained in the orthodox scheme, that is, in the common explication of the trinity: viz. how the Son of God may be also God of one substance, power and eternity, or of the same substance with the Father, and in some sense equal with him in power and glory. And it may be explained also by this means, how *Christ* becomes the Son of God by an ineffable communication of the divine nature to him from the Father, and thus he may be the image of the invisible God, and the express image of his Father's person; thus also all the divine characters which are ascribed to *Christ* in the new testament, may be properly said to be derived from the Father. Observe the following method.

1. If the essence of God which is in the Father, and in the Son *Jesus Christ*, be the same numerical essence*, then it is evident that the Son hath the same substance with the Father.

2. If the perfections that belong to that divine essence are equal, or the same in the Father and in the Son, then there is a sense wherein the Father and Son may be said to be equal in power and glory; though the Father may be properly said to have them originally, and the Son by communication.

3. The divine nature, or deity, may be said to be communicated to *Jesus Christ* the Son, by the Father's uniting the human nature of *Christ* to his own godhead, or to some divine power or principle of agency represented personally, or by God's actual assuming the man *Christ Jesus*, his Son, into a personal union with himself, or his own infinite wisdom, which act of uniting the godhead to the man *Christ Jesus* may be called a communication of the divine nature to the Son ||.

4. And

* It is generally granted by the greatest and best trinitarian writers, that supposing we believe the Father, Son and Spirit, to be really, truly and properly, one God, the particular manner of explaining the internal distinctions in the divine essence is of much less importance. Upon this concession I take leave to say, that though the doctrine of the same numerical essence belonging to the sacred three, has been opposed by some learned and pious writers, yet this is the opinion which is certainly most consonant to the light of nature, which has been for many centuries past counted the orthodox doctrine, and which seems most agreeable to the unity of God, where that is represented in scripture, and therefore I rather incline to believe it: And I think the personal representations of the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit, may be explained in a full consistency therewith, as I shall endeavour to shew hereafter.

Here let it be noted also, that the divine nature of *Christ* is sometimes taken inadequately for the eternal word or wisdom of God, sometimes adequately for God, exerting or acting by his eternal word or wisdom, or godhead under the special idea of wisdom. Now it is chiefly in this latter sense that I speak of the godhead of *Christ* in these three dissertations.

|| Though it has been an opinion generally received, that the sonship of *Christ* belongs to his divine nature, supposing it to be really derived from the Father by eternal generation, yet the scripture does nowhere assert this doctrine, but it is drawn only by supposed consequences: And there are many zealous trinitarians, and learned writers in our day, who suppose no derivation of one person from another in pure godhead, lest it infer some inferiority in the person derived; and therefore they explain *Christ's* Sonship rather

4. And perhaps, this is one way whereby *Christ* becomes the Son of God ; nor is it utterly improper to apply the text here, *Pfal.* ii. 7. " I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son this day have I begotten thee." *Christ* becomes the Son of God, and may be said to be begotten of the Father by a divine decree or appointment. And thus, " as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself," *John* v. 26. That is, he hath given the favour of union with the divine nature to the man *Christ Jesus* ; and to have life in himself is one property of the divine nature*, which now exists in the complex person.

5. Thus *Jesus Christ*, the Son of God, becomes the most perfect image of the invisible God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. The powers and perfections with which the man *Jesus* is invested, by the indwelling and united godhead, would render him a most illustrious image of the Father, if there were no superior sense in which also he were the express image of God ; for there is no being through which the godhead shines in all it's perfections with such brightness, such express likeness, and such glory as in the person of *Jesus Christ*," *2 Cor.* iv. 6.

6. Yet farther, if we can receive the doctrine of the pre-existence of *Christ's* human soul, which seems to be the most obvious and natural sense of many scriptures, if we can believe that it was formed the first of creatures before the foundation of the world, and was present with God in the beginning of all things, which is no hard matter for an *arian* to grant, then we also justly believe this union between God and man to have begun before the world was, in some unknown moment of God's own eternity : For when the human soul of *Christ* was first brought into existence, it might be united in that moment to the divine nature.

Thus *Christ* was, in this sense also, the first-born of every creature. For his complex person had a being before the creation was formed ; and perhaps, this may be the best way of expounding the doctrine of the most primitive fathers concerning the ante-mundane generation of *Christ*, that is, his becoming the Son of God in a new manner just before the world was made. See " the fourth dissertation on the " *Logos.*"

According to this view of things, it is easy to understand how he had some hand in the creation as God-man §, that is, as *Jesus Christ*, by whom " God created all things," *Eph.* iii. 9. How all " things were created by him, and for him, and by him all things consist," *Col.* i. 16. " And he upholds all things by the word of his power," *Heb.* i. 3. For he was God-man from the beginning of his existence as man. Thus divine perfections always belonged to him ; his godhead was co-essential and co-eternal with the godhead of the Father, for it was the same divine essence ; and his person as God-man existed before the foundation of the world.

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rather to signify the peculiar derivation of his soul and body from God the Father, or his being constituted the *Messiah* by the decree and appointment of God ; and doctor *Thomas Goodwin* also supposes, that the union of the man *Jesus* to the divine nature is one reason why he is called the Son of God. " It was by the personal union that God bestowed on the man *Jesus* the glory of being his Son," Volume II. Book 3. Page. 146.

* This is not so bold a thought as doctor *Goodwin* has on this text, when he says, " It is one attribute of *Christ* as he is God man, yea, as he is man taken up into that union, to have life independently in himself, even as God the Father hath." Volume II. Book 3. Page 193.

§ Doctor *Thomas Goodwin* does at large maintain and prove, that *Christ*, as God-man, created all things, and under this character he was the instrument by which God created the world. " See his discourse of the knowledge of God and *Christ.*" Book 3. Chapter 10, 11, 12. Page 178, 190.

These glorious attributions, by this means, appear to have a just foundation in the divine and human natures of *Christ* united, even without entering into any of the particular and internal distinctions, and personalities which belong to the divine essence itself, and which are more abstruse and incomprehensible; and therefore they are not the first and most necessary things to be taught or learned in the doctrine of the deity of *Christ*.

Lastly, The human soul of *Christ* being thus antiently united to the divine nature, did about seventeen hundred years ago, assume a body that was prepared for it by the Father through the peculiar operation of the holy Spirit. Upon this account sometimes *Christ*, or the Son of God, is said to come in the flesh; at other times God himself is represented as manifest in the flesh; some expressions referring chiefly to the godhead, others to God-man, or the soul of *Christ* in antient union with his divine nature.

S E C T I O N IV.

NOW, if by such methods of reasoning a disbeliever of the proper divinity of *Christ* shall be induced to believe his true godhead, by virtue of such a personal union between the man *Christ Jesus* and the divine nature, I cannot but think there is a just foundation laid for a ready belief of all the glorious consequent doctrines of the priesthood and kingdom of *Christ*; and of the proper and perfect satisfaction of *Christ* offered to the infinite majesty of heaven for all the infinite offences of sinful men. Our blessed Saviour, by this doctrine, is furnished with all those divine powers and perfections that are requisite for his exaltation to the government over all things, since in his person there is the true and eternal godhead united to the man *Jesus*: And he becomes hereby the proper object of divine worship, considered in his person as God-man. And whosoever shall believe and confess this doctrine, has, in my opinion, a sufficient degree of orthodoxy in this point, to be received into any christian church, although he may have some scruples or difficulties remaining upon his mind, about some opinions relating to other parts of the doctrine of the trinity.

The most natural and pressing objection which here would arise in the mind is this, "If the divine nature, or true God, be but one single conscious mind or spirit, and this spirit be united to human nature, or the man *Jesus*, then does not God the Father seem to be incarnate? Is there not too great an approach made to that doctrine which was called the heresy of the *Sabellians*, or the *Patri-passians*, viz. That God the Father took flesh, suffered, died, and rose again, and ascended to heaven?" To this I answer,

Answer I. If the sonship of *Christ* be not referred to his divine nature, but rather to the extraordinary production of his human nature, or to it's personal union with the godhead, or to his office as *Messiah*, then the name of Father will not import any internal real distinction in the divine nature or essence*, but rather it imports a honourable

* That the notions of paternity and sonship are not necessary internal distinctions of the divine essence, but rather oeconomic, external and relative, seems to be the sense of some learned trinitarians. "Though these three are in the holy scriptures spoken of under the names of Father, Son, and holy Ghost, and as begetting, begotten and proceeding: yet still we leave it to those who are wiser, or at least more bold and daring than we, to say, that this does, and to shew afterwards how it does relate to the divine essence: For we have no notion of a greater or lesser in the godhead." See "doctrine of the blessed trinity by some London ministers," page 21.

honourable title or character which the great God assumes, upon the account of his being the origin of all things, or his being the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ* as man, or his constituting him God-man and mediator.

The Father is also a proper name which belongs to God, considered as sustaining the character of prime agent in all the works of creation, providence, government, and salvation. But when this godhead is considered in it's union to a man, and as part of the complex person, then it does not assume to itself these supreme characters, nor the title of Father in the trinity; and being joined to the man *Christ Jesus*, it may receive those characters of office and inferiority which belong to a mediator, as well as it renders the person of *Christ* God-man fit to sustain these offices.

In this view, although *Christ Jesus* the Son be united to the same godhead, which is the very essence and nature of the Father, yet it cannot be said properly, that he is personally united to the Father, because this union to human nature, though it does not diminish any thing of the divine perfections, yet it alters the relative titles and characters that belong to God, as he appears the Father of all things, the sovereign majesty, the prime almighty Creator, and supreme governor of heaven and earth.

The similitude which I have used in the "christian doctrine of the trinity," Proposition XVIII. would set this in a fair light, if I may repeat part of it again, viz. Suppose a king should send an ambassador extraordinary to a foreign country; and suppose the soul of the king himself, or one of his intellectual powers, could be so united also to the body, or person, of the ambassador, as to animate, actuate and move him, and become, as it were, one person with him: then the soul of the king himself might be said to sustain both his own character as king, and the inferior character of the ambassador, and fulfil both those offices under a distinct sort of personality, or in two distinct persons.

Thus we may apprehend, how God the Father, the king of heaven, sent down his Son, a distinct person, in whom the same godhead dwells, as an ambassador extraordinary, to earth: And thus this eternal godhead being the same in the Father and Son, sustains the superior character of a sovereign king, in the person of the Father, and may be said also to sustain the inferior character of an ambassador, and to fulfil that office in the person of the Son.

We must not expect human similes should be entire and perfect images of things divine: If they give us some illustration of sacred mysteries it is sufficient.

The holy scripture seems to favour this representation when it describes the godhead, or sometimes even the Father, as subsisting in the man *Christ*, and executing all his three offices of a prophet, priest, and king, in and by the human nature.

1. A prophet. *John* xiv. 10. "The words I speak to you I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works," that is, it is the same God, who is sometimes called Father, that speaks in me, and confirms the words by miraculous works.

2. A priest. *2 Cor.* v. 19. "God was in *Christ* reconciling the world to himself," that is, God in the person of *Christ* was the reconciler of the world to himself in the person of the Father.

3. A king, or lawgiver. *1 Thess.* v. 18. "In every thing give thanks, for this is the will, or command, of God in *Christ* concerning you." God in *Christ* is our commander.

Thus it is the same God, who at other times sustains the person of the Father, dwelling personally in the man *Jesus* his Son, who assists him in all the works of mediation, so far that it may be said God performs them; and thus "God laid down his

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life for us," 1 *John* iii. 16. and " God redeemed the church with his own blood," *Acts* xx. 28. It is that " God who was manifest in the flesh," 1 *Tim.* iii. 16.

Thus you see, how far we may go toward the solution of this difficulty, before we come to distinguish three persons in the very essence of God. And I cannot avoid remarking, that all these thoughts put together do naturally lead one rather to incline to this opinion, that the godhead of the Father and of the Son, are numerically one and the same godhead, however internally and externally distinguished by personal subsistences and relative properties. And this is the constant idea that our protestant divines abroad and at home have given us of the deity of *Christ*, viz. as the same numerical godhead which is in the Father.

Answer II. But, perhaps, this will not be thought sufficient entirely to answer and remove the difficulty: I add therefore, that if we suppose there may be some such, or greater distinctions in the divine nature it self, or in God the infinite spirit, as are between the understanding and will in the soul of man, which is a finite spirit, I have shewn very particularly in another discourse, how one of these divine powers, or differences in the divine nature, may be united to man in such a sense as the other cannot so properly be said to be united to him; and for this I must desire the reader's patience, till I see whether the world will encourage further publications on this subject.

C O N C L U S I O N.

LEST I should be exposed to the censure of my zealous friends, for not speaking so largely, fully and particularly, in this dissertation, concerning the three sacred persons in the trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit, as I have done elsewhere, I entreat them to consider the design of this discourse, which is not to explain this article at large, but merely to lead an *arian*, by soft and easy steps, into a belief of the divinity of *Christ*: And therefore it was necessary that I should not break in upon his understanding all at once, and attempt to assault and batter down all his old sentiments; but that I should explain the doctrine in as near a correspondency to his former sentiments as truth would permit, and represent the deity of *Christ*, and the union of the two natures in one person, in such a manner as might give the least disgust and offence to one of *arian* principles*, provided always, that I assert nothing but what is agreeable to scripture, though I do not at once publish the whole of that doctrine in all it's varieties. It would be a good beginning to proceed thus far; time, and study of the scripture, with divine instructions, may lead him on to farther knowledge, and a more complete agreement with our best writers, so far as they agree with the word of God.

Our blessed Saviour bore with the prejudices of his own disciples for a season; he had many other things to say of them, even at the end of his life, " but they could not bear them yet," *John* xvi. 12. And the blessed apostles bore with the prejudices of the *jews* many years, and did not all at once beat down their whole scheme of *mo-saic* principles. When St. Paul taught the *Corinthians*, he " fed them with milk and

* That great defender of the divinity of *Christ*, doctor *Waterland*, will bear me out in this manner of writing, for he freely declares, " He does not find fault with the fathers for adapting their style sometimes to pagans, but commends them rather for doing it in some cases, as doing what was proper." See his farther vindication of *Christ's* divinity," &c. page 17. And St. Paul practises the same thing, and becomes all things to all men, even to *jews* and heathens, that by all means he may save some, 1 *Cor.* ix. 22.

and not with meat, for they were not able to bear it," 1 *Cor.* iii. 2. And when he found the *Hebrews* backward to hear, he reserved, till afterwards, the many things which he had to say, and which were hard to be uttered," *Heb.* v. 11, 12.

"The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves," 2 *Tim.* ii. 24. as well knowing, that it is by short and gentle steps, and by slow degrees, that human nature is capable of dropping it's former prejudices, parting with any of it's old opinions, and receiving further light. I am well persuaded, that disputes regulated by christian love, and under the conduct of sacred charity, are in their own nature most proper to rectify the unwilling mistakes of men; and if ever the Spirit of God condescend to bless any controversial writings for the conviction of those that are in error it is the soft and gentle method of argument that stands fairest to receive such divine influences.

DISSERTATION II.

God and man united in the person of *Christ*.

AS it is evident throughout all the scripture, so it is agreed on all hands, that our blessed Saviour *Jesus Christ* is a proper person, and is so described in the word of God. He has all the peculiar characters of personality belonging to him; he is a distinct intelligent agent; and the personal pronouns, I, thou, and he, are applied to him with great frequency in the holy writings.

It is also as clear in it self, and agreed upon without controversy on all sides, that he has the true and proper characters, attributes, actions and passions of man attributed to him: The history of his life and death bear witness to this in all the evangelists.

It is also very evident to me, and has appeared so to almost all the christian church, in the several ages of it, that the names, titles, peculiar properties, and incommunicable prerogatives of God, are given to this glorious person in the scriptures both of the old and new testament.

It is very hard, if not impossible, for us to give any tolerable account, how and why the peculiar and appropriate characters both of God and of man, in so many places, and in such variety of expressions, should be given to the same person, *Jesus Christ*, unless we suppose the two distinct natures of God and of man, united to make up one complex, or compound principle of action and passion, that is, to make up one person.

The holy scripture lays an evident foundation for this. *Christ* is plainly described in several of the sacred writings as God and man, united to make up one person, one complex principle of action and passion. He is often called God, and he is often called a man, both in the old and new testament; and sometimes both these natures are represented together, *Col.* ii. 9. "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily." *Rom.* ix. 5. *Christ* of the seed of *David* after the flesh, and yet he is over all,
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God blessed for ever." 1 Tim. iii. 16. "God manifest in the flesh, who was seen of angels, received up into glory." Rev. xxii. 13, 16. "The beginning and the end, the first and the last, the root and the offspring of David." John i. 1, 14. "The Word who was with God, and who was God, was made flesh and dwelt among us." It is upon the account of this union that both human and divine properties and characters are attributed to him in the bible.

In opposition to this it has been objected, "That in the passages of scripture mentioned in my book of the "christian doctrine of the trinity," there is not the least hint of two intelligent agents united in one person." "Sober appeal," page 144.

Answer. I would let the reader judge, whether in the passages which are there mentioned, page 468. as well as in the texts I have now cited, there is not much more than a mere hint of two such intelligent agents united: It seems to me to be the very language of scripture. But if the two natures of *Christ* were not expressed so plainly as they are, and connected and united in the same texts, yet there are so many different characters applied to *Christ*, which necessarily require two such intelligent agents, one divine, and one human, that the inference appears very obvious and unavoidable, that God and man are united in the person of *Christ*.

Let us look into our selves a little, and enquire, Why we believe man to be a compound being, a creature or person made up of an animal body, and a rational spirit? If we would speak as philosophers, the only reason why we believe it is, because we find some powers, properties and operations belong to us, which cannot belong to a mere animal, or a body of flesh and blood, such as thinking, reasoning, doubting, reflecting, designing, repenting, wishing, &c. And we find also, other ideas, operations, powers and properties, which cannot belong to a spirit, such as, corporeal qualities, dimensions, figure, local motion, tangible, impenetrable and solid substance, eating, drinking, walking: From these things put together, we infer, that since one single nature is not capable of all these properties and operations, therefore the person of man is made up of two distinct natures, viz. a body and a spirit.

Now it is the same diversity of appearances, and the same reasoning, that persuade us to believe the person of *Christ* is made up of two natures, divine and human: And the scripture seems to account for these things the same way.

It is objected again, That "the author of the christian doctrine of the trinity, &c. hath defined the word person; in the common language of men, to signify one single, intelligent, voluntary agent, or principle of action, therefore according to the common sense and language of mankind, here are two persons in *Christ*, as well as two natures; and therefore the author will not say, that he uses the word PERSON here in a sense near akin to the common sense of the word." "Sober appeal," page 140.

Answer, Yes, the author may venture to say, he used the word PERSON here in a sense near akin to it's common sense: And I gave particular notice, page 459. that "though the word person may be fitly used and applied to the doctrine of the trinity, yet we generally suppose it is not to be taken exactly in the same sense, as when we call three men, or three angels, three distinct persons." Now what is not exactly the same sense, may yet be a sense near akin. And if in explaining things divine we use the same word to include a little more, or a little less, than in things human, I think this may be done without blame, since we give notice of this special use of the word, since it is the best word we have, and it is that which comes nearest to the divine or sacred ideas which we would express.

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The word person, in the common sense of it, signifies one single, intelligent, voluntary agent. But in this theological sense it is supposed to signify one complex, intelligent, voluntary agent; and thus the two natures of *Christ*, divine and human, may be called one person. In order to explain this in a very near approach to the common forms of human language, I would propose the few queries following.

Query I. May not two distinct substances, such as a body and a spirit, be so intimately united, as that the one may act in subordination to the other, and they may both be esteemed, by virtue of this union, as one common subject of action or passion, or one complex principle of doing and suffering? And is not the whole being properly called a person? The common affairs and language of mankind, who are composed of a spirit and a body, answer this query in the affirmative by daily and hourly experience.

Query II. In this instance, of a person composed of two distinct substances, is not that which is done, or sustained by the one or the other substance, attributed to the whole complex being? If the body sleeps or walks, if the soul meditates, loves or fears, do we not say, the man fears, loves, meditates, walks or sleeps?

Query III. In this complex being, or person, are not the actions, passions or characters, of either part of the composition, sometimes attributed to the other in common language? Do we not frequently say, and hear such sentences as these, viz. Poor soul, how pale it looks! That tall thing is very silly. No wise body would have done so. This deformed figure here is a learned man. Some body thought of me. A projecting brain. A thoughtful face. A witty head. A honest heart. A heavy soul. A warm spirit. In each of which expressions some property of body is attributed to the soul, or some property of the soul attributed to the body.

This is what we call a communication of properties, and it is used in the sacred writings as well as human. *Gen. vi. 12.* "All flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth," when in truth it was the spirits of men had corrupted their way. *Prov. xxvii. 7.* "The full soul loatheth the honey comb, but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet," whereas hunger and fulness are really the properties of the body. *1 Thess. iv. 14.* "Them that sleep in *Jesus* will God bring with him." It is in truth, the body that sleeps, and the soul is brought from heaven with *Christ* to judgment; yet you find, in the language of the apostle, this communication of properties.

Query IV. May not two intelligent agents, or two spirits, one of which is inferior to the other, be so intimately united, as that the one may generally act in entire subordination to the other, and under the influence of the other, so that they shall be esteemed as one common principle of action and passion? And may not what is done or sustained by one spirit, be sometimes attributed to the whole complex being, or sometimes to the other spirit, by reason of their most close and intimate union.

The union of the soul and body to make one complex being, that is, a man, which are two things so utterly distinct in their own natures, gives foundation enough for the union of two spirits into one complex principle of action, since kindred natures may better admit of closer union than natures so exceeding different.

Query V. May not the personal pronouns I, thou, and he, be applied to this whole complex being, especially in every instance wherein the inferior spirit acts in entire subordination to the superior? And as the word person, in common language, signifies one single, intelligent, voluntary agent, so may it not, in this instance, signify one complex, intelligent, voluntary agent? And thus the word person will appear to be used here in a sense near akin to the common ideas of it.

Query VI. Are there not many other words in human language which are used in this manner, that is, to signify either one single substance, or to signify one complex substance, made up of two, or more, single substances united?

We may borrow instances from corporeal unions. When two contiguous houses have mutual communication made between them by proper doors, and are inhabited by one family, they are often called one house: They were two single houses before, now they are one complex house. So two trees may be planted close together, and if they are barked on one side, and bound to each other, by this union they will, as it were, grow into one, and we may with propriety call them one tree: Such instances are also common in twin-fruits, as apples, cherries*, &c.

We may borrow instances also from political unions. So the parliament of *England*, and the parliament of *Scotland*, are united and made one parliament: Or those two single nations, which contain thousands of intelligent agents, may be united and made one nation, that is, one complex nation. So a man and his wife, who are two single natural persons, may be called one political person, for they are one person in the eye of the law, because what the one sustains, receives, or acts, is in many cases attributed to the other.

Now to apply these queries to the doctrine of two natures in the person of *Christ*.

Query VII. May not the great God, the infinite spirit, think it proper to assume into union with himself a finite spirit, in so close and intimate a manner as is possible for two such spirits to be united to each other? And may they not be esteemed as one complex being, one complex principle of action and passion?

Query VIII. Whether this complex agent, made up of the human and divine natures, so intimately united, may not have the personal pronouns, I, thou, and he, in the singular number, applied to it with a justness and propriety of speech, which pronouns are the distinguishing characters that human language has affixed to distinct persons?

Query IX. May not this union be properly called a personal union? Or, if we choose *Greek* words, a hypostatical union? And may not this lay a foundation for that figure of speech which is so exceeding common in human language, viz. a communication of properties, when two different beings are thus united into one?

Query X. Though it be impossible for us to tell precisely and fully wherein the personal union consists, yet is it not sufficient for us to know that it is a nearer, and more intimate union between the godhead and the man *Jesus*, than there is between God and any other creature within our notice? And that it is sufficient to lay a foundation for the attribution of the distinguishing properties, operations and passions of the one to the other, or to the whole complex person?

Thus, though the saints are said to be united to God, or to be one with God, and to dwell in God, and to have God dwelling in them, yet we never find the peculiar properties, actions and passions of God and of the saints, mutually attributed to each other in that manner as the actions and passions, and peculiar properties of God and the man *Jesus* are; nor are they ever described as making one complex being or person; nor are the actions, passions, and peculiar properties of God and the saints, attributed to any such complex being, or compounded person, made up of both.

Query XI. Whether the person, the complete person of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, may not therefore be properly described, as the blessed God in personal union with a man,

or

* I would not have used similitudes of so low a rank to represent things sacred, if I could have found such proper resemblances among the higher ranks of being: But, as others have observed before, an iron key that opens a lock, is better than a golden one which will not open it.

or as a man personally united to God? And whether this is not the most plain, easy and natural way, of accounting for the human and divine titles and characters attributed to him? Is not this done without straining any of the expressions of scripture from their most proper ideas, and always allowing the divine titles and characters to signify the idea of true deity, and the human characters to intend nothing superior to human nature?

Query XII. Whether upon this principle it may not be said *Christ* is God, *Christ* is man. He grew in wisdom and in stature. He knows all things, &c. referring to his two different natures, or the two different parts of his complex person? Upon this account, when we speak of God manifest in the flesh, may it not be properly said, "God was seen of angels, and he ascended into glory; *Christ* was of the seed of *David* after the flesh, and he was over all God blessed for ever; God laid down his life for us; God purchased the church with his own blood?" &c. If what is true of one of his natures, be affirmed concerning his whole person, and sometimes concerning the other nature, this union of two natures in one person lays a plain foundation for it.

Objection. "Supposing this strange notion, of two intelligent agents making one person, we shall find some things to manifestly spoken of the entire person, as will effectually preclude this way of escape: As particularly, when our Lord says, *Mark* xiii. 32. that "he knew not the day of judgment:" For though it is allowed to affirm of the person, what belongs to either nature, yet I fear it will be accounted no better than equivocation, to deny of the person what belongs to either, for certainly if it belongs to either nature, it is true of the person which is supposed to be constituted of both natures. By the same liberty of speaking might one not deny that *Christ* is God, meaning it of his human nature; and again, on the other hand, deny that *Christ* is man, meaning it of his divine nature? The same may be said concerning those places, where *Christ* says, I can do nothing of my self, &c." Sober appeal, page 146.

Answer, This objection is pushed home with it's utmost force by a very acute writer, Mr. *Emlyn*, in his humble inquiry, &c. And I would refer the reader to those answers which that excellent author, Mr. *Boyse*, has given it, in his "vindication of the true deity of *Christ*," from page 94. to page 108, edition 3d. wherein the whole dispute on this subject is contained. There are also several other authors who have vindicated this text, *Mark* xiii. 32. from the inferences which the *arian* writers would draw from it, by such considerations as these.

I. Our Saviour speaks this under the character of a mediator, or a prophet commissioned by the Father, to reveal his will to men: Now, since he had it not in his commission to reveal the day of judgment, he speaks as though he knew it not, that is, it was not within the reach or extent of that knowledge which his Father commissioned him to communicate to men at that time, though in his divine nature he had in himself the knowledge of it. By the same reason our Lord might say, he could do nothing of himself, which he had not commission to do as mediator.

II. That in this place *Christ* represents himself as the Son of man in the foregoing verses, *Mark* xiii. 26. and thereby he may be understood to distinguish his human nature from his divine, and to deny that he knew the day of judgment as he was man or the Son of man. And it is certain, that our blessed Lord, in the days of his humiliation, often spoke of himself considered in his human nature abstracted from the divine, though the union was never dissolved: It was his proper work on earth to represent

present himself as man, rather than as God, for "had the *jews* known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory," 1 *Cor.* ii. 8.

III. To this I would add, in the last place, That if the sonship of *Christ* does not belong to his godhead, even when he is called the Son of God, but belongs rather to his office as mediator, or to the derivation of his human nature, both soul and body from God the Father, in a peculiar and extraordinary way, then wheresoever he is represented as a Son, whether as Son of God or Son of man, still his sonship is an inferior part of his character; and on this account we may expect many things asserted or denied concerning him, which cannot properly be asserted or denied concerning his supreme nature or godhead, which has nothing in it self so much derivative and dependent, as seems to be implied in the word Son.

Now, if we should allow the inference which the objector makes, viz. that "if our Saviour in his whole complex person, should deny, concerning himself, those properties which he possesses in one of his natures, it would approach too near to an equivocation," yet when he speaks of himself expressly in his inferior character, or in his inferior nature, as a Son, or as mediator, he may then expressly deny any divine and supreme property of himself, considered in his divine nature, without any shadow of such an imputation. Though he would not say *Christ* is not God, or *Christ* is not man, yet he might freely declare, that his divine nature is not man, or the Son of man is not God; and in the same sense the Son can do nothing of himself, and the Son of man knows not the day of judgment.

I was willing to answer this objection particularly, because it is generally supposed by the *arian* writers to be unanswerable, though it has diverted me too far from the subject of personality, which I was pursuing.

Perhaps it may be yet further objected here, against the unity of the person of *Christ*, that the human and the divine natures are still two persons, for they are two distinct intelligent agents, and the pronouns I, thou, and he, may be applied to either of them, considered apart.

Answer I. To this I answer, the same may be said concerning any of the foregoing instances that I gave of two substances united into one compound substance: So the complex house may be called two houses; and the complex tree be called two trees; and *Great Britain* may be called two nations; and a man and wife may be called two persons still: There is a sense in which they are two, though there is another sense in which they are one. But I think it is sufficient to denominate each of these examples one being, or to attribute unity to each of them, if one thing is frequently predicated or affirmed concerning each of these examples as a complex idea.

Nor can I see any thing so terrible or heretical in it, if we should suppose the human nature, and divine nature of *Christ*, to be in some sense two distinct persons, as God and man, being each of them a single intelligent agent. I confess the frightful sound of *Nestorianism* may reasonably forbid a man to indulge this language, because it will not be counted orthodox: But I know of no manner of injury done to the scripture, to the sacred truths of the gospel, nor to the common schemes of explaining the trinity, by such an allowance as this is. The reverend Mr. *Robert Fleming* is positive in this point. See "Christology," book III. chapter 3. page 279. And the scripture sometimes seems to speak of *Christ* as a distinct person in one of his natures, and as abstracted from the other, though it be not really separated.

Answer II. But yet I may add, that the common way of speaking to which our divines have accustomed themselves, denies the human nature of *Jesus Christ* to be so properly

properly called a distinct person by it self, because it was never ordained to exist one moment separate from the godhead : And that therefore the complex idea of God-man, may with greater propriety be called a person, than the human nature alone. If I were engaged to support this notion, I might propose a parallel case to give some light to it, viz. an angel is called a person, because though it be but a single spirit, yet it was never ordained to exist in union with an animal body : And yet a human soul, which is one single spirit, is not so usually called a person in the separate state, because it is ordained to dwell in a human body ; and upon this account the addition of a human body is many times reckoned necessary to complete the personality, or to make a human soul, a complete person.

Answer III. If this difficulty could be solved no other way, we might correct the account which I have given of the word person, and include in it all the ideas which the learned doctor *Waterland* has expressed in his definition; viz. “ a single person is an intelligent agent, having the distinctive characters of I, thou, and he ; and not divided or distinguished into more intelligent agents capable of the same characters.” See “ second vindication of *Christ's* divinity,” query fifteenth, where he has set this definition of the word in a clear and easy light. Let it be noted here, that the doctor accurately and judiciously uses the words divided and distinguished, not divisible and distinguishable ; for the human and divine constituents of the person of *Christ* are really divisible into two such persons, but since their union they never were, or shall be really separated and divided.

If after all it should be found, that the scripture, on some occasions, represents the divine nature of *Christ* as a person, and at another time speaks of the human soul as a person, either before or after it's incarnation ; and if in other places it describes the divine and human natures united as one person, I cannot see any inconsistency, in all this ; supposing that person be distinguished into single and complex, and into complete and incomplete : In one or other of these senses, the word person may be variously applied, without any force or strain put on the words of scripture, and without any violation of the rules of human language.

I cannot but think the light in which I have here set this matter, of the complex person of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, is sufficiently evident ; and though, perhaps, we may not always agree about terms and names, and the use of the word person, yet the ideas which I have represented seem to be clear and distinct, and, perhaps, may give satisfaction to those who are not inclined to dispute about words and names. If a further account of the use of the term person in this controversy be desired, See “ dissertation the sixth.”

And since it may bear a dispute, whether the word person be ever used in this sense in scripture, it shall never be a matter of zeal and contest with me, whether another man will express these ideas in my words or no ; provided he will but acknowledge such a peculiar union between the human and divine natures in *Christ*, as sufficiently qualifies him for all the honours and offices of his mediation, and lays a foundation for attributing to him the appropriate and peculiar titles, characters and operations, both of God and man. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

DISSERTATION III.

The worship of *Christ*, as mediator, founded on his godhead.

IT is an unhappiness to the christian church, that there should be any controversies raised about matters of so sacred importance, as the worship which is paid to our blessed Saviour. It is agreed now a-days on all hands, that both God the Father, and his Son *Jesus Christ*, are the proper objects of religious worship; but the chief dispute lies here, whether the worship that is paid to both of them be properly divine or no? And, whether our Saviour be the object of our worship, merely as a glorious creature, whom the Father has thus dignified, or as he himself has proper communion with God the Father in the divine nature, and is one God with him? That is, Whether true and proper godhead, or an inferior exalted character, be the proper foundation, and ground, of the worship that is paid to him?

I have read, with some diligence and care, what the author of the "sober appeal," and others, even the most ingenious of the modern *antitrinitarians* have written on this subject, where they endeavour to prove, that religious worship under the new testament is not so peculiar a prerogative of the supreme God, but that it may be given to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, though he be, in their sense, but a mere exalted creature; and that the new testament requires religious worship to be paid to him as such. After all, I cannot see sufficient reason to abandon my former argument on this head, which I have published in my "christian doctrine of the trinity," though, perhaps, I may take an advantage from this study, to correct some of my sentiments, while I endeavour to guard and defend the most important of them.

In the pursuit of this subject, I shall attempt to establish the common protestant doctrine of the worship of *Jesus Christ*, the mediator, upon the foundation of his godhead, and answer the most considerable objections I have met with in any of those writers.

The method I shall take in this discourse, is to lay down several successive propositions, to support the argument for the divinity of *Christ*, drawn from the payment of religious worship to him, and then shew, that divine, or religious worship, may be paid to him as mediator, even though the man *Jesus* is a part of the complex person of the mediator who is religiously worshipped.

Proposition I. "Worship is some peculiar honour or respect paid to an intelligent being, either real or imaginary."

The word worship, in old *english*, was used for honour in general, whether this be paid by the body or the mind, or both: An inward esteem or respect for any being may be called worship, though this word frequently implies also some external forms of bodily reverence, such as bowing, kneeling, or prostration.

It is also supposed to be paid to an intelligent being; for though the heathens worshipped stocks and stones, and the papists pay a sort of worship to the relicks of the saints, and to their images, yet it is always built upon this supposition, that there is some God, or some infer or spirit, or power, that dwells in these images, or attends and takes notice of the respect that is paid to themselves, by the means or medium of the image, relick, or other material beings; unless, in some cases, idolaters have

been

been so stupid as to imagine, the wooden idol it self had acquired intellectual powers.

Proposition II. "Human or civil worship, is that human honour which is paid to any of our fellow creatures on earth, upon the account of some excellency which a man may possess, or some special relation or character which a human person may sustain."

This sort of worship is given to knights, baronets, and several societies of men in our nation. This kind of worship was paid to king *David*, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 20. "They worshipped the king." And it is the same which may be supposed to be paid by the debtor to his lord, *Matt.* xviii. 26. "The servant fell down and worshipped his lord." So *Christ* tells the church of *Sardis*, he would make her adversaries "come and worship before her feet," *Rev.* iii. 9. And, perhaps, some who knew not that *Christ* was God, might pay this sort of worship to him as a very extraordinary man in the days of his humiliation.

Proposition III. "Religious worship is generally described to be divine honour paid to some superior being, on the account of some supposed divine excellencies and powers belonging to it."

I cannot boldly affirm, that all religious worship implies the absolute supremacy, the complete omnipotence, and sovereign godhead of the object of it, in the common sense of mankind. The heathens paid religious worship to inferior deities, and to household gods, whose power they did not imagine to be absolutely supreme; nay, they believed their influence to have a narrow and limited extent, though it was superior to human: But still they imagined it to be a sort of divine power, so far as it reached; and consequently the worship which they paid these inferior deities was divine worship. But God, in his word, has forbidden all this sort of worship to be given to any being beneath, and beside himself, as we shall see immediately.

Indeed, the learned doctor *Waterland*, in his "first defence of his sixteenth, and following queries," maintains, "that whatever has been, or may be, the sense of men, and their notions of worship, yet the great God has determined the meaning of religious worship in scripture to include the divinity, supremacy, eternity, &c. of the object:" See page 239, 240, &c. and has said several valuable things on this subject, worthy of a diligent perusal, and of great importance in this controversy. Our author, the appellant, utterly refuses this account, "for, says he, if religious worship imply the supremacy and divinity of the object, who will dispute it, whether it can belong only to the supreme God? But is not this plainly begging the question, and going in a circle?" "Sober appeal," page 122, 125.

But I ask leave to differ from his sentiment; nor can I think this is arguing in a circle, nor begging the question; for if doctor *Waterland* has proved, that the sense of religious worship, in scripture always includes the proper godhead, the supremacy and eternity of the object of it, then by the proof of this sense he cuts off all other inferior senses of religious worship, from the scriptural use of the word, and effectually maintains, that it must belong to God alone according to scripture. And when the appellant has again perused what this learned author has written, both in his "first, and second defence of the queries," perhaps he may find, that he has well vindicated the sole right of the supreme God to all religious worship; therefore I shall refer to his writings, rather than rehearse them here: That learned author stands in no need of my assistance to defend his arguments.

The appellant gives us another idea of religious worship, for it seems to him, that "religious worship imports our expressing a dependence on, or making acknowledgment to some other being as superior to man. There might be the same outward signs

signs of this worship, as of civil respect, such as bowing, kneeling, &c. And there might be the same immediate acts, as asking favours, returning thanks, &c. which, no doubt, are allowable between man and man. But all direct expressions of respect and homage to other beings, as of a superior nature, and having power over us, whether visible or invisible, I take to be properly religious worship. And this was forbidden absolutely under the old testament: This would have been accounted the worshipping another god, though they did not acknowledge the being they worshipped to be supreme, eternal, immutable, &c. which indeed, in most instances, could never be supposed." Appeal, page 123. margin.

I cannot say I am fully satisfied with this account of religious worship; for if an angel should bring me a message, or command from heaven, would it be unlawful to ask him to explain it by his superior knowledge? Or, to desire him to return again, and give me some help toward the performance of it? Or to make a thankful acknowledgment to him for his angelical service and condescension to converse with me? I confess these things do not express a direct dependence on this angel in distinction from God, nor any acknowledgment of such a dependence on him, any further than merely as a divine messenger, and therefore these, perhaps, may not arise to this author's idea of religious worship*.

But however let us now take this idea of worship which the appellant himself has proposed, and state it thus more at large, and I think, according to his meaning.

Religious worship is "honour more than human, paid to some being on the account of some supposed excellencies, or powers, more than human, belonging to it, with an acknowledgment of our dependence on this being, and subjection to it." And now let us see, whether according to his own description, my argument for the divinity of *Christ*, drawn from religious worship, will not stand upon firm and unshaken ground.

Proposition IV. "God has assumed religious worship to himself in his word, as his own peculiar prerogative, and with the severest penalties has forbid it to be paid to any inferior being."

It is not my business here to enquire, whether in the abstracted nature of things a mere creature be, or be not, capable of religious worship, that is, of some honours superior to human, and yet inferior to divine: but it is evident, that God thought it the best way to secure his own divine honour, and to guard his people in all ages from idolatry, by forbidding all such religious honours to be paid to any mere creature whatsoever: And this he does in most general expressions, excluding all sorts, kinds, and forms, of religious worship whatsoever, and that in the most awful and solemn language, as a matter of the greatest importance. *Exod. xxxiv. 14.* "Thou shalt worship no other God, for the Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God." *Deut. vi. 4, 13, 14, 15.* "The Lord our God is one Lord: Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and him shalt thou serve, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods; for the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you, lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee and destroy thee." *Deut. x. 20.*

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* I acknowledge it is a more difficult, and a more important thing, than I heretofore imagined, to ascertain the precise idea of religious worship. And since it seems manifest in scripture, that it is appropriate to God, I take the liberty with my own writings, to retract that sentence in my book of the trinity, page 482: "If there be any mere creature to whom I can communicate the knowledge of my wants, &c. the light of reason and scripture lead me to address him." And that sentence also, page 446. "The very reason of things leads us to adore him." And I give thanks to the appellant, who has convinced me that these expressions are uncautious and unguarded. Though according to the method of controversial writers, who seem to renounce all retractions, I might have a pretence to colour them over: But I chuse to stand corrected.

“Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name: He is thy praise, he is thy God, that hath done for thee great and terrible things.” *Deut. xiii. 1, 2.* “If a prophet shall say, let us go after other gods and serve them,” [it is interpreted, verse 5. “a turning them away from the Lord their God,” and, “that prophet shall be put to death.” And, verse 6, &c. “If thy brother, thy son, thy daughter, thy wife, or thy friend, &c. shall say, let us go and serve other gods, thou shalt stone him with stones that he die,” for it is interpreted a “thrusting thee away from the Lord God.” And, verse 12, &c. “If a whole city shall agree to serve other gods, the inhabitants of that city shall be utterly destroyed with the edge of the sword, the city itself shall be burned with fire, and shall be a heap for ever.” *1 Sam. vii. 3.* “Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only, and he will deliver you.” *Hosea xiii. 4.* “I am the Lord thy God from the land of *Egypt*, and thou shalt know no other God but me, for there is no other Saviour beside me,” *Psal. lxxxix. 9, 10.* “There shall no strange god be in thee, neither shalt thou worship any strange god. I am the Lord thy God,” &c.

The first of the ten commandments delivered with such solemnity upon mount *Sinai*, *Exod. xx. 2.* is this, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me;” that is, no other objects of worship, upon which thou shalt have a religious dependence, or to which thou shalt pay religious honours.

Proposition V. “Religious worship is attributed to our Lord *Jesus Christ* both in prophecy, in precept, and in example in scripture.”

Psal. xlv. 11. “He is thy Lord, and worship thou him.” *Heb. i. 6.* “When he bringeth the first begotten into the world, he saith, let all the angels of God worship him.” *Rom. x. 13.* “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, that is, *Christ*, shall be saved.” *Rev. v. 13.* “Every creature which is in heaven and earth, &c. heard I, saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the lamb, for ever and ever.” Besides the account we have of the disciples, of *Stephen* the martyr, and of *St. Paul*, the last apostle, worshipping *Christ*, and praying to him: and the several doxologies that are paid to him, both in earth and in heaven, are sufficient proofs that religious worship is due to him; nor do any of the modern *anti-trinitarians* deny it.

Proposition VI. “Thence we infer, that true godhead belongs to our Lord *Jesus Christ*,” or that he has such communion in the godhead of the Father, such an oneness with the Father in the divine nature, as renders him justly capable of religious, or divine worship: For if religious worship be a peculiar prerogative of the true God, and *Jesus Christ* has religious worship paid to him, he must also be the true God.

Let us now consider what the objectors have to say in opposition to these three last propositions.

The appellant and his brethren readily allow, that religious worship is, and ought to be paid to our Lord *Jesus Christ*; he allows also, that during the days of the old testament religious worship was absolutely forbidden to be given to any creature, page 123. margin. He seems hereby to allow what I have proposed as the meaning of the first command, viz. “That there should be no other object of religious worship but the Lord *Jehovah*, the one God of *Israel* *.” But then he will not allow

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* That this is the true meaning of the first command, is evident from many places of scripture; for whosoever men set up any other object of worship, it is called in scripture language “the setting up idols, or other gods,” even though these idols were only designed to be the objects of mediate or subordinate worship;

the inference, "That therefore *Jesus Christ* is the true God:" For if God signifies an object of worship, he supposes the first command is so far repealed under the gospel, as to admit another, even an inferior object of worship, viz. "our Lord *Jesus Christ*, as the fourth command in the decalogue is repealed, so far as concerns that seventh day which the *jews* were required to keep as their sabbath," page 125.

Here the appellat speaks his sentiments with freedom, in plain language, and confesses the necessity he is driven to, of supposing the first commandment to be in part repealed. He seems to be conscious that these words, "Thou shalt have no other gods, no other *Elohim* before me," exclude all other gods, both inferior and subordinate as well as supreme, beside the one *Jehovah*, the Lord God of the *jews*: Nor can he account any other way for the worship of *Christ*, as an inferior god, but by repealing in part the first commandment. Now to prove that the first command is not repealed, neither in whole nor in part *, I give these six reasons.

Reason I. The very grounds upon which this antient command, of worshipping one God only, and the prohibition of other gods, is founded, abide the same under the gospel; and the reasons by which it was enforced under the old testament, seem to remain the same under the new, viz. his being the one God, the one *Jehovah*, the eternal, the almighty, the Creator of all things, his jealousy of his own honour, his deliverance of his people from bondage, his being the author of the salvation of his people, and his sovereign authority over them, with his almsufficiency for their help and happiness. Now, is not God the same only Lord God, and one *Jehovah*, the same eternal, almighty, and Creator of all things? Is not God as jealous of his own honour under the gospel, as he was under the law? Is he not that being who has delivered his people from spiritual bondage, which was typified by the land of *Egypt*? Is he not the same one God under the new testament which he was under the old? Is he not that God upon whom his people as much depend for deliverance and salvation? And therefore to admit another God under the new testament to be the proper object of worship, seems to be as inconsistent with the unity, the holy jealousy, and the almsufficiency of God, under the gospel, as it was in the days of *judaism*.

There are also several other expressions of the prophet *Isaiab*, and the other prophets, wherein God asserts his own unity, his own peculiar prerogative and right to religious worship, in opposition to all other gods, or other objects of worship, not only because he alone is the Creator of all things, but he alone is omnipresent, he alone knows all future things from the beginning; he alone is the maker and redeemer of *Israel*; he is the first and the last, &c. Now the one true God has the same reasons to maintain his divine prerogative, and sole right to religious worship under the gospel; he alone is the omnipresent, the omniscient God, the maker and saviour of his people.

If it be objected here, that *Christ* is also represented as the Creator of all things, the maker and saviour of his people, &c. and therefore he may become an object of worship too, we readily allow it; because we suppose him to be one God with the Father,

worship; nay, though they were only mediums of worshipping the true God; so *Jeroboam's* calves are called other gods, 1 *Kings* xiv. 9. 2 *Chron.* xiii. 8. *Laban's* images are called gods, *Gen.* xxxi. 30. which were probably the household gods of the family, *Joshua* xxiv. 2. Though by these *Jeroboam*, *Nabor* and *Laban*, might ultimately worship the true God, as *Gen.* xxxi. 49, 53. Whatever was honoured with religious worship, in scripture sense is called God, and therefore in scripture language every thing but *Jehovah*, or the true and supreme God, is excluded from such worship by the first commandment.

* I see not, indeed, how it is possible for this first command to be repealed in any part, unless it be wholly repealed; for the form of it is negative, and thus it excludes any other god or gods whatsoever: Now if any other god be admitted under the new testament, I think the whole command is repealed.

Father, and therefore the antient titles and characters of godhead belong to him, and render him justly capable of religious worship.

Reason II. If *Christ* or his apostles taught the *jews* the worship of any other god, or gods, beside *Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*, I question whether all their miracles, and their professed commission from heaven, could ever have justly gained them any credit with the *jews*; whether they ought not to have been rejected by the law of God, according to that solemn declaration of God to *Israel*, and that universal rule which he gave them by which to examine and try all their succeeding prophets, *Deut. xiii. 1—5*. “If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder cometh to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul: And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death, because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God.”

If it should be said here, that the reason why the offender is stoned, was not because he led them to other gods, but because he turned them away from the true God: I answer, that there is nothing of this kind mentioned in the description of the crime, viz. a turning them away from the true God, but it is only brought in at the end of the law, to shew the malignity of the crime itself, and to make it appear, that the teaching them to worship other gods, would be interpreted by the true God as a rejection of himself. And this is plain in several instances, when the *jews* worshipped other gods and retained the worship of the true God still, yet they are charged with turning away from the Lord their God.

Upon this supposition therefore, that *Christ* or his apostles taught the *jews* to worship another god, or gods, which they had not before known, I would speak it with holy fear and caution, does there not seem to be a divine command to put them to death, whatsoever signs or wonders they produced to vindicate their commission? And thus, if they set up our Lord *Jesus Christ*, whom the appellant allows to be called God in an inferior sense, and proposed him as another god, another object of religious worship, did they not hereby sap the foundations of all their own pretences to a divine commission, and seem to give the *jews*, their countrymen, a right to stone them to death, according to their own law? And I humbly question, whether all their miracles could have been a sufficient protection to them.

Let it be considered further, that when the *jews* took up stones to stone our Saviour, they pronounced him worthy of death according to their law, for that “he being a man made himself god,” *John x. 33*. Whereas the words which our Saviour spake were these, “I and my Father are one,” verse 30. He doth not deny himself to be God, which seemed very necessary to be done at such an important juncture as this, if he had not been the true God, nor doth he declare himself to be a God different from the Father, which might have given the *jews* a juster pretence to stone him; but his words are, “I and my Father are one,” which represent him to be the same God as the Father, or to be God by virtue of some personal oneness with the godhead of the Father.

Nor can I conceive how any thing else but the supposition of this doctrine could have so honourably vindicated our Saviour’s conduct at this juncture, and at the same time have taken away all just pretence from the *jews* for attempting to stone him. Since he did not preach up another God, his miraculous works obliged them

to believe all that he said, and to these mighty works he appeals, verse 32. Whereas, if he had preached up himself as another god, that *jewish* law seems to stand in force against him notwithstanding his miracles.

I confess this thought has something in it very solemn and awful; it carries, in my esteem, very great weight with it, and confirms me in the belief, that *Jesus Christ* has communion in the godhead of the Father, and is in a proper sense the same God; otherwise I cannot see how he could be made an object of religious worship: For if he be God only in an inferior sense, then he is another god, and seems hereby to lie exposed to the condemnation of this sacred rule in *Deuteronomy*; this divine test of future prophets which *Jehovah* gave to *Israel* by the mouth of *Moses*. The learned doctor *Waterland* is so positive on this head, that he asserts, "The worship of the same one God, exclusive of all others, is for ever made unchangeable by this text." "First defence of the queries," page 231.

If it should be objected by an *arian* here, That this, and all other prohibitions under the old testament, to worship any other god, must be construed with a particular relation to those false gods and idols of the heathen nations of which the *jews* were in danger; but it must not be supposed, that God ever designed by such language to exclude from religious worship so glorious a being as his own Son, who can hardly be called a creature, though he be a distinct being, produced by the will and power of God, and of a nature inferior to the Father?

Answer I. The language of this prohibition is very general, it excludes all *Elohim*, God, or gods, which thou hast not known. Now it does not appear from scripture, that the *jews* knew any true god besides the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, their only *Jehovah*: So that the word plainly excluding all gods that they had not known, seems for ever to exclude *Christ* from their worship, if he be not the same God with *Jehovah*, the God of *Abraham*, whom the *jews* knew.

Answer II. How could the *jews* ever imagine that there was such a limitation intended and implied in the general prohibition, when there is not any intimation of it in the books of *Moses*; nor, indeed, in any of the prophets? And since *Jesus Christ*, in the *arian* sense, was an unknown god to them, how could they ever come to the knowledge of him, or be assured that he is so glorious a being as the Son of God, and that he is appointed by the Father to be called God, and to be worshipped, except by the divine tokens of prophecy and miracle? How should they ever know that this supposed limitation of the general and solemn prohibition of worship did not reach to exclude this person, but by some such divine testimonies? Now the force of these very divine testimonies, miracle and prophecy, seem to be enervated and precluded in this single case, viz. the receiving any other god, or having any other object of worship. In all other cases, as *Grotius* well observes, "de veritate religionis christianæ," prophecy and miracle were constituted the criteria of an inspired person, and the *jews* were bound to receive him; but in this one case of worshipping another god, these criteria were excluded by this very law or statute: So that this law of having no other god seems to be confirmed to the *jews* for ever.

If the objector should persist and say, that "there are intimations given us in the old testament that the *Messiah* must be worshipped, when he comes, and that therefore the *jews* would not be so much surprized at the proposal of another object of worship in the days of the *Messiah*." To this I answer two ways;

Answer I. This seems to be a begging the question, and taking it for granted, that the *Messiah* is not the one true God in any sense, which is the present matter of debate.

Answer II. It should be observed, that in most of those places, wherein it is foretold that the *Messiah* should be worshipped with religious worship, his godhead is also intimated, *Psal.* xcvi. 1. "*Jehovah* reigneth, let the earth rejoyce;" verse 6. "All the people see his glory;" verse 7. "confounded be they that boast themselves of idols: Worship him all ye gods, or angels:" Which verse is applied to *Christ*, *Heb.* i. 6. So *Psal.* cii. 15. where the kingdom of the *Messiah* is foretold, "the gentiles shall fear the name of the Lord;" verse 22. The people are gathered together, and the kingdoms to serve the Lord; verses 24, 25. "Thou hast laid the foundations of the earth," &c. which is also applied to *Christ*, *Heb.* i. 10. So *Psal.* xlv. 6. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;" verse 11. "He is thy Lord, and worship thou him;" which is also applied to *Christ* in the same place. So again, *Isa.* viii. 13, 14. "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear and dread, and he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence;" which compared with *Isai.* xxviii. 16. *1 Pet.* ii. 6, 7. *Rom.* ix. 33. *Matth.* xxi. 44, &c. shew that this is spoken of the *Messiah*: And several other scriptures might be cited to the same purpose. So that still it seems to be the indwelling or united godhead, which is worshipped in the *Messiah*, and which gives the *Messiah*, in his complex person, a right to religious worship, as we shall see hereafter.

Reason III. Our blessed Saviour, in the beginning of his ministry, was tempted by the devil, to fall down and worship him; upon which occasion our Lord confirms the first commandment, and repeats and cites the words of the *mosaic* law, *Mat.* iv. 10. "It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." *Deut.* vi. 13. and x. 20. And it is worthy our observation, what doctor *Waterland* remarks here, that "the reason which *Christ* gives for refusing to worship him, is not that he was a bad spirit, an enemy to God, or that God had not commanded it, but because none are to be worshipped but God only."

It may be objected here, That our Saviour only means to appropriate supreme worship to God the Father, but he does not exclude himself, nor any other inferior being, from an inferior and subordinate worship, proper for subordinate beings, and that therefore subordinate worship may be paid to one who is not the true and eternal God.

I answer, that as all inferior and subordinate * worship, of any mere inferior or subordinate beings, is acknowledged to be excluded under the old testament, by the *mosaic* law, so our Saviour's citation and repetition of it there, does most expressly and directly exclude mere creatures from subordinate worship as well as supreme: For the devil does not tempt him to pay supreme worship to himself, since he acknowledges that he is not the maker, nor supreme possessor of the kingdoms of the world; but he says only that these were delivered into his hands, and therefore he was capable of bestowing them upon *Christ*. As he therefore was but a subordinate possessor, he could demand but subordinate worship, which our Lord forbids by a citation out of the *mosaic* law, *Luke* iv. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Now in disputes on this subject, and this text, the *unitarians* seem to have found out but these two refuges, for which they have any colour or pretence.

1. That notwithstanding the devil's own expression, that he received his kingdoms and powers from another hand, and that they were not originally his own, by supreme

* When I speak of supreme and subordinate worship in this place, I would be understood with respect to the proper foundation of worship, and not with regard to the modes of worship, the motives, designs, or particular forms of address; for in the ninth proposition I have shewn, that these may possibly be mediate or subordinate, even when God is worshipped under some subordinate character, though the foundation of worship is always supreme or proper divinity; and thither I refer the reader. See page 447—452.

preme right, yet that he was so impudent and unreasonable in the same breath to desire divine worship. To which I answer, that as impudent and unreasonable as his requests may be at some times, yet in this place, the *unitarians* have no manner of proof that he requested supreme worship; and there is a rational probability of the contrary. It is most likely, that he desired such worship as the heathens were wont to pay to any of their deities, besides the supreme, that is, those deities into whose hands their supreme God had delivered the government of particular parts of the creation.

2. It is pretended that *Christ's* prohibition of worshipping any thing besides the true God at this time of his temptation, was of no force after his own exaltation; and though God only was to be worshipped at that time, yet in three or four years afterwards *Jesus Christ* also being exalted, might have religious worship paid to him, though he were but an inferior being.

To this it is answered, that our blessed Lord not only now, but afterwards, preaches the same doctrine; he takes other occasions, in the course of his ministry, to confirm that solid foundation of all religion, "that there is but one God, one object of worship:" Now if he himself, or his apostles immediately after his resurrection, had been appointed to set up the worship of himself as a mere inferior being, and another god, it is not to be supposed that our Lord *Jesus* should have introduced his own ministry upon earth with so sacred a confirmation of the one only object of worship, in his repelling the temptation of the devil: Nor can we think he would have taken frequent occasion to maintain that doctrine and practice inviolable, and that without the least hint of any repeal of it.

So very important and considerable a change of religion as this, which repeals the first commandment, and admits another god to be owned and worshipped, would certainly have required a very particular and express account of it to be given to the *jews*, and much labour to be spent in persuading them of the change of this great and fundamental article of their faith and practice, "Hear, O *Israel*, the Lord thy God is one Lord, thou shalt have no God besides him."

Here if it be said, *Christ* gave some intimations of a repeal of it when he speaks of his own future worship, and told them, that "all men must honour the Son, as they honour the Father." *John v. 22.* Let us remember also, that he gave frequent intimations of his own communion in the godhead: For he said, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me; I and my Father are one; *John xiv. 10, 11. x. 30.* and thus the first command abides in it's full force still.

Reason IV. That religious worship is the peculiar prerogative of God alone under the new testament, as well as under the old, is further proved by the continuance of this precept in force after the resurrection and exaltation of *Christ* as well as before: For the apostle *John* was twice going to worship the angel, *Rev. xix. 10. and xxii. 8, 9.* the angel refused the worship both times, and said, "See thou do it not, I am thy fellow servant, worship God;" which must necessarily signify worship God alone, or that God only is the proper object of thy worship, otherwise it could not exclude the worship of an angel. Now if God alone was to be worshipped after the full glorification of *Christ*, when God had appointed every knee to bow to him, and when he was known and adored by the church as a proper object of worship, I think it is a very plain consequence that *Christ* is God; that he has a glorious communion in the divine nature with the one true God, the God of *Israel*, who was the only proper object of worship under the old testament, and is the same under the new.

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Whether St. *John* mistook this angel for *Christ* himself, or whether he might uncautiously, and on a sudden, attempt to pay too sublime a respect and honour to a mere angel, is much the same to my argument; for the angel forbids this honour to be done to himself, as being due to God alone; and this being the reason of his repeated prohibition, the same reason would also exclude *Jesus Christ* from worship, if he were not true God. And, perhaps, this redoubled occurrence and prohibition might be placed in the end of scripture, by divine providence, to let us see, that from the beginning of the bible to the end of it, God alone is intitled to religious worship.

Reason V. The *jews* had learned from the old testament, the worship of one true God and him only; and there is scarce any command more frequently renewed, or guarded with more awful sanctions, and more terrible examples of the wrath of God against the breakers of it: Now if *Christ* or his apostles had so much as pretended any repeal of this law, the *jews* would have had a most public and glorious pretence against christianity. The doctrine of the worship of *Christ* as a mere creature, would have raised in the heart of every *jew* one of the most unconquerable prejudices against the gospel. Since the time that they smarted so severely in *Babylon* by a captivity of seventy years for their idolatries, they have been always observed to have the utmost aversion to every appearance of idolatry, or the worship of any thing beside the one true God: St. *Paul* testifies thus of his countrymen, *Rom. ii. 17, 22.* "Thou art called a *jew*, and abhorrest idols." Now if the crucifixion of the *Messiah* was a stumbling block to the *jews*, which many of them could not get over, the worship of a man, an exalted creature, would, in all probability, have been a much greater stumbling-block and impediment of their belief of the gospel. Their aversion to a crucified *Messiah* arose only from their own foolish traditions and pre-conceived errors; but their aversion to the worship of a man is patronized by all their sacred writings, for they could hardly read any part of their bible but they found some precept, threatening, or divine judgment recorded, against worshipping any creature, or receiving any other god.

It is evident in the writings of the apostles, that *Jesus Christ* is several times called God, and that he is worshipped. Now if he has not the same godhead with the God of the *jews*, then he is another god, another object of worship; and when the *jews* had smarted so terribly in all former ages for their worshipping any beside their own true God, and for their breach of the first commandment, it would appear like an immoveable and everlasting bar against their acceptance of the religion of *Christ*, if they had been told, that this first commandment was now in some measure repealed, and that they must now admit of another god, even the man *Jesus*, and pay him religious worship, though he were but a creature.

Shall it be objected here, that there were several parts of their religion repealed, namely, all their ceremonial law, which they seemed to be as fond of as of any thing in their religion; and why might they not submit to a repeal of the first command also?

But it may be answered, That there was sufficient evidence given of the repeal of the ceremonial law, by discovering to them, that all these were but shadows of the promised blessings of the *Messiah*; and consequently when the substance and glory of their religion appears in the reign of their expected *Messiah*, it is necessary that the shadows should vanish and disappear. So St. *Paul* argues in his epistle to the *jews* or *hebrews*. Even their sabbath itself in the *jewish* forms of it, was a type of the blessed rest under the gospel, and of the final rest in heaven, as the apostle proves in

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the fourth chapter of that epistle, as well as in *Col. ii. 16, 17.* But there is not the least intimation that the first commandment had any thing in it ceremonial or typical; nor can any such reason be given why that should ever suffer a repeal.

I add further, That the apostle not only gives a reason for it, but I think he declares in very plain language, that their laws of ceremonies are repealed in the epistles to the *Galatians* and *Colossians*, as well as the *Hebrews*; at least so far as not to be necessary: And I am well assured, that if the first command were to have suffered such a repeal, and to have admitted another god, there would have been as much, or more need of plain and express declarations of it by inspired men, because there seems to be so much more of natural reason for the continuance of this command, than there is, or can be, for any part of the ceremonial law.

It will be further enquired, "Then how came any of the *jews* ever to be persuaded to receive christianity, and to worship *Christ* whom they knew to be a man, if they had such an utter aversion to every shadow of idolatry, and the worship of any thing beside the God of *Abraham*, their own true and only God?"

The answer is obvious here, for the apostles did not in their very first preaching require of them the religious worship of *Christ*, but by degrees led them into it. They first preached up the peculiar and extraordinary presence of God with the man *Jesus*, whereby he wrought miracles, as is evident, *Acts ii. 22.* and *Acts x. 38.* "God was with him." Then they taught by degrees, that the "fulness of the godhead dwelt in him bodily," as *Col. ii. 9.* That the union betwixt the true God and the man *Jesus* was so great, as that the actions and sufferings of *Christ* were attributed to God, that "God redeemed the church with his own blood," *Acts xx. 28.* That *Christ* was so far one with the true God, as that upon this account he is called "God manifest in the flesh, God over all blessed for ever," *1 Tim. iii. 16.* and *Rom. ix. 5.* Thus the *jews* themselves might be led to the worship of *Jesus Christ* by the discovery of the same godhead dwelling in him, and united to him, whom they and their fathers were taught to worship by the law of *Moses*. *Jesus Christ* is the same God, or *Jehovah*, but now dwelling in flesh; and this they might prove out of many of their own prophets.

Reason VI. As the doctrine of worshipping another, an inferior god, would have been a just stumbling block to the *jews* against receiving christianity, so it might have been fairly objected by the *gentiles* against the preaching of the apostles, when in their ministry they demolished the heathen gods and heroes.

The blessed apostles made it their business, every where to inculcate the doctrine of the one true God, to call the heathens away from the worship of all their inferior deities, the souls of all their departed heroes, and all such as "are not God by nature," *Acts xiv. 15.* and *xvii. 24.* *Gal. iv. 8.* that they might no longer "serve those who by nature are no gods." Now, how could they expect success in their reasonings with the heathens on this subject, if they introduced *Jesus Christ* as another god, as an inferior god, as one who by nature was no god, and proposed him to be their god, or the object of their worship, merely by the appointment of the supreme God? Would not this look like building again the things which they had destroyed, if *Jesus Christ* had no such communion in the natural supreme and eternal godhead, as might render him a proper, capable object of their religious worship, according to the general dictate of scripture, that we must worship God alone? Would not this have a tendency to establish their old superstition and polytheism rather than destroy it?

Let us suppose *St. Paul* had been just preaching up the unity of the true God to the *Athenians*, or *Corinthians*, and forbidding them to worship any of these inferior gods,

gods, and the souls of departed heroes; let us suppose that he had fixed their faith upon the one true God, and appropriated their worship to him; and suppose in a little time after, he should teach them to call upon the name of the Lord *Jesus*, which doubtless he did to all his disciples, for the christians were generally known by this character, viz. "All that call upon the name of the Lord *Jesus*," 1 Cor. i. 2. What would the heathens say? "Did you not lately teach us the worship of the one true God, and bid us renounce our several departed heroes and inferior deities, and all other gods whatsoever? And are you already bringing in your departed hero *Christ* for a new inferior god among us?" I know not how the apostle could readily and clearly give a plain and satisfactory answer to them upon the *arian* principle. But if he should tell them *Jesus Christ* is not another god, for this man *Jesus* has the fulness of the true godhead dwelling in him, he is united to the one true God, and thereby becomes one with God, and upon this account may justly be worshipped. Such an answer of the apostle would stop their accusation, would make his own doctrine consistent with itself, would maintain the unity of the true God, and justify his demolition of their inferior deities.

I freely confess, that there is a real difference between the *arian* worship of *Christ*, and the heathen worship of their gods or heroes; because these are either fictitious, or at best have no such real power and authority as our Saviour is allowed to have even in the *arian* scheme. But it would be hard to make this difference appear to the heathen multitudes where the apostle preached; for if *Christ* be supposed to have no superior nature to his human soul and body, the gentiles would plead hard for their inferior gods and heroes, both as having an extensive power in themselves suited to their particular charge, and as being appointed by *Jupiter* their chief god, to perform various services for mankind, to exercise their deputed powers, and to receive inferior worship. Now it would be a tedious and difficult matter to convince the gentiles of the real difference between their own heroes and the christian hero; and it would be hard to make it appear to them, that the christians inferior god had a much juster title to worship than the heathen inferior gods, upon the supposition of having no God beside him who made all things. And while the apostles continually inculcated this doctrine of the unity of God; and while the gentiles themselves as well as the apostles called every thing God which they worshipped, it would be very hard to prove to them, that *Jesus Christ*, if he were a mere creature, had so much better pretence and claim to their worship than their own heroes had, without much labour of distinctions far above the reach of the multitudes; whereas the adorableness of *Christ*, on the account of the supreme indwelling godhead, sets all things right with ease and plainness: He must be worshipped as supreme God, for he is one with God supreme.

Indeed the appellant exclaims against this sort of reasoning. "Would it not grieve one, says he, if it may not move one's indignation, to see christians representing the worship of *Christ*, the only true and proper worship which the gospel directs us to pay unto him, as little better than heathenish idolatry; and thus in effect making the blessed *Jesus* no better than an idol?" "Appeal," page 128.

Surely the appellant must needs know, that I am not singular in this reasoning; and that this is no new charge against his doctrine; doctor *Cudworth* in his "intellectual system," doctor *Waterland* in his "defence of the queries," doctor *Smallbrcke* in his two sermons against *arianism*, and others, concur with the fathers writing on this subject, to charge the *arians* with a restoration of idolatry, and support of *polythe-*

ism, like that of the *pagans*, when they call *Jesus Christ* a mere creature, and yet pay him religious worship.

And truly, if this argument move grief and indignation, it will fall heavy on the *arian* scheme, and not on my argument : For it is that scheme which represents the blessed *Jesus* as an inferior god, and thus brings him too near to the rank of those inferior gods or heroes in the sense of the heathens ; whereas the scripture places him in a vastly superior character, as God over all blessed for ever, and as one with God the Father ; and though I believe from my heart, that several of these writers have a sacred and profound reverence for the blessed *Jesus*, and adore, and love, and trust in him, yet this inferior or figurative godhead, which is all they usually allow him ; and upon which they build his worship, seems to bring him down too near to those ideas and characters which the heathens attributed to their inferior gods. I am well persuaded, that these gentlemen abhor the thought of such indignity offered to our blessed Lord, but their opinion seems to draw such consequences after it, and it is neither unfair nor unfriendly to give them a hint of it.

To conclude this part of the argument, to prove the everlasting obligation of this command, to worship God only, I beg leave to transcribe a few lines from Mr. *Boyle*, in his excellent " vindication of the true deity of our blessed Saviour," page 142. edition the third. " Upon the whole, the opinion and practice of the *unitarians* plainly re-advances that creature worship, which is one great design of the christian religion to overturn and abolish. It undermines that grand article of the everlasting gospel that was to be preached to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people ; 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 fountains of waters," *Rev.* xiv. 6, 7. And this it does by setting up as an object of religious worship a creature, to whom neither the divine perfections nor works belong."

Thus I have confirmed this argument for the divinity of *Christ*, which is drawn from religious worship paid to him, by answering the objection which supposes religious worship not forbidden to a creature under the new testament, though it was under the old : And I think it is made pretty evident, that the same prohibition stands still in force under the new testament, and that the first command obliges christians as well as *jeews*, viz. " Thou shalt have no other gods before me : " And therefore if *Christ* is a God, or an object of religious worship, though he be another person, yet he is not another God, but one and the same God with the Father, or the God of *Israel*, for we must have no other God but the God of *Israel*, we must not have two Gods.

A second objection which is used by the refiners of the *arian* scheme, against the appropriating all religious worship to God alone, is, that " this doctrine absolutely precludes God himself from all right of appointing any person to be adored with any religious worship at all, whatsoever exalted station he may be raised to in the divine oeconomy, unless he has true and eternal godhead in him, that is, unless he has the same inherent and independent right to this worship as God the Father himself has."

Answer. Suppose it be granted, that this doctrine does preclude it ; but then let it be considered, it is God himself has precluded it in his own word, whence this our doctrine is derived. I will not say, this is absolutely precluded in the nature of things ; but if God himself, in every part of his word, both in the old and new testament, has confined religious worship to himself as his own prerogative ; and rather than let any mere creature be worshipped, if he condescends himself in the person of his Son, or in union with the man *Christ Jesus*, to assume inferior characters, and transact inferior concerns in his own oeconomical kingdom, surely there is nothing in

in this which is absurd or unscriptural. It rather makes a divine grandeur run through all the transactions of God with the children of men; and there is no dishonour done to the sovereignty of God, by precluding himself by his own counsels, and his own revelations, from exalting any mere creature to be the object of religious worship.

Now, that God has precluded all the mere created beings, even of the invisible world, from this honour, seems naturally to be inferred from the care and solicitude which God has shewn in the old testament as well as in the new, to prevent angels from receiving any religious worship from the children of men. And doctor *Waterland* offers most ingenious and probable reasons for it. "Defence" I. query XVI. page 231, 232. Suppose some exalted creatures could know, hear, and relieve our wants at any distance; suppose they were appointed to bear some rule over us, and suppose we thought it proper to respect, worship, and adore them accordingly: "But God's thoughts are not our thoughts; he has entered an express caveat and prohibition in the case. Possibly he may apprehend it to be more for his own glory, and more for our good, that our whole worship and service be paid to him than a part only. Possibly he may know, such is human infirmity, that if any part, or kind or degree, of religious worship, was permitted to be given to creatures, it might insensibly alienate our minds from the Creator; or eat out all our reverence and respect for God. Or, it may be, that while our acknowledgments are ordered to be paid to him, and to him alone, we may thereby be induced to live more in dependence on him; become more immediately united to him; and have the greater love and esteem for him. He will not, perhaps, leave his favours in the hands, or in the disposal of his creatures, lest we should forget whom we are principally obliged to; or lest we should imagine, that he is not always every where present, to hear our petitions, and to answer them, according to his own good pleasure. These, or a thousand better reasons, infinite wisdom may have, for appropriating all acts of religious worship to God. It is sufficient for us to know that he has done it: And of this, holy scripture has given abundant proof." Thus that learned author.

Wheresoever angels appear in scripture, both under the *jewish* and christian oeconomy, you find them solicitous to forbid the worship of themselves, unless where the angel of the covenant, or the angel of God's presence appeared, that is, the *Messiah*, in whom was the name of God, and who assumed the titles of *Jehovah* and the God of *Israel*, whom we generally believe to be the Lord *Jesus Christ* himself. Worshipping of angels is a thing utterly forbidden, and yet if the angel of the covenant was worshipped, I cannot account for it any other way, but by supposing the angel who said I am *Jehovah*, was really *Jehovah*, the only true God, or had the fullness of the godhead dwelling in him; he was God manifest in the burning bush, God manifest in the *shechinah*, before he was God manifest in the flesh.

There is a third objection which they bring against the doctrine of the worship of *Christ*, founded on his true and eternal godhead, and it is this, that the scripture never recommends the worship of *Christ* upon this account, nor is there any one instance where it appears that he was worshipped as the supreme God: The scripture plainly puts it upon another foot, viz. "because the Father hath committed all judgment to him, therefore all men must honour him; because God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of *Jesus* every knee should bow, &c. upon the account of his humiliation, and his obedience to death; because God hath commanded, saying, let all the angels of God worship him; and that the lamb is worthy to receive power and glory, &c. because he was slain, and has redeemed us to God." Now if his godhead were the true foundation of religious worship, it is strange,

say they, that this only foundation, this standing, and eternal ground of all that religious worship, which we are bound to give to *Christ*, should be so entirely overlooked in all the instances of it, and that the worship of him should be always put upon another foot. "Appeal," page 128, 129.

Answer I. I think it is not strictly true, that the godhead of *Christ* is never mentioned in scripture as the ground of his worship, *Psal.* xlv. 6. "Thy throne O God, is for ever and ever." And verſe 11. the Psalmist addresses the church thus, "He is thy Lord, and worship thou him." His godhead and his lordship are both mentioned before the command of worship. See also *Psal.* xcvi. 1, &c. "*Jehovah* reigneth, let the earth rejoice; the hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. Confounded be all they that serve graven images, worship him all ye gods." Now both these passages of scripture are applied to *Christ*, *Heb.* i. 6, 8. "When he bringeth his first begotten into the world he saith, let all the angels of God worship him:" And unto the Son he saith, "Thy throne O God is for ever and ever." See more in *Psal.* cii. 15, 22, 24. *Isaiab* viii. 13, 14, &c. as before, page 525. Thus you see *Christ* is called *Jehovah* and God in those very places where his worship is required. That text in *Phil.* ii. 9,—11. where the human nature of *Christ* seems to be taken into the complex object of worship, as I shall shew afterward, that very text is borrowed from *Isa.* xlv. 23. where God, the only true God, the just God and Saviour, is represented as the object of religious worship, and that upon the account of his godhead as well as of his salvation: And therefore it is the same godhead that may lay a just foundation for the worship of *Christ* in those very places of scripture in the new testament, which require us to worship him as God-man, or mediator.

See further, *John* v. 23. where all men are ordered "to honour the Son even as they honour the Father." There are some characters which seem to imply godhead united to man in the context, viz. having life in himself, raising the dead, doing whatsoever the Father doth, &c. And if the last verses of *Jude* be a doxology given to *Christ*, he is there called the only wise God our Saviour, which is a sufficient ground for such a doxology. And I think the reasons which I have formerly given for the proof of this exposition, maintain a good degree of strength still, notwithstanding what has been said in opposition to it.

Answer II. As there are some scriptures under the old testament which demand the worship of God the Father on the account of his being the one true God, omniscient, omnipotent, and the Creator of all things; so there are other scriptures which demand the worship of him upon the account of the various benefits which he has bestowed upon *Israel*, viz. because he has brought them out of the land of *Egypt* and the house of bondage, because he has delivered and saved them, he is their redeemer and their king*. It is the divine nature that renders God the Father properly

* So it is said in the new testament, *Rev.* xix. 1, 2. "Salvation, and glory, and honour, to the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments," *Rev.* iv. 11. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour, for thou hast created all things." Creation and judgment, truth and righteousness, are the reasons or motives given for the worship of the Father: But his divinity stands as the foundation of worship, whatever particular operations may be assigned as the reasons and motives of it. So *Christ* may be said to be worshipped because he is creator as well as judge, *John* i. 3. *John* v. 22, 23. yet his divinity lies at the bottom to support it.

perly capable of religious worship according to the scripture, but his various benefits are strong reasons and obligations upon all mankind, and especially upon his own people to worship him. These benefits do not add a new foundation for his worship, but add new obligations upon creatures to pay him divine adoration. These benefits do also determine and model the special forms and expressions of worship, paid to God the Father: He is to be worshipped, because he is God, but he is to be worshipped in this or that form of address, that is, as a deliverer, or saviour, &c. because he rescued and saved his people.

In like manner, as there are some texts of scripture which represent our Lord *Jesus Christ* as God, and which in the same place require or demand religious worship for him, so there are other places which shew us the obligations that lie upon us to worship *Christ Jesus*, and reveal to us the particular forms and language of worship in which we should address him, viz. "as the lamb that was slain and has redeemed us: as he that was obedient to the death, and died for us, and redeemed us to God with his blood." Though it is his deity still that renders him capable of religious adoration, yet some of the reasons and motives why we worship him, are derived from what his human nature has done.

It is a frequent thing with the scripture to represent our obligations to duty as derived from the benefits we receive; and to represent the object of our worship rather in his relation to us, and our dependence upon him, than in his own metaphysical nature and incomprehensible essence: And since the scripture has dealt thus in relation to God the Father, and his worship, no wonder that it speaks the same sort of language with regard to *Jesus Christ* when he is revealed as the object of our worship. We praise God the Father, because he has created us, *Psal.* c. 3, 4. and the Son, because he redeemed us, *Rev.* v. 9,—13.

But that I may give the objection its full weight and force, it may be replied here, That "not only our obligation to worship *Christ*, but even his right to receive our worship, seems to be given him by the Father, upon the account of his humiliation and obedience to death;" especially in that famous scripture, *Phil.* ii. 7, 8, 9. "He took upon him the form of a servant; he was found in the likeness of men; he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of *Jesus* every knee should bow, &c."

To this I answer, that in this passage the scripture seems to have a peculiar reference to the exaltation of the human nature of *Christ*, to become part of the complex object of worship in union with the divine. Now this was a honour of which the man *Jesus* seems utterly incapable, according to scripture, had he not been united to God. I say therefore, this text speaks of the worship of *Christ* as man in union with deity, and that not only because of the appropriation of all religious worship to God, but the very language in which this worship of *Christ* is expressed by the apostle, is taken from *Isa.* xlv. 23. where the true God or *Jehovah* assumes this worship; and the citation of it by St. *Paul*, both here and in *Rom.* xiv. 10,—12. proves the godhead of *Christ*. But when this man who is united to God, had thus humbled himself, then the Father ordained him publicly to receive his proper share of that religious honour which is paid to God-man, or God dwelling in human nature. Then he was exalted as God-man and mediator, to be adored by all men: He might be worshipped before as God in his divine robes, if I may so express it, but now he must be worshipped in his meditorial robes, in his garments of flesh and blood. The public

lic right of the man *Jesus* to religious worship, as part of the * complex person of the mediator, is here manifested to the world, as a reward of his sufferings. This seems to be the precise meaning of the apostle in this place, as far as I am capable of penetrating into it.

But the answer made to this present objection as well as to others drawn from *John* v. 22, 23. will derive further force and evidence from the following propositions.

Proposition VII. "The godhead of *Christ* hath assumed the man *Jesus* into an unspeakable and most intimate union with it self, which is generally called a hypostatical or personal union."

The scripture seems to express this in several places, as when *Christ* is called "God manifest in the flesh," *1 Tim.* iii. 16. when the "Word, who was God, is said to be made flesh," *John* i. 1, 14. He who was "of the seed of *David* after the flesh, is ever all God blessed for ever," *Rom.* ix. 5. "In him dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily," *Col.* ii. 9. These scriptures have been sufficiently explained, and this proposition confirmed so far, that I shall not imploy myself further in it here.

Proposition. VIII. "The complete person of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, or God man, is a proper and appointed object of the christian-worship."

Though the divinity of *Christ* is the sole foundation of these honours, yet when this divinity has put on human nature, and received it into a personal union with it self, in order to become a proper mediator between God the Father and mankind, then the whole person God-man may receive the worship, and stand intitled to the religious honour.

I am so far from being singular in this sentiment, that it might be easily shewn to be the opinion of a great part of our protestant writers. The name of *Turretine* is well known in the learned world: In his "institutions of theology," Place xiv. question 18. section 10. he determines "the human nature of *Christ* to be the inseparable adjunct of the divine nature in the matter of adoration, and that it is adored together with the Word. And in section 12. he allows the whole mediator or God-man to be adored, though the human nature be not the formal and terminative object of worship. Section 14. Adoration does not more confound the two natures of *Christ*, and the honour due to them, than faith does; for as it regards *Christ*, both God and man, distinctly in one person, so it attributes to him according to both natures that which belongs to him. Section 15. Though the human nature or flesh of *Christ* is not adored by itself, or for itself, yet it is truly said to be adored in the Word, with whom it is personally united. And in section 11. Though it is the deity alone that makes the person of God-man adorable, yet *Christ* as mediator must be adored, and various motives to worship him are drawn from his mediation."

Doctor

* Some may complain that I speak without caution here in calling the man *Jesus* a part of the complex person of our mediator, because the godhead of *Christ* is usually described as a complete person, and the human nature or man is reckoned only an adjunct or appendix to the second person in the trinity. I do not attempt here to refute this correction, nor will I insist upon the use of the word "part," if the word "adjunct" or "appendix" will better serve the various designs of this doctrine. Yet it may not be amiss to cite *Mr. Baxter* on this occasion, in his "paraphrase on *Col.* i. 16, 17." "The orthodox hold that *Christ* hath only two natures in one person, the divine and human. And of these the subtle philosophers say, that his human nature is no part of his person, but an adjunct, because God cannot be a part. But others avoid this, as dangerous." Thus you see in *Mr. Baxter's* opinion, some of the orthodox think it dangerous to deny the human nature of *Christ*, to be a part of his person. And *Turretine* confesses it to be a part of the person of the mediator, though it is but an adjunct of the "logos" or Word, or second person of the trinity. "Institutionis theologiae loci xiii. questionis sextae, et septimae." And after all, I think, this dispute would be a mere logomachy.

Doctor *Owen* is of the same mind. See his "treatise of the person of *Christ*," page 152. "His divine nature is the proper formal object of our faith, but the entire person as God and man is the immediate object of it. We believe in him because he is God; but we believe in him as he is God and man in one person. All of *Christ* is considered and glorified in this acting of faith on him, and the benefits of his mediation are the special motives thereunto. Page 322. The human nature of *Christ* in his divine person, and together with it, is the object of all divine adoration and worship. *Rev.* v. 13. All creatures whatever do for ever ascribe "blessing, honour, glory, and power unto the lamb, in the same manner as unto him who sits upon the throne." But no other creature either is, or ever can be exalted into such a condition of glory, as to be the object of any divine worship."

I must confess there are some few writers that imagine it is the pure godhead of *Christ* alone is the single object of worship; and they are afraid to allow the united human nature to be considered as a part of the complex person worshipped, lest worship should seem to be given to any thing that is not God. I must own, that in treating matters so sublime we ought to be well upon our guard, lest while we would pay just honour to the man *Jesus*, we should take away some of the just prerogatives of his godhead: But on the other hand, we must learn what worship we ought to pay to *Christ* from the scripture itself, since it is a matter of pure revelation; and I should not readily allow the man *Jesus* to be taken into the complex object of worship, if the scripture itself did not seem to lead me to it, by the following considerations.

Consideration I. The worship of the complex person of our Lord *Jesus Christ* is represented as an appointed worship, and that * partly as a honour bestowed upon him by the Father, by way of recompence for his sufferings, *Phil.* ii. 9. "Therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." Now the pure godhead of *Christ* never did or could suffer; that is and always was worthy of our religious worship, had it never assumed human nature, had *Christ* never been obedient to the death, and never redeemed us. But the human nature may become part of the complex object of worship, by the appointment and gift of the Father, partly upon the account of it's sufferings. The man was first united to godhead with this very view and design, that he should suffer and die; and as his union to godhead renders him capable of religious honour, so his sufferings and death may be appointed in the counsels of God to lead the way to his actual enjoyment of it, or to some higher degrees of it.

Consideration II. It is the mediator *Christ Jesus* who is worshipped under his character as mediator. Now this office or character includes his human nature as well as his divine: Nay, it has a peculiar respect to his human nature, as *St. Paul* tells *Timothy*, for there "is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man *Christ Jesus*," *1 Tim.* ii. 5. The honour is paid to the "lamb that was slain, in the midst of the throne;" and the heavenly spirits worship him because he has fulfilled the office of a mediator, and "redeemed them to God with his blood," *Rev.* v. 9. The man *Jesus* is "appointed the judge of the world," *Acts* xvii. 31. and "all men are therefore obliged to honour him as they honour the Father, because he is the Son of man;" that is, the *Messiah*, with a connotation of his manhood, *John* v. 23, 27.

It

* I use the word "partly" to shew, that the man *Jesus* in union with godhead, might be appointed to be adored at his incarnation or before, and yet he might have a further claim to it given him upon his death and resurrection, and thus it may be said, "Therefore God hath highly exalted him," *Phil.* ii. 9—11. even as *Jesus* was beloved of God always, and yet he himself says, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life and take it again," *John* x. 17.

It is as mediator we are to believe or trust in him, and to call upon him: It is as God-man and mediator, that dying *Stephen* committed his soul to him, for he saw him with his eyes. *Christ* requires us to believe on him as the means, or method of obtaining salvation: Now it is not his pure godhead, but the person God-man who has purchased salvation, and who is exalted to bestow it, and therefore we must trust in this person, and call upon him under this character as God-man.

Consideration III. The very actions and sufferings of his human nature are chiefly mentioned in some of those places where honour and worship are not only appointed to him by the Father, but actually given him by the saints. When the apostle had described him as "man, the Son of man, or the second *Adam*," *Heb. ii. 9.* he adds, "We see *Jesus* who was made a little lower than the angels, for the sufferings of death crowned with glory and honour;" and accordingly this honour and this glory which he obtained by his death is paid in heaven, and ought to be paid him on earth. Heaven is full of this worship, and it is represented as given to the lamb by the whole creation, *Rev. v. 13.* and particularly by saints, and sometimes by angels, verses 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. "Worthy is the lamb that was slain, to receive honour and power," *Rev. v. 13.* "To him that has loved us, and washed us—in his blood, be glory and dominion for ever," *Rev. i. 5, 6.* "Because he was obedient to the death of the cross, therefore the Father has appointed that every knee shall bow to him," *Phil. ii. 8, 9, 10.*

Now if these three considerations are put together, they seem to give a sufficient confirmation of the sentiments of those two great men, doctor *Owen* and professor *Turretline* in this point, viz. That the whole complex person of *Christ*—both God and man, is the true object of our worship.

Objection. "But how can it be that the divine nature or godhead can be the only foundation of worship, and yet *Jesus Christ* be worshipped as a complex person God and man? Is not this an allowance of religious worship to be given to a creature as well as to God?"

Answer. It is the complete person who is the proper object of worship; the man could never be worshipped, if he were not also God. But when godhead assumes a creature into so near a union as to make one person with itself, the religious honour may be paid to the whole person, without allowing religious honour to be paid to any mere creature*. This may be explained by an example or two, whereby we may learn that what belongs not to any single nature in itself, may come to belong to it in union with another nature.

We may borrow one example from scripture, *1 John i. 1, 2, 3.* "The word of God, the eternal life which was with the Father, is said to be seen, and heard, and handled." Now if we take this "logos" or word in any sense whatsoever, it certainly signifies a most exalted spiritual being, and in itself it is not capable of being seen, being heard, being handled; so a mere creature, considered in itself, is not capable of religious worship. But when this "logos" is united to flesh and blood, then it makes one complex person, and thus it is seen, it is heard, it is handled: So the man *Jesus* being united to godhead makes one complex person, and thus receives it's share of honour in the worship paid to the person of *Christ*. Yet still the foundation of religious

* When I speak in any of my writings of worshipping that which is not God, and call it idolatry, I desire to be understood in this sense, viz. worshipping that which has not true godhead belonging to it, at least as a part of the compounded being or person. For though the human nature of *Christ* is not true God, yet it is worshipped, not in and by itself, but in and with the divine, and as a part of the complex nature of the mediator.

religious worship lies only in the godhead, to which the man *Jesus* is united, even as the foundation of corporeal attributes, seeing, hearing, handling, lies only in flesh and blood; to which the "logos" or divine Word is united.

But there is another example or similitude which perhaps comes nearer to the subject, and, I think, makes it evident beyond exception, how the divinity of *Christ* may be the only foundation of religious worship, and yet the man *Jesus* may be assumed into a kind of partnership. Let us survey and compare it in these several successive views. 1. Suppose a human spirit, in the world of separate spirits, had some intellectual excellencies above its fellow spirits, it might receive human honours upon this account: So was the godhead of *Jesus Christ* supreme in the invisible world, and received religious honours. 2. Suppose this excellent human spirit assumed a beautiful and graceful body into union with itself, then this whole human person might not only receive human honours upon the account of its intellectual excellencies, but it might receive addresses of human honour, because of its beauty and graceful figure or motion: So the godhead of *Christ* having assumed the man *Jesus* into union with itself, this whole person might not only receive religious honours upon the account of its divine perfections, but also on the account of the characters, graces, obedience, and sufferings of the man *Jesus*. Such honours are frequently paid to *Christ* in scripture. And yet further, as some of the particular forms of address made to this supposed whole human person, may be derived from some special properties, or graceful motions of the body; so some of the particular forms of address made to the whole person of *Christ*, are derived from the actions and sufferings of his manhood. The scriptural examples of worship paid to *Christ* manifest this. 3. The gestures of human honour, such as bowing the head or the knee, together with the acclamations or songs of human praise which are paid to this supposed human person, may be seen and heard with agreeable sensations by the human body as an animal, as well as noticed and accepted by the human spirit united to it: So the religious honours which are paid to *Christ* may be seen and heard, or known and observed by the man *Jesus* with special satisfaction, as well as they are noticed and accepted by the indwelling godhead united to him. 4. Yet the beautiful and graceful body considered apart from the human soul, is not capable of human honours, even as the man *Jesus* apart from the deity is not capable, according to scripture, of religious honours. 5. Therefore the whole foundation of human honours paid to this united soul and body, this complex human person, lies in the intelligent nature, or the soul: So the whole foundation of religious honours paid, or payable, to this united God and man, this complex person of *Christ*, lies in the divine nature or godhead, though some special reasons, motives, and forms of address may be borrowed from this human nature.

I know there may be a great deal of metaphysical controversy raised to perplex this, or any other representation of things: But if we will attend to this illustration, I think it sets the whole matter of the worship of *Jesus Christ*, God-man, in a fair and easy light; and yet at the same time maintains the foundation of religious worship payable to *Christ* to be laid in his divine nature.

Now, if we consider the worship of *Christ* as God-man and mediator in this manner of representation, it gives a natural and easy solution to many difficulties that have been proposed.

Particularly that objection derived from *John* v. 22, 23. "The Father has committed all judgment to the Son, that all men might honour the Son, as they honour the Father." Here some have said, "It were a most absurd interpretation, that the Father has committed all judgment to my human nature, that men might honour

my divine nature; for the divine nature receives nothing hereby, and is adorable on a much higher reason without it. Certainly the same subject is intended to be honoured, which is invested with authority from God, viz. the Son of man."

Answer. This is granted, that it is the same subject receives authority and receives honour; and it is no absurd interpretation to say, the Father has committed all judgment to my human nature being united to the divine, which union makes me capable of this office, that men might honour my human nature in union with the divine, which union renders the whole complex person capable of this honour or adoration. Though this objection might also be answered another way, as doctor *Waterland*, "defence II. query 16. page 381. *Christ* is not worshipped because God committed judgment to him, but God committed it to him for this purpose, that men might know the divinity of his person, and thereupon worship him." But in this solution of the difficulty, both the office and the worship seem to be attributed alone to the divine nature of *Christ*, and therefore I rather chuse the former solution.

A further inquiry will arise here, "Whether the human nature of *Christ* shares in the divine honours that are paid to his person.

Answer. Divine honour or worship may signify, either honour paid to a divine person, or else an acknowledgment of divine perfections. In the first sense the human nature may share in divine worship, in the second it cannot do properly. But,

To answer this more particularly, let us remember that the religious honours which are paid to the person of *Christ*, may be considered either as the ascription of divine perfections and operations to him, or as the ascription of human graces, perfections, kindneses, operations, or sufferings, or as the ascription of mediatorial offices, operations and benefits, which are the result of both divine and human natures.

Now I grant the human nature distinctly considered, cannot directly share in the ascriptions of divine perfections, though it may receive sensible pleasure in seeing divine honours paid to the godhead. But the human nature considered as a part of the complex person of *Christ*, may receive it's share of the ascription both of human and mediatorial characters and operations to this complex person, and derive a sensible satisfaction thence. For as we cannot suppose, that the human nature of *Christ* in this exalted state can be utterly ignorant of the knees that bow to his person, and the tongues confessing that he is Lord; so the man *Jesus* cannot chuse but have a sacred relish and complacency in these honours, as a reward of his sufferings, always referring them to the final glory of the divine nature. If *Jesus Christ* be worshipped as the lamb that was slain, and his human nature takes cognizance of these addresses, it cannot but receive it's own share of satisfaction from this knowledge.

If this proposition want further illustration, let us try if the following supposition will do it. Suppose God himself were clothed with a robe of light which had intelligence or consciousness in it; suppose in our addresses to God thus arrayed with light, we should be required to make honourable mention of that vesture of glory which surrounded him; might not this intellectual glory be said to receive honour or worship from us, as considered in union with the indwelling deity? And might it not take cognizance of this honour with delight and just approbation? Yet this intellectual glory, this conscious light, would by no means be a proper object of any such honours in itself, but merely by virtue of the indwelling God: And every degree of honour or satisfaction which it received would redound to the glory of God himself who dwelt in the midst of it. Thus God dwelling in the manhood of *Christ*, as in a vesture or tabernacle, is worshipped by men; and some of the addresses he receives

ceives are paid to him expressly as incarnate, and thus the manhood is conscious of, and receives it's own appointed share of the honour.

But these thoughts lead me on to the next proposition.

Proposition IX. "Since the design of the union of God and man in one person, was to render *Christ* a fit mediator, therefore the worship that is paid him may be considered either as ultimate, or as mediatorial, and it may in some sense be called either supreme or subordinate."

Religious worship may be considered with relation to it's foundation, which renders the object capable of it, and in this sense it may be always called supreme; for no person who has not true and proper godhead can demand religious worship.

But when worship is considered with relation to it's end or design, or has a peculiar respect to the character of *Christ* as mediator, then it may sometimes be called mediatorial or subordinate; for when *Christ* is worshipped in his mediatorial capacity, the design is, that he may fulfil some mediatory office for us, in order to bring us to God and heaven, or it is to give him thanks that he has done it.

Again, if the worship of *Christ* be considered with regard to the forms or modes of address, it may, perhaps, be called either ultimate and supreme, or mediatorial and subordinate. It was supreme and ultimate when he was worshipped in his appearances to the patriarchs as God almighty; it is the same when we pay him the honour of divine perfections residing in him, even the same divine perfections which are in the Father, and say, glory be to thy name, O *Jesus*, who art over all God blessed for ever. But it may be called mediatorial and subordinate when we trust in him; or intreat him to bring us near to God, when we call upon his name to bestow on us the grace and gifts he has received of the Father for us, or when we ascribe honour to him who has washed us in his blood, and reconciled us to God.

Christ considered explicitly as the second person of the trinity, or considered as God incarnate, perhaps has not always such honours paid to him in scripture as are supreme and ultimate in the highest and divinest sense. But this is not for want of dignity or deity in his complete person, but because *Christ*, the second person, or incarnate, is rather represented as a mediator in the new testament: And according to the oeconomy of the gospel, the forms of worship paid to him under this character, are rather mediatorial and subordinate: Whereas the forms of ultimate and supreme worship are generally appropriated to God in the person of the Father, as sustaining in that oeconomy the dignity and state of supreme godhead.

I confess, that in my book "of the trinity" I have followed some great writers, and allowed no different sorts or degrees of religious worship mentioned in scripture, nor any scriptural difference between supreme and subordinate religious worship. In so sublime and so difficult a subject we are too ready to follow the phrases and language of great writers without a due examination: I beg leave here to correct these expressions, and to explain my self according to the distinction which I have now proposed. I know of no subordinate worship in scripture with regard to the foundation of it, or that which renders the object capable of religious worship; this is the sense in which I meant all worship is supreme, that is, it admits no person to be the object of it who is not God; but there may be mediate or subordinate forms of worship paid to him that is true God, when in union with an inferior nature he condescends to take upon him the form or character of a mediator.

All the expressions of scripture which represent our "coming to the Father by *Jesus Christ*, or praying to the Father in his name, or giving thanks to God in the name of *Jesus Christ*, and offering the sacrifice of praise by him; that God in all things may be glorified

glorified through *Jesus Christ*." This language seems to signify mediate and subordinate worship, that is, religious honour paid to *Jesus Christ* as mediator, in order to make us and our services acceptable to God the Father. And when the man *Christ Jesus* is said to be exalted, that "at the name of *Jesus* every knee should bow, and every tongue confess, that *Christ* is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," it seems to imply this mediate or subordinate worship, that is, as to the special purpose and design of it, though at the same time this very man *Christ Jesus* is united to the divine nature, and by that means rendered capable of being worshipped as part of the complex person God-man.

There are two or three senses in which it may be said that *Christ Jesus* is worshipped to the glory of the Father.

I. As God the Father, or the godhead subsisting in the person and character of the Father, sustains the dignity of supreme God and sovereign Lord and governor in the oeconomical kingdom, as he maintains the rights and majesty of the divine nature, and transacts all it's affairs through his Son *Jesus Christ* as a divine medium; in this sense, though the divine nature to which the man *Jesus Christ* is united be the same with that in the Father, yet as it subsists in the person and character of the Father, it assumes supremacy, and all things are done to it's glory; and all that the man *Jesus* does, or enjoys, is to the glory of the Father, though the same united godhead capacitates him for these actions, honours, or enjoyments.

II. When *Christ* is worshipped, it is to the glory of the Father, because it is God the Father has appointed this union of the man *Jesus* to the divine nature, whereby as a part of the complex person of the mediator he is made the object of religious worship. And,

III. As our addresses to *Jesus Christ* as mediator, or God-man, are performed by us with this design, that we may glorify the person of God the Father, or the divine nature in the character of supreme majesty and godhead.

Now that all this may be done without injury to the sacred doctrine of God alone being the proper or fundamental object of worship, I shall attempt to explain by this similitude. Suppose the usual and peculiar honour paid to *roman* emperors were prostration; suppose the emperor *Constantine* and his son possessed a complete equal share in the empire, and suppose *Caius* a common soldier had offended *Constantine* the father; then his son puts on the garments of a common soldier, makes a visit to *Caius* in the army, and promises him to become a mediator with his Father to reconcile him to the offending soldier *Caius*. Upon this view *Caius* falls prostrate, and pays the son imperial honours, and intreats him to fulfil this work of mediation, or gives him thanks for what he has done in it: He also addresses *Constantine* the father with prostration, or imperial honours, but comes in the name of his Son, and for his sake is admitted into favour. The son here receives imperial honour because he is still emperor, which is the foundation of it; yet the honour is but mediatorial and subordinate, because the design of it is to draw near to the father by the son. *Constantine* the father always receives imperial honours from *Caius*, which are ultimate and supreme, for he sustains the dignity and majesty of empire. The son, though equal in the empire, yet receives mediate honours, because he condescends to be a mediator: And yet the manner in which *Caius* pays these mediate honours, viz. prostration, is supreme and imperial, or shews the son to be an emperor too.

Thus the divine nature, as subsisting in God the Father, receives only supreme and ultimate honour from us sinners: But God, as vested with human nature, or the man *Jesus* united to godhead, receives mediatory honours, because the design of our ad-
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dress to him is to reconcile us to God the Father : Yet these mediatory honours are divine, and paid to him in a religious manner, so as at the same time to acknowledge his communion in the divine nature, and his oneness with God the Father. The person of *Christ* is partaker of religious and divine honours ; supreme, if you consider the foundation of them, but mediate, or subordinate, if you consider the design of them.

I am very unwilling, in writing on this sacred subject of divine worship, to oppose so great and excellent a defender of the divinity of *Christ* as doctor *Waterland*. He utterly denies, indeed, all mediate or subordinate worship, yet let it be noted that he allows *Christ* to be worshipped under the character and office of mediator ; but since as mediator he is God as well as man, he maintains it is divine worship is paid him under all his offices. " He is a divine mediator, a divine priest, a divine prophet, a divine king ; and so our worship of him never wants it's proper object, never moves from it's proper foundation, but remains constantly the same. Our worship of *Christ* as a mediator does not hinder us from considering him as God at the same time, any more than our considering the Father as king, judge, preserver, or rewarder, hinders us from considering him also as divine." I perfectly agree to these sentiments. All the worship that is paid to *Christ* may be called divine, because the complex object of it has a divine nature, yet I think it cannot always so properly be called supreme and ultimate ; because some of the addresses which are made to him who is God, particularly refer to what he has done, and to what he does, as man and mediator, which is a subordinate and not a supreme character. Nor can I see any inconvenience in calling this worship mediatorial or subordinate, especially since the new testament seems to give the most frequent precepts and patterns of that worship which is due to *Christ* in his mediatorial character rather than in his pure godhead.

I think we may maintain the deity of *Christ*, and the necessity of his deity to render him adorable, without denying that mediatorial worship which seems to be the most natural and obvious meaning of several scriptures. And even in the esteem of our opponents, it adds honour and justice to an argument against themselves, when we allow what may fairly be allowed, and do not strain the scripture from it's most obvious meaning, in order to disallow and deny every thing which our opponents have some colour to assert.

Objection. There is no worship of God the supreme being, according to the gospel, but what must be offered through *Christ* as a mediator. " No man comes to the Father but by me," *John* xiv. 6. Now if *Christ* be worshipped with divine worship as God supreme, who can be the mediator ? So that when I worship him with divine worship as God, I must worship him without a mediator, which is not according to the gospel.

This objection may be answered two ways, viz. By considering *Christ* the mediator in his human nature, or in his divine.

Answer I. If we consider *Christ* in his human nature, he is an all-sufficient mediator to bring sinners into the favour of God, because he has done and suffered every thing that is necessary to procure peace ; and he is united to the divine nature, whence all his mediatorial actions and capacities receive their efficacy. The man *Jesus Christ* is a mediator between God and man, as the scripture expresses it, *1 Tim.* ii. 5. and he may be addressed with religious worship, because he is united to God, or he is one with God : And yet he may be thus addressed without another mediator, for nothing in the gospel forbids a sinner to worship God-man, or a man united to God, without any medium. Or,

Answer II.

Answer II. If we consider *Christ* the mediator in his divine nature, we may address him with divine and mediatorial worship without any other medium; for in the character of mediator, and as he is united to man, he is not that supreme offended majesty of heaven, which refuses access to sinners without a mediator. It is God in the person of the Father who sustains the supreme dignity and majesty of godhead, or the character of supreme governor; and it is in his person that the deity is dishonoured by the sins of men; therefore he is not to be approached under the gospel by offending sinners without a mediator: And the word Father is put with great propriety and emphasis into that text, *Job*, xiv. 6. "No man comes to the Father but by me." But the same God in the person of the Son or mediator, dwelling in the human nature of his Son, *Jesus*; may be worshipped without a mediator; for in this view the godhead does as it were put off the character of supreme governor, by assuming human nature, by condescending to accept the work of reconciliation, and to sustain the office of a mediator.

The foregoing similitude will serve to illustrate this. The son of *Constantine* is emperor as well as the father, and is offended as well as the father; because the soldier *Caius* had broken the laws of the empire; and therefore the son will not admit *Caius* the offender to approach him, or come into his presence, when he is sitting on the imperial throne, assuming the character of emperor: But when he has put on the garments of a common soldier, that he may become a mediator, he gives *Caius* the offender leave to address him as a mediator, and thus reconciles him to the offended emperor, to *Constantine* his father.

Lest there should be any exception taken against this similitude, because *Constantine* and his son are two distinct beings, whereas the godhead of the Father, and the godhead of the Son is the same, I might represent the matter thus; Suppose there were but one single emperor of *Rome*, and call him *Augustus Cæsar*, he may refuse to admit an offender into his presence, without a mediator, while he sits on the imperial throne, dressed in robes imperial; and yet *Augustus Cæsar* himself may put on meaner raiment, may visit the offender in his own dwelling, and permit him to converse with himself though he be emperor, under the inferior character of a friend, that would willingly reconcile the offender to himself as emperor: Thus God in *Christ* is reconciling the world to himself. God in *Christ* may visit us offending sinners in our own dwelling on earth; he may permit us to address and worship him without any other mediator, though God in the person of the Father, and as supreme governor, would not suffer it.

There does not seem any thing in all this, either unscriptural, or contrary to common reason; nor has it any thing in it so disagreeable to human ideas and customs, but it might lead us into a clear and intelligible conception of these divine mysteries, if we could but suffer our selves to receive such an explication of difficulties in divine matters, as may be borrowed from human affairs. And surely it is in such sort of human language that God in his word reveals to us the mysteries of salvation; and our blessed Saviour in this manner, by parables drawn from earthly things, represents to us things heavenly.

C O N C L U S I O N.

I shall conclude this discourse with a short recapitulation of it under the following queries, and a remark or two on the common sense of the *arians* and the trinitarians about the worship of *Christ*.

Query I.

Query I. Is it not the constant custom, both of scriptural and heathen writers, to give the name of God to every thing that is made the object of religious worship, whether it be superior or inferior, whether it be one or many?

Query II. Is it not expressly forbidden in the first command to have any other God or gods, besides *Jehovah* the God of *Israel*, that is, to receive or admit any other object of religious worship?

Query III. Does not this command seem to be of everlasting continuance, by the repetition and establishment of it under the new testament, as well as by the peculiar and repeated solemnities of it's sanction under the old.

Query IV. Is not our blessed Saviour called God several times in the new testament, and is he not also represented as a proper object of worship, both in precept and example?

Query V. Does it not therefore appear a most natural consequence, that he is the true God? Or that *Jesus Christ* has such an union and communion with *Jehovah* the God of *Israel*, as to be called by the same names in their sublime sense, and to receive religious worship accordingly?

Query VI. Are there not some expressions in the new testament, where *Christ* seems to be exalted and advanced to receive religious worship, as a gift from God the Father, and sometimes as a reward of the sufferings of his human nature?

Query VII. Does not his human nature it self, according to the language of scripture, seem to be the more immediate object of this exaltation and reward, and to be admitted so far into a share of these honours as it is capable of receiving them?

Query VIII. May not this difficulty be solved, by supposing the man *Jesus*, by his most intimate union to, or oneness with *Jehovah*, or the God of *Israel*, to become one person with him, and thereby become a part of the object of religious worship, from which all other creatures are for ever excluded, because they have not this privilege of personal union with the divine nature?

The REMARKS are these.

The doctrine of religious worship paid to the man *Jesus*, is acknowledged by the *Arians*, and accounted for by the appellant, by supposing him to be exalted by the appointment of God the Father to this honour, though in truth he be only a creature or a being inferior to the true God; and by supposing the first commandment to be so far repealed under the new testament, as to admit of another object of worship, that is, another god besides the supreme God, the God of *Israel*. But this seems to be cutting the knot instead of untying it, and breaking through the great doctrines of the deity of *Christ*, and the perpetuity of the first command.

On the other hand, the man *Jesus* is excluded from all share whatsoever in religious honour or worship by some few trinitarian writers; and they determine those texts, wherein *Christ* is represented as exalted by the Father to this honour, to belong only to his divine nature considered as clothed with flesh and blood, and they explain them these two ways.

I. By supposing the divine nature in the person of *Christ* to be oeconomically, though not really inferior to the divine nature in the person of the Father, for he sustained the character of God's servant, angel, messenger, &c. and that God the Father has given the divine nature of *Christ* an oeconomic exaltation, or right to religious worship, both as dwelling in flesh, and as now publicly vested with regal authority, though it had really this right to divine worship before.

II. Since

II. Since the deity of the *Messiah* was not distinctly known to former ages, they suppose that after the sufferings and death of *Christ*, the Father has more clearly published his deity to the world, and has declared him to be one God with himself, and the proper object of worship. Thus God the Father's publication of the deity of *Christ*, as adorable, and of it's peculiar additional claim to our worship, since the sufferings of his human nature, is called, the exaltation of him to this worship on the account of those sufferings; as there are other things also said to be done in scripture language when they are only manifested.

These are the justest and fairest representations which I know of the common solution of this difficulty; and so far as the exaltation of *Christ* in those texts can relate to his divine nature, I concur with these sentiments. And indeed I should have acquiesced herein entirely, and sought no farther, if I had not found some expressions of scripture which seem to carry with them in their plain literal sense, an exaltation of the man *Jesus* to some peculiar religious honours: This inclined me to attempt a solution of this difficulty in a little different manner. Nor am I alone herein, for there are several great divines in this same sentiment, viz. That the "human nature of *Christ* is a proper part of the person of the mediator, and as such is joined with the divine nature in the religious worship and honours which are paid to *Christ* as God-man; so doctor *Owen*, *Turretine*, &c. as I have cited them under proposition viii. page 534.

But if it be found plainly inconsistent either with the deity of *Christ*, or with the first commandment, I still think it better to relinquish this attempt, and betake myself to the common explication of these difficult texts, rather than renounce the deity of *Christ*, or the perpetuity of the first command, which seem to be established upon so numerous and so evident proofs of scripture.

Yet after all, if these two different propositions are plainly revealed in scripture, viz. That religious worship belongs to God alone; and that the man *Jesus* as personally united to the godhead, is exalted to some kind of partnership in this honour, I would chuse to believe them both, since I do not see any evident contradiction in them, though perhaps I may not have hit upon the best way of reconciling them.

It is a general and excellent rule, that where two propositions are evidently true, we are not to reject either of them, because we cannot at present find the modus or manner how they are reconciled: I would be ever mindful of the weakness and narrowness of our understandings, and confess that there are some mysterious and sublime doctrines in the word of God, for whose farther explication we must wait till the "pouring down of the blessed Spirit from on high, when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; when the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun as the light of seven days."

In the meantime, if we yield our assent to what God has plainly revealed, and fulfil the practical parts of religion which God has plainly enjoined, we have no reason to doubt of our acceptance unto eternal life, and our safe removal and advancement to the upper blessed world. There we shall see the redeemer face to face, and have the mysterious glories of his sacred person revealed to us, that we may pay him such celestial honours as are required of all the worshippers in those holy and happy regions. And when we shall join together in that joyful song, "worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive glory and blessing, for he has washed us from our sins in his own blood, and redeemed us unto God," we shall then be fully apprized of the nature of that worship which we pay to our redeemer; and we shall no more dispute how far the man *Jesus* is admitted to a participation of these honours, who in union with the divine nature, is over all God blessed for ever. Amen.

D I S S E R-

DISSERTATIONS

Relating to the

Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

THE SECOND PART.

The P R E F A C E.

IT is not a matter of light or trivial concern to write upon the sacred article of the trinity. Many of the glories of our holy religion are derived from it, and so much of this doctrine as is necessary to the safety of our souls, is revealed with bright evidence in the word of God. The various and particular modes of explaining it can by no means be esteemed of equal importance with the doctrine it self: For men of wisdom and learning, and exemplary piety, have fallen into different sentiments in this attempt: And there will always be room for further enquiry, while we abide in this feeble and imperfect state. Here, in this world, we see but a glimpse of many of the deep things of God, and they are discovered to us but darkly as in a glass.

Yet we are encouraged by a prophet, *Hosea* vi. 3, "to follow on to know the Lord;" and are required by an apostle, *2 Pet.* iii. 18. to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of *Jesus Christ*." A diligent christian would seek daily to arrive at some clearer ideas of the great God, whom he adores, and the redeemer, with whom he has intrusted all his immortal concerns; especially, when we have just reason to believe, that there is much sacred truth which lies yet concealed in the mines of scripture, in the search whereof we may happily employ our labour and meditation; and since we have also ground to hope for the promised assistance of the blessed Spirit of God, who is appointed to guide his people into all truth, and to glorify our Saviour, by "taking of the things of *Christ* and manifesting them to us," *John* xvi. 14.

And as we are encouraged by scripture to seek a further acquaintance with the mysteries of the gospel, so we are sometimes constrained to it by the importunate objections of our opponents: There are, and have been, many writers, who will not allow it to be possible in any manner whatsoever, that true godhead should belong to each of the blessed three. It seems proper therefore, for some persons to endeavour

to make it appear, that there is a possibility in the reason and nature of things, for true and eternal deity to be attributed to the Father, the Son, and holy Spirit, without danger of those absurdities and inconsistencies which are pretended to arise thence. And though the modus, or peculiar manner of explaining this difficulty, be not necessary for every christian to understand in order to his own salvation, yet the providence of God may sometimes make it necessary for those who are set for the defence of the faith, to explain and vindicate this great point, as far as the Holy scripture furnishes us with any traces of divine light, and the powers of reason, under the conduct of scripture, can afford us any assistance. And to encourage our search we may reasonably hope, there are several things in the gospel which are not surrounded with such impenetrable shades and darkness, as the writings of men have sometimes represented them.

When I wrote that little treatise, intitled, the "christian doctrine of the trinity," my design then was, only to give a plain and general account of what representations the scripture made of the sacred three. And as my chief purpose in that book was to exhibit this doctrine to private christians in an easy view; so I declared in the title, that I had endeavoured to do this without the aid or incumbrance of any of those human schemes of explication, which had been contrived to solve the difficulties attending that doctrine. Yet it was no part of my intent utterly to renounce and abandon all those schemes, and methods of explication, which pious and learned men had already given us; or which might hereafter be found out to relieve these difficulties.

For though it might be possible, in some measure, to avoid the mixture of human schemes, when the only purpose of the writer is to lay down the doctrine of the scripture for the use of private christians, yet when an ingenious and learned author shall raise a variety of objections to obscure, refute, and confound that which I call the scriptural doctrine it self, perhaps it is impossible to give a tolerable answer to those objections without entering into some particular scheme of explication, and shewing in what manner the sacred three may be one God, and thereby declaring in what manner those objections may be solved, and the difficulties removed.

Though I was not a stranger to the various human explications, when I wrote that treatise, yet I confess with freedom, I was not at that time engaged in any one particular scheme. I thought the general doctrine of scripture was plain and evident, but as to the modus of it I was much in doubt: And upon that account I must acknowledge this benefit which I have received from the author of the "sober appeal to a Turk or an Indian," which was written in answer to my book*, viz. That by the arguments which he uses, he has almost precluded in my opinion some of those schemes of explication, and inclined my thoughts towards one particular mode of accounting for this difficult doctrine, which I have in a great measure exhibited in the following discourses.

Such as know little of these disputes, and have never ventured to read any thing but the writers of their own side, generally imagine that all things in their own particular scheme are clear as the light; and they are too ready to impute all the doubts or difficulties that are raised on these subjects to the want of a due regard to truth. They believe their own particular mode of explaining this great article with as firm a faith, and make it as sacred and divine as the article it self; and they suppose that their whole scheme is supported by all those scriptures which are made use of to prove the

* Why I have not in these present dissertations proceeded farther in a reply to that writer, I have given an account at the close of the seventh dissertation.

the deity of the Son or Spirit. So unhappily has the christian world been taught to mingle human schemes with divine truths.

And I cannot but take notice here, if a man has never so sincere a design to vindicate the same great doctrines which are professed and maintained by his brethren, yet if he happen to step aside from the common track of human phrases, and especially if he give an exposition of some important scriptures different from their sentiments and the established interpretation, he runs the risque of having heresy cast on himself and his writings, ever while he labours by reasoning, and clear ideas, to defend those very propositions which they themselves believe.

I know it is a very difficult and hazardous undertaking, for a man to attempt to give a rational account of these mysterious parts of our religion, though he endeavour humbly to follow the track of scripture light; and there is much danger in it upon this account as well as others, viz. That what scheme of explication soever he follows, there are some hard names of modern or ancient error which lie ready to be discharged upon him. If he explain the trinity according to the ancient *Athanasians*, with bishop *Pearson*, bishop *Bull*, and Mr. *Howe*, he is censured perhaps as a downright tritheist. If he follow the scholastic scheme, which has been professed by most of the reformed churches, and which has been commonly called modern orthodoxy, he incurs the charge of *sabellianism*. If he dare propose the doctrine of the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, and follow bishop *Fowler*, Mr. *Fleming*, and others, he is accused of favouring the *arian* and *nestorian* errors, even though all this time he strongly maintains the proper deity of *Christ*, and a sufficient personality in the sacred three to support their distinct characters and offices. It is hardly possible that the nicest care should exempt a man from these inconveniences: But I hope none of these things shall ever discourage me from the sincere pursuit of truth, nor provoke me to lay aside the exercise of christian candor and charity.

I think the doctrine of the proper deity of the Son and Spirit is supported by some convincing arguments drawn from the word of God, though the manner of explication is attended with much difficulty. Surely those who have well known the *arian* and *socinian* controversies, and have given themselves leave to be acquainted with the force of argument on all sides, must acknowledge that it would be an invaluable happiness to the christian world, if any hypothesis of explaining the trinity were current among us, which might have clear and distinct ideas affixed to it, that we might not be perpetually running to this refuge, "it is all mysterious and inconceivable, and therefore we must not search into it."

I should be very glad, if a man might be permitted to imitate the blessed work of angels, 1 *Pet.* i. 12. and might desire to look into the glorious things of *Christ*, without being suspected of a profane curiosity, or a violation of the faith. It is my opinion, that a fair, easy and intelligible scheme of the trinitarian doctrine, agreeable to holy scripture, would be the noblest and the securest guard against the *arian* and *socinian* errors, for then there would be no pretense to deny it.

A late anonymous writer on the "doctrine of the trinity" assures us, that "there is a number of men who are prejudiced against, and do reject this weighty article, and many reject christianity in general on it's account, because they are persuaded it is expressly impossible; or contradictory, and inconsistent with reason. Many men labour under so strong a prepossession that this mystery is impossible, that till they be cured of this prejudice, by a sensible demonstration of the possibility of that abstruse

doctrine, in some sense manifestly consistent with reason as well as scripture, no other arguments can have any effect with them, or be duly weighed by them."

This is one reason why I ventured into these enquiries; and if this great article could be well adjusted and represented in such distinct ideas as would remove all appearance of inconsistency, it would also better support protestant writers in their triumph over the inconsistent doctrines of popery, and particularly that of transubstantiation, without any fear of a retortion of the same charge upon our selves. I know the papists retort this charge without reason or justice; but it must be confessed also, that it would be a happiness if we could cut off all shadows or pretences of occasion from those who seek this occasion against us.

Far be it from me to boast, that I have exhibited such a hypothesis here! I know there are some difficulties which attend my explication of things. All that I can say is, that I have made a humble essay toward it, and how far I have succeeded herein, must be left to the impartial judgment of those who will take the pains to read it, and honestly compare it with the word of God. As for the conviction, or silencing of all manner of opponents, I make no pretence to it. It is a very just observation of the learned doctor *Waterland*, in his preface to his sermons on the "deity of Christ," "that in such sublime subjects as these, and in such controversies as depend on the interpretation of dead writings, the objector has much the easier part, as it is always easier to puzzle than to clear any thing; to darken and perplex than to set things in a good light; and to start difficulties than to solve them."

Yet that I may not leave these dissertations utterly defenseless, I would attempt, in this place, to obviate a few exceptions that may be raised, though the reasons and foundations of them cannot be well understood till the discourses themselves have been perused.

Objection I. Perhaps it may be charged upon me, that I have not, in these dissertations, exactly confined my self, in every punctilio, to the same sentiments, which I had published some years ago, with relation to the doctrine of the trinity: And particularly, that though I continue to maintain the supreme deity of the Son and Spirit, yet, that I have expressed the doctrine of their personality in stronger, and more unlimited terms heretofore, than I have done in these papers.

Here let me first give one general answer, and then descend to particulars.

The general answer is this. When I apply my self with diligence to make further enquiries into the great doctrines of the gospel, I would never make my own former opinions the standard of truth, and the rule by which to determine my future judgment. My work is always to lay the bible before me, to consult that sacred and infallible guide, and to square and adjust all my sentiments by that certain and unerring rule. It is to this supreme judge of controversies that I pay an unreserved submission, and would derive all further light from this fountain. I thank God, that I have learned to retract my former sentiments, and change them, when upon stricter search and review, they appear less agreeable to the divine standard of faith.

Though a sentence or two from any man's former writings may be cited, perhaps, to confront his later thoughts, yet that is not sufficient to refute them. All that it will prove is this, that that man keeps his mind ever open to conviction, and that he is willing and desirous to change a darker for a clearer idea. It will only declare to the world, that he can part with a mistake for the hope of truth, that he dares confess himself a fallible creature, and that his knowledge is capable of improvement. It becomes the all-wise God, and not mortal man, to be unchangeable. It doth not belong to such poor imperfect beings, as we are, to remain for ever unmoveable in all

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the same opinions that we have once indulged, nor to stamp every sentiment with immortality. For a man to be obstinately tenacious of an old mistake, and incorrigibly fond of any obscure phrase or conception, because he has once admitted it, is the shame, and not the glory of human nature.

The particular answers to this objection, relating to the personality of the Son and Spirit, are as follow, viz.

Answer I. My design in writing the "christian doctrine of the trinity," was to represent in the plainest manner, what appeared to be the most obvious ideas of scripture concerning the sacred three, for the use of private christians. And as I supposed both their deity, and their personality, to be plainly exhibited in the letter of the scripture, I represented them both in that manner in that little book, without so great a solicitude about reconciling the difficulties arising thence, as may be necessary for a person who undertakes further to explain that sacred doctrine, and to vindicate it against the exceptions of learned men.

I think it also proper to acknowledge, that I was at that time inclined to suppose those personal representations in scripture, especially so far as relates to the blessed Spirit, were really to be understood in a more proper and literal sense, than I now find necessary; and on that account I did then express the doctrine of three persons, or three distinct intelligent agents, in terms a little stronger, and more unlimited, than my judgment now approves. For since that time I have more carefully considered the *hebrew* idioms of speech, wherein powers, virtues, and properties, are frequently personalized, or represented in a personal manner.

Answer II. As it was my purpose, in that little treatise, to shew, that the scripture ascribes deity and personality, both to the Word and to the Spirit, so the business of my present dissertations, is to shew, how these two may be reconciled. Now, if personality and deity can scarce be fairly explained, and happily reconciled in a proper literal sense, I think it much more agreeable to scripture, to explain the deity ascribed to the Word and Spirit in a proper and literal sense, and to explain the personality in a figurative manner, than to construe the deity of the Word and Spirit into a mere figurative godhead, and sink their character into that of two creatures, in order to maintain their literal and proper personality.

Answer III. Let it be further considered, that the common scholastic explication of the doctrine of the trinity, which for some centuries hath been called orthodox, makes the difference between the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, to consist in mere internal relative properties. This is the term which is generally used to describe their distinct personality: Whereas the present scheme which I offer, supposes the Word and Spirit to be analogous to real distinct powers in the divine nature. Now a real distinction is something greater than that which is merely relative. I hope therefore, that those trinitarians at least, who give their assent to the common orthodox scheme, will have no reason to charge me with making a less distinction between the divine persons than they do.

Objection II. Some persons, who pay a very great respect to the primitive christian fathers, may blame me, perhaps, for those parts of the fourth dissertation, wherein I allow so many of the inferior and diminutive expressions of those ancients concerning the "Logos," to be construed in their own proper literal sense, and apply them to the human soul of *Christ* in it's pre-existent state.

Answer. Let it be observed in the first place that I have every where allowed the greatest, the brightest, and the strongest expressions of the ancients, concerning the true and proper godhead of our Saviour, to be construed according to their proper and genuine sublime ideas. I reverence the name and memory of bishop *Bull*, and

bishop

bishop *Pearson*, whose excellent writings have effectually proved, that those primitive fathers did generally believe the true and eternal deity of *Christ*. And I pay all due honours to the learned labours of the reverend doctor *Waterland*, and doctor *Knighy*, who have supported the same cause, and have given me an occasion to review the writers of the most early ages of christianity, whereby I have had the pleasure to find such a number of citations applied in this controversy with great justice; and it must be confessed, that they have so far exhausted this subject, that I could meet with very few expressions of importance on this theme, in those ancients which I consulted, which had not been cited in some of their writings, or the writings of their learned antagonists. I have therefore struck out many of the citations that I had made, both relating to the divinity, and to the inferior nature of *Christ*, that I might not too largely repeat what had been done before: And would rather remit the reader to those worthy authors who have plentifully given us the various expressions of the fathers in this controversy.

I thankfully acknowledge the profit I have received from the labours of those who with so much skill and learning have defended the common faith: And heartily declare my agreement with them, that the doctrine of the godhead of *Christ*, was asserted and maintained by the fathers of the christian church. Yet with all due deference to their superior worth, I humbly take leave to answer the objections which the modern disbelievers of his proper godhead have derived from the fathers, in another manner than most * of these writers have done. Their arguments for the deity of *Christ*, are, in my opinion, strong and conclusive; but surely it may be lawful to attempt the relief of difficulties in another way and manner, since their opponents have ever denied their solution of them to have been satisfactory.

While we all agree to support the same doctrine of the deity of our blessed Lord, I think every man may be also permitted, without offence, to solve the objections that are brought against this doctrine, in such a various manner as is most suited to our different apprehensions of things; and by such a variety of solutions the doctrine itself, perhaps, may be better guarded against assaults on every side.

To conclude, I have nothing more to request of my readers, but that they would give themselves leave to peruse these dissertations with due attention, and without prejudice, or not to peruse them at all. That they would not take offence at every inaccurate expression, and condemn the whole work for some incidental mistakes. I entreat that they would not set their invention at work, to oppose as fast as they read, lest such a temper should bar all the avenues of the soul against conviction and evidence. That must be glaring evidence indeed, and an argument of prodigious power, that forces it's way into an unwilling mind; I pretend to no such skill or demonstration.

If I have set any part of this subject in an easy light, agreeable to reason and scripture, I hope there may be some readers disposed to receive it. I entreat them to believe that it is possible for some of them to have been mistaken, as well as my self, in our former modes and schemes of explication of this great doctrine of the trinity, though the doctrine itself stands unshaken, and our assent to it as firm as ever. It is possible that an article which has had so many difficulties and obscurities attending it

* I say, most of these writers; for I know not any of them who has laid a foundation for the answer of these difficulties in the same manner as I have done; except the reverend author of the "considerations on Mr. *Wibstan's* historical preface," in his first and second letters to the author of the "history of montanism," whose expressions on this subject, in several parts of those letters I have here cited, in proper places, with all due respect.

it in all ages, may be a little further cleared and disintangled by labour and prayer, and the daily study of the holy scriptures. And if the blessing of God shall so far attend these feeble endeavours, as to lead any of my fellow christians into clearer and more defensible ideas of these deep things of God, let them join with me, and give the glory to God the Father, and his Son *Jesus Christ*, who, according to the divine oecomy, instructs humble enquirers by the blessed Spirit.

But if it appear that I am mistaken in this hypothesis, I shall be very ready to receive a happier scheme of explication, wherein the doctrine of the sacred three may be represented, both in their divine nature, and distinct personality, in a clearer light, and whereby this doctrine may be rescued with more glory and power from all the attacks that have been made upon it. Happy are the souls above, who see God face to face, who behold the sacred three in that divine light, where objections and darkness are banished for ever, and the shadows are fled away! The noise of controversy and wrangling is never heard in those regions; but if it were possible for the happy inhabitants to differ in sentiment, and controversy could ascend thither, I am persuaded it would be managed without wrangling or noise. The gentleness and benevolence, the sweet serenity and candor that adorn every Spirit there, would reign through all their sacred reasonings; and wheresoever a mistake was found, and rectified, among those holy disputants, the voice of joy and triumph would be heard on all sides at the bright and lovely appearance of truth. O that the disputes of christians on earth might be carried on with the same heavenly candor, and might end in the same harmony and joy! Amen.

May 8, 1725.

DISSE-

DISSERTATION IV.

The sentiments of the ancient *jews*, and primitive christians concerning the LOGOS, OR WORD, compared with scripture.

S E C T I O N I.

The general senses of the term Logos, and it's application to Christ.

OUR blessed Saviour hath a variety of names and titles given him in scripture, to describe his personal glories, and his sacred offices in the divine oeconomy. These must be borrowed from human things, and from the languages of men, in order to bring them within the reach of our understandings. We cannot frame ideas of things divine and heavenly, as they are in themselves, and therefore it hath pleased God to condescend to lead us into some imperfect conceptions of them, by revealing them to us, under the names and resemblances of things on earth.

The Logos, or Word of God, is a name whereby *Christ* is often represented in the new testament, and particularly in the writings of *St. John*. Now it may assist us considerably in tracing out some of the glories of his person, if we search into the meaning of this name, and the reason of it's application to our blessed Lord.

The term LOGOS, in *greek* heathen authors, does not only signify word, but it is used as commonly to express reason. In this sense the *platonick* philosophers apply it to God as well as man.

And not only the ancient *greeks*, but *Philo the jew* uses the term "logos" in this latter sense, even when it is applied to God; and denotes hereby the reason, or wisdom of God. In his treatise "De mundi opificio," he tells us, that the idea by which God made the world, and which he calls the κόσμος νοητός, or the κόσμος ἐκ τῶν ιδεῶν, that is, the ideal, or intelligible world, could have no place but in the logos of God, as an intelligible or ideal city is in the mind, or reason, of the architect. And he adds a little afterward, that if a man will use plain words, he will say, the ideal world is nothing else than the logos of God the Creator; as an ideal city is nothing else than the reasoning of the builder; ὁ τὸ ἀρχιτέκτονος λογισμὸς. And this opinion, saith he, I have from *Moses*, and not from my self. The archetypal exemplar, the idea of ideas is the logos, the word, of God. He sometimes supposes it to be a divine power, or δύναμις, that regulates or conducts the agency of other powers, viz. principality and goodness, which office particularly belongs to the divine reason, or wisdom. And in several places of his writings, he seems to put such a sense upon this term, the logos of God, as we most properly refer to divine wisdom, or reason.

It is plain also, that several of the primitive christian writers include, if not chiefly intend, the idea of reason, in some places where they speak of that divine logos,

which was always with God, even from eternity: For it was a common notion among them, that God was always λογικός, that is, rational; never ἀλογος, or ἄσος, that is, never irrational, never without his word, or, rather, his reason, or wisdom. *Tertullian* makes the logos to be eternal, as it signifies reason; and more ancient than the logos, as it signifies a word, or speech: His language is this, "Non serminalis Deus à principio, sed rationalis Deus etiam ante principium." That several of the *greek* fathers speak of the logos, as divine wisdom is manifest; and that some of the *latin* fathers, both elder and later, use the terms "ratio" and "sapientia," to express the logos, as well as "verbum," or "sermo," I suppose will not be denied.

And even in scripture, the term logos sometimes seems to denote reason as well as word; for *Christ*, who is the Logos, or Word of God, in several scriptures, is also supposed to be represented by divine wisdom in other places of the sacred writings, both in the old and new testament: As *Prov.* viii. where wisdom is described, which whole chapter is generally interpreted concerning our blessed Saviour, in his pre-existent state. *Luke* vii. 34, 35. "The Son of man is come eating and drinking, and ye say, behold a wine-bibber, &c. but wisdom is justified of her children." *Luke* xi. 49. "Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets, &c." that is, the eternal word or wisdom, by whom God transacted his affairs of the government of the *jewish* church.

And, indeed, there is a plain affinity between both these senses of "logos;" for a word or speech, is but the external representation of inward thought or reason; and reason it self is but a sort of internal speech, or the language of the mind. Thus by one we speak inwardly to our selves, and by the other we speak to other persons. And therefore *Christ*, who is the divine wisdom, *Prov.* viii. is also the divine Word, *John* i. manifesting the wisdom of God; and the name "logos" implies both. So *Calvin*, both in his institutions, and his commentaries on *John* i. 1. represents *Christ* as the Logos, partly because he is the wisdom of God, and partly because he reveals the mind of God to men. *John*, saith he, calls the Son of God, "sermo, quia primum æterna sit dei sapientia et voluntas, deinde expressa consilii ejus effigies." And many other writers are of the same mind.

Yet I think in our theological discourses on the *Messiah*, since we have not one single term in *english* that signifies both reason and word, it may be proper generally to translate logos by the term Word, rather than reason.

I. Because the scripture in the new testament seems rather to favour this sense: For the same things which are attributed to logos in some scriptures, are in other places ascribed to ῥῆμα: Now ῥῆμα always signifies word.

II. Because the same term logos is used by the *jewish* writers to translate their *memra*, which properly and literally signifies a word, and which is much used in their theological writings. If we enquire into the origin of it, perhaps it may be this, viz.

Moses relates the work of each day in the creation, to be performed by God's speaking, *Gen.* i. "And God said," This might give them the first hint or notion of the word, or memra, as a medium of God's manifestations and operations. And, perhaps, it might be thus designed by the Spirit of God, since it appears that succeeding inspired writers copied after *Moses*. *Psal.* xxxiii. 6. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made." *Psal.* cxlviii. 5. "He commanded, and they were created." *Psal.* cxlvii. 15, 18, &c. "He sendeth forth his word, and melteth the ice." *Psal.* cv. 19. "The word of the Lord came and tried *Joseph*." And the frequent mention of the word of the Lord in the old testament, which came to the patriarchs and prophets, might

might give the *jews* further occasion to speak of the "memra," or word. Such ancient divine hints probably introduced this term so often into their theology, and by that means into the writings of the new testament.

III. Another reason why we interpret logos, the Word, is because this has been the most frequent translation of logos in most places, by the writers of the christian church, in all ages; which has something of weight in it, where we can see no sufficient ground to change.

IV. Because when logos is translated word, or speech, it includes reason: But reason does not include word.

V. The term word is more adapted to signify both the human and divine natures of *Christ*; whereas reason, or wisdom, seems rather to refer chiefly to his divine nature, as will appear in the following parts of this discourse. And, indeed, where the divine nature alone is intended, I cannot think it amiss, in some cases, to imitate some of the fathers, and former writers, and to translate it reason, or wisdom; as in other cases it should be construed the Word.

But let us more particularly consider the import of the term logos, when it signifies a word, and the reasons of the application of it to *Christ*.

Logos, or word, when used in human affairs, is a declaration of our mind or will; and when it is taken for a word of command from a superior, it becomes also a medium of operation as well as manifestation. And so when it is used in a divine sense, it primarily and properly denotes some declaration of the mind or will of God; but if it be put for a word of divine efficacious command, then it denotes a medium of divine operation.

Therefore when the term "word" is taken personally as well as divinely, it must denote some glorious person, by whom God reveals himself, his mind and will to creatures, and by whom he operates. In short, it is a personal representation of some glorious medium of God's manifestations and operations.

Now this character eminently agrees to our blessed Saviour: And it is reasonably supposed, that it is upon these accounts chiefly he is so often called the Logos, as it signifies Word.

I. As he was the medium of divine manifestation. So *Irenæus* speaks, libro ii. capite 56. "The Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ* is revealed and manifested to angels and arch-angels, to principalities and powers, and to men by his Word, who is his Son: The Son reveals the Father to all to whom the Father is revealed." So *John* i. 18. "The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

II. As he was a medium of divine operation. So *Irenæus* expresses himself, "The Word ministers to the Father in all things: He made all things by his Word;" libro iv. capite 17, 37. So *St. Paul* and *St. John* explain each other, when they describe God the Father, as creating all things by his Word, and by *Jesus Christ*, *John* i. 3. *Eph.* iii. 9.

Upon a review of the whole we find, that the logos is the divine wisdom it self, a revealer of the divine wisdom, a medium of divine manifestations and divine transactions: And on these accounts it is probable, that our blessed Saviour first obtained, and still keeps the name of Logos, or Word, since his incarnation, as well as before.

Christ is called the Logos in his incarnate state, 1 *John* i. 1, 2. The Logos, or "Word of life, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled." *Rev.* xix. 13. he is represented as "clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Logos or the Word of God." Nor does

the apostle *John* only use this language, but the evangelist *Luke* seems to speak the same dialect, in the second verse of his gospel, when he calls the apostles eye-witnesses, and ministers of the Logos or Word: For if the term Logos be not taken in its personal sense, it is an improper way of speaking, to call them eye-witnesses instead of ear-witnesses.

It is manifest also, that the term Logos has sometimes a peculiar reference to our blessed Saviour, considered as distinct from flesh and blood, and is so used in those scriptures which speak of him in his pre-existent state. The beginning of St. *John's* gospel puts this beyond all doubt, if there were no other testimony. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. By him were all things made, and without him was nothing made that was made." And this "Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory," *John* i. 1, 2, 3, 14.

There are many other places also, which may be fairly and reasonably interpreted concerning our blessed Saviour, as expressed by the term Logos, which Mr. *Fleming* reckons up, "Christology," volume I. page 155, &c. As, *John* v. 58. "Ye have not the Word of God, or Logos, abiding in you; for whom the Father has sent, him ye receive not." *Titus* i. 2, 3. "God who had promised eternal life of old times, hath now manifested his Word, or Logos, through preaching." *Heb.* iv. 12, 13. "The Logos, or Word of God is quick and powerful,—a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart: Nor is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight." *2 Pet.* iii. 5. "By the Logos, or Word of God, the heavens were of old; and by the same Word the heavens and earth, are now kept in store, reserved unto fire." *1 John* v. 7. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one." With some other texts.

S E C T I O N II.

A difficulty mentioned, with a proposal for the solution of it.

NOW concerning this "logos," or the pre-existent nature of *Christ*, or rather concerning *Christ*, or the Logos, in his pre-existent state, there are such glorious ascriptions given to him, as seem to raise him above the character of all creatures, viz. "That he was God;" *John* i. 1. "that all things were created by him and for him, whether in heaven, or in earth; that he is before all things, and by him all things consist;" *Col.* i. 16, 17. "that he upholds all things by the word of his power; that all the angels of God must worship him; that his throne, as God, is for ever and ever; and that in the beginning he laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of his hands, &c." *Heb.* i. 3, 6, 8, 10.

Yet in these very places of scripture, as well as in several other texts, there are some expressions, which seem to represent him, even in his pre-existent state, below the dignity of godhead: As, when he is called the Son of God, and said to be begotten of the Father; which seems to denote too much derivation and dependence for pure deity: When he is said to be appointed the heir of all things by his Father: When he is called the first-born of every creature, and the beginning of the creation of God; when he is said to be sent by his Father, not to do his own will, but the will of him that

that sent him ; that he had a body prepared him by the Father ; that the Son can do nothing of himself : And many other expressions of the same kind.

Now here lies the difficulty, how shall we interpret all these expressions in a consistency with each other ? This has been a perplexing and laborious inquiry in all ages of christianity.

Most writers fix their eyes and thoughts so entirely upon the divine dignity of the person of *Christ* ; and out of a holy fear of sinking his character below godhead, have explained many of these diminishing expressions, as mere oeconomical accounts of his sublimest nature, and attributed even these lessening characters to *Christ* considered as God, by the help of tropes and figures, by *catechreses*, and oeconomical interpretations.

On the other hand, there have been some, who out of a sacred veneration for the supreme majesty of God the Father, and in order to secure the unity of the godhead, have sunk all the sublimer and divine characters given to *Christ*, or the Logos, in his pre-existent state, and reduced them to some diminished and figurative sense, in order to reconcile them to the inferior characters of *Christ* ; and thereby they have not suffered the person of *Christ*, in any sense, to arise to the true dignity of godhead.

This has been a matter of dreadful contest in the churches of old, and has been again revived in the present age. The scriptures have been consulted through and through, by each party ; and yet there are some difficulties still attending the sacred subject, and the parties are not reconciled.

I grant that scripture is the best interpreter of itself, and by comparing one part of the word of God with another, we are led into the meaning of many a difficult text, and find out many an important truth : And, in my esteem, the foregoing difficulties are resolved by the scripture itself. But when persons have employed their labour in this manner, and there still remains a darkness in their opinion, upon the language of scripture, they may, perhaps, derive some degrees of light, by consulting the authors that wrote on the same subject, and lived nearest to that age when the scriptures were written.

And since the christian religion is built upon the same general foundations with the *jewish* ; and the new testament is a divine comment upon the old, perhaps we may borrow some advantages for the interpretation of dark passages in the gospel, from the modes of speech, and the common sentiments of the *jews* in that age ; as well as from the primitive fathers of the christian church, who lived nearest to the apostolic times.

It may be also observed, that the sacred writers of the new testament, were *jews* themselves ; and though they were converted to the faith of *Christ*, yet it is very evident, that they used several peculiar words and phrases, according to the sense and meaning of their country-men, and brought several of the idioms of the *hebrew* language into their *greek* writings : This is agreed among all the learned. Upon these accounts the ancient *jews*, as well as the first christians, may give us their assistance toward the better understanding of these terms and expressions, " the Word of God," the " Son of God, &c." and add some light to that doctrine which we derive from scripture.

SECTION III.

The sentiments of the ancient jews concerning the "logos," viz. the apocryphal writers, the targumists, and Philo the jew.

Since Logos, or the Word, is a name frequently given to our blessed Saviour, by the sacred writers of the new testament; since he is also called the Son of God frequently: Let us therefore enquire a little what sentiments the ancient jews had of this matter, and what they meant by the Logos; and in what sense he is the Son of God.

The books of the old testament speak of the Son of God. *Psal.* ii. 7. "Thou art my Son." *Psal.* lxxxix. 27. "I will make him my first-born." *Prov.* xxx. 4. "What is his name, or what is his Son's name?" They speak also of the word and wisdom of God, which the ancient christian fathers understood as denoting *Christ*. *Prov.* viii. where he is called wisdom, has been cited already. See *Psal.* xxxiii. 6. where the "heavens were made by the word of God." *Psal.* cvii. 20. "God sent forth his word and healed the people, &c." Which word the seventy *jewish* interpreters call the logos.

Upon this account the *jewish* writers of the apocryphal books, speak of the word and wisdom of God in the same manner. *Eccclus.* i. 1, 4, 5, 9, 10. "all wisdom cometh from the Lord, and is with him for ever. Wisdom hath been created before all things: He poured her out upon all his works. The word of God in the highest, is the fountain of wisdom. Πηγή σοφίας λόγος Θεῶν ἐν ὑψίστοις: By which, it is probable, the author does not mean the written word, but the logos, or word that dwells on high. Verse 10. "She is with all flesh according to his gift." Now these expressions are very much akin to the beginning of St. *John's* gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. All things were created by him. This is the light that lighteth every man who cometh into the world." So in the book of *Wisdom*, chapter xvi. 12. "It was neither herb, nor mollifying plaister, that restored them to health; but thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things." So *Wisdom* xviii. 15, 16, 17. "Thy almighty word * leaped down from heaven, out of thy royal throne, as a fierce man of war, into the midst of a land of destruction, and brought thy unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up filled all things with death; and it touched the heaven, but it stood upon the earth." *Wisdom* ix. 1. "O God of my fathers, who hast made all things with thy word." Verse 4. "Wisdom sitteth by thy throne." And chapter vii. 21, &c. "Wisdom is called the breath of the power of God; a pure influence flowing from the glory of the almighty; the worker of all things; the brightness of the everlasting light; the image of the goodness of God." To which it is supposed the apostle might allude, *Heb.* i. 3. "when he calls *Christ*, "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." And it is probable that the author of *Ecclesiasticus* gives an intimation of the Son of God, chapter li. 14. "And I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord."

From all these citations we may derive this degree of light, that the writers of the new testament, do not imitate the language of *Plato*, or other heathen philosophers, when they describe the logos, the word of God, or his wisdom, and that sometimes

* This almighty word, Λόγος παντοδύναμος, may mean the essential divine word; or it may be referred to the glorious archangel called Logos, armed with almightiness by the indwelling godhead, that is, the angel of the covenant, who is also *Jehovah*, and true God. Of which hereafter more particularly.

times in a personal manner ; but rather that they follow the language of scripture, and of the *jewish* church : And that they had many hints from the old testament itself, as well as from their traditional expositions of it, as doctor *Allix* informs us, that their great expected *Messiah* was to be the Son of God, and the Word of God, as being the fittest characters of a person who was to represent the wisdom and grace of God amongst them ; and to be an illustrious medium of divine manifestations and operations.

It is allowed, indeed, that *Plato* may call the divine impressions on the works of nature, *λόγοι*, or words ; and he speaks of the *λογος*, the word, or reason of the Creator ; but is much more probable from ancient history, that *Plato*, and other *grecians*, borrowed that term from converse with the *jews*, or their neighbours the *phoenicians*, and the *chaldeans* *, than that the *jews* should borrow it from him or them ; or that St. *John*, who was a poor *jewish* fisherman, should be acquainted with the *grecian* learning of the gentiles, and imitate their phrases, when the same phrases were more common and ancient in his own nation.

I proceed now to consider what we find concerning the Word, and the Son of God, in the *jewish* commentaries on scripture, which are called the *targums*.

Here I shall make a free acknowledgment, that what I cite upon this occasion, is borrowed chiefly from doctor *Allix*, doctor *Owen*, doctor *Lightfoot*, Mr. *Ainsworth*, and Mr. *Fleming*. My acquaintance with the *chaldean* or *rabbinical* language, was never sufficient to read the rabbies, or their comments on scripture : But I may reasonably presume, that these learned authors have made faithful citations from these *jewish* writers, and given a just account of their sentiments.

The *targums* are paraphrases, or explanations of several parts of the old testament, in the *chaldee* language, written by *Onkelos*, *Jonathan*, &c. The exact time of their writing is not agreed amongst the learned, but generally supposed to be in the same century wherein *Christ* lived, or at least in the next century following : They speak very frequently concerning the “*memra*,” or the Word of God, which is the same with the “*logos*,” and they make it to signify these several things.

I. The word, or “*memra*,” in these writings, often signifies God himself. There is a great number of places, in which when the *hebrew* bible declares that God, or the Lord, spake or acted any thing, these commentators ascribe those speeches, actions, &c. to the “*memra*,” or word. It was the voice of the word † of the Lord God walking in the garden, that *Adam* heard : It was the word of the Lord was with the lad *Issmael*, and helped him in the wilderness. It is by the word of the Lord their God I will save them, says the *targum* ; where *Hosea* says, “*I will save them by Jehovab* their God,” *Hosea* i. 7. It was the word that saved *Noah* in the time of the flood, and made a covenant with him. It was the word brought *Abraham* out of *Chaldea*, and commanded him to sacrifice, and in whom *Abraham* believed. It is
the

* *Gratius* on *John* i. 1. affirms, “*that the greeks cite the creation of the sun and moon, by the word, out of the ancient books of the chaldees* :” And that the writer of the *orpbic* verses, thence borrowed his *Θεος λογος*, and his *αυδη πατρος*, the divine word, and the voice of the Father, whereby he made the world. That learned author, Mr. *Theophilus Gale*, in his “*court of the gentiles*,” part II. book iii. chapter 3, and 9. has shewn at large how *Plato* borrowed his notions originally from the *jews*, by the *pythagoreans*, the *egyptians*, and *phoenicians* : And many other very learned men have been of the same mind.

† This is the first place in the bible where the *targums* mention the “*memra*” of *Jehovab* ; and it is remarkable, that the text itself mentions the “*voice of God walking*,” before any word was spoken : Whence doctor *Owen* infers, that this expression may denote, the essential word of God, the person of the Son. See “*first volume on Hebrews*,” page 114, and 116.

the word that redeems *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and against whom *Israel* murmured. It is the word whose presence is promised in the tabernacle; whose protection was promised to *Moses*, when he desired to see God. It is the word whose commandments the *Israelites* were carefully to observe. It is the word that dwelt in the pillar of a cloud, and led *Israel* through the wilderness, and that spake out of the fire at *Horeb*. It is the word that created the world, that made man after his image, that spoke to *Adam* in the garden; that lifted up *Enoch* to heaven; and that talked with *Moses* in the tabernacle. It is the word to whom *Moses* prays, and who gives statutes to *Israel*. The word sent fiery serpents, and punished *Israel* for their various crimes. The word said, he had sworn to give *Israel* the land of *Canaan*; and where the scripture says to *Abraham*, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord;" there both *Onkelos* and *Jonathan* interpret it, "By my word have I sworn, saith the Lord." See doctor *Allix's* "judgment of the ancient *jewish* church," chapter 12, 13. See doctor *Lightfoot's* "harmony of the evangelists, on *John* i. 1." and "horae hebraicae in locum."

That God himself is often signified by the "memra," or word, appears further by the use of the same term, with regard to men also; as *Jonathas Ben Uzziel*, on *Numb.* xv. 32. "A certain man said with his word, I will go forth, and gather sticks on the sabbath day;" where he said with his word, signifies he resolved in his mind, or with himself. *Job* vii. 8. "Thy eyes are upon my memra;" that is, upon me. So "my breath is in my memra," *Job* xxvii. 3. that is, my breath is in me. "There is a league between my memra and thee," 2 *Chron.* xvi. 3. that is, between me and thee. See *Fleming's* "christology," volume I. page 137. and *Lightfoot's* "horae hebraicae, et talmudicae, in *John* i. 1." where they bring other undeniable instances, to prove the memra sometimes is nothing else but a *chaldeism*, denoting one's self: So the word of God sometimes denotes God himself.

II. The "memra," or word of God, in these *jewish* writings is used to signify any thing in or of God, whereby he transacts his divine affairs: It implies some one or more of his attributes, or his powers, his knowledge, his wisdom, his purpose, his command, his efficacy, his providence, or his influence; and where the *hebrew* text metaphorically ascribes human affections, and human members to God, the *targums* use the word "memra," and thus it signifies his head, his face, his mind, his tongue, his mouth, his eye, his hand, or his feet: In general it means that divine power and wisdom, or, in one word, that sufficiency of God which he exerts in managing human affairs, or in revealing himself to the children of men. One *targum* saith, "God created the world by his word;" where the other *targum* says, "by his wisdom," *Gen.* i. 1. So the Lord gave *Noah* warning by his word; the Lord judged the old world by his word, and said, "I will destroy them by my word." And a great variety of such expressions may be found in doctor *Allix's* "judgment of the ancient *jewish* church;" and Mr. *Fleming's* "christology," in the places before cited.

Here let it be noted, that it is the custom of the *jewish* writers, even the penmen of the bible, as well as other authors, to represent powers, attributes, virtues, agencies, &c. in a personal manner, and to describe them as distinct persons. Upon this account, in some places where the "memra" may be supposed to signify the divine sufficiency, or some particular distinction of power or property in the god-head, it is represented in a personal manner by these *jewish* commentators. Whether they had a distinct idea of the Logos, or word, as a second personal agent in the

the divine nature, according to the complete ideas of the *asbanasian* explication; is a matter too doubtful to be asserted with any great assurance.

III. The term "memra" is used by these *targumists*, for that angel who appeared to the patriarchs and to *Moses*, and assumed the name of God and *Jehovah*. It is the word of the Lord that appeared often, as an angel, to *Abraham*, in the valley of vision; and *Abraham* worshipped, and prayed to the word of the Lord in these appearances. When the angel of the Lord appeared to *Hagar*, the *targums* say, "she confessed before the Lord *Jehovah*, whose word had spoken unto her; and she prayed to the word of the Lord, who had appeared to her." When *Jacob* returned from *Padan-aram*, the word of the Lord, which in scripture is called a man, appeared to him the second time, and blessed him. When the angel of the Lord in scripture is said to appear unto *Moses* in the burning bush, it is said in the *targums*, "the word of the Lord spake to *Moses* there." It was the word of the Lord that appeared against the *egyptians* at midnight, and his right-hand killed the first-born of *Egypt*; which *Moses* ascribes to an angel. And in several other places, where the scripture speaks of an angel, as appearing, and assuming any divine character, these commentators introduce the "memra."

Now let it be noted, that it was a current opinion among the *jews*, that there was one great arch-angel, superior to all the rest of the angels in power and dignity; and whom God created or generated before all the others; in whom he put his own name, and whom he employed in most of his important affairs which related to the patriarchs, and to his own people the *jews*. This was the angel whom the *jews* say, God promised to send before his people, *Exod.* xxiii. 20, 21. "To keep them in the way, and to bring them to the promised land: Beware of him, says God, and obey his voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your iniquities, for my name is in him." They say, this was the angel who wrestled with *Jacob*, and is called a man, *Gen.* xxxii. 24. Some of the ancient rabbies acknowledge him to be the *Messiah*, and call him the angel *Michael*. It is the same angel, who going before the camp of *Israel* in the wilderness, in the pillar of cloud, *Exod.* xiv. 19. removed and went behind them in the red sea, who by the rabbies is called *Michael* the great prince; he was made a wall of fire between the *israelites* and the *egyptians*. This is *Michael* the great arch angel, the prince of *Israel*, *Dan.* x. 13, 21. *Rev.* xii. 7. See "*Ainsworth* on the *Pentateuch*." This *Michael* is that high priest of heaven, who offers up the prayers of the righteous, so rabbi *Menabem*: He is the priest above, that offereth, or presenteth the souls of the righteous, saith another of their rabbies. See doctor *Owen*'s "exercitations on the *Hebrews*," volume I. page 121.

There was an angel who was called *Metatron*, which doctor *Owen* supposes to be a corrupt expression of the *latin* mediator, who by the rabbies is called the prince of the world, the prince of God's presence, the master or teacher of *Moses* himself; he is the angel always appearing in the presence of God, of whom it is said, "my name is in him." *Bechai*, a great master among them, affirms, when he treats on *Exod.* xxiii. that this name *Metatron* signifies both a lord, a messenger, and a keeper. A lord, because he ruleth all; a messenger, because he stands always before God, to do his will; and a keeper, because he keepeth *Israel*. Some of the *jews* have called him the chancellor of heaven, because he blotteth out the sins of *Israel*. See doctor *Owen* "on the *Hebrews*," volume I. exercitations, page 123. and exposition, page 75."

And as the *jews* suppose this angel to have the name of God in him, and to be one in whom God dwelt, and by whom God transacted his affairs, so it seems to be

the same being whom the antient jews before *Christ*, call the *Shekinah*, that is, the habitation of God; and they sometimes denote this *Shekinah* by the names "memra" and "logos." They attribute the same things to this *Shekinah*, which they attribute to the word of God. They call the *Shekinah* the *Adam* of above, after whose image *Adam* was created. They say, that God having committed to angels the care of other nations, the *Shekinah* alone was intrusted with the care and conduct of *Israel*. They acknowledge the *Shekinah* to be that very angel whom *Jacob* calls his redeemer, and whom the prophets call the angel of the presence, and the angel of the covenant. This was that *Shekinah* who took possession of the tabernacle and the temple in the form of light and glory, and resided in the holy of holies. See more in doctor *Allix's* "judgment of the jewish church," chapter 11.

I confess, the jews sometimes represent this *Shekinah* to signify the holy Spirit: But it is no wonder that the imperfect notices which they had of the sacred doctrine of the trinity might be paraphrased, explained, and commented upon, with some confusion both of names and things: Though what they have left upon record gives us sufficient hints of a certain glorious, angelic being, who had also godhead dwelling in him.

The LXX jewish translators of the bible seem to have had some notion of this glorious arch-angel, and suppose him to be the *Messiah*, whom they call the "child born, the son given," *Isa.* ix. 6. *μεγάλως βουλῆς ἀγγελος*, the angel of the great counsel, while they ascribe to God, or *Jehovah*, who is "great in counsel," *Jer.* xxxii. 19. the title of *κύριος μεγάλως βουλῆς*, Lord of the great counsel.

It is to this arch-angel that *Maimonides* refers, when he says, "the angel, the prince of the world of whom the wise masters so often speak." *More Nevochim*, part II. chapter 6. *Nye* against *Allix*, page 76."

He that would read more of these testimonies, and citations, out of the *targums*, let him consult the 12th, 13th, and following chapters of doctor *Allix's* "judgment of the antient jewish church," and *Fleming's* "Christology," and doctor *Owen's* "excitations on the *Hebrews*," particularly the 9th and 10th.

IV. The "memra," or word, is sometimes described by them as the Son of God; so the *targum* of *Jerusalem*, *Gen.* iii. 22. "The word of *Jehovah* said, here *Adam* whom I created is the only begotten son in the world, as I am the only begotten Son in the high heaven. *Allix*, page 268. Doctor *Allix* also shews, that they called the *Messiah* the Son of God; as on *Psal.* lxxx. 15. where the psalmist says, the "branch which thou madest strong for thyself," the *targum* reads the words, "for thy Son's sake," and interprets them, "even for the sake of king *Messias*." This seems to be intimated in other places of the *targums*, and in other ancient jewish writings: And it is sufficiently manifest, that the jews, in the days of our Saviour, supposed the *Messiah* to be the Son of God, *Matth.* xxvi. 63, 64. *Luke* xxii. 70. though it does not so evidently appear by any of these jewish writings, as doctor *Allix* imagines, that they believed the *Messiah* to be a Son in the godhead itself. This leads me on to the next particular.

V. "Memra" is sometimes used by these jewish authors to signify the *Messiah*. Doctor *Allix* hath spent a good part of his 16th chapter in the proof of this subject, and there is some weight in it: Though it must be acknowledged his proofs in this point are not so evident and express as one would expect, nor sufficient alone to convince an impartial and close inquirer. The learned Mr. *Fleming* therefore acknowledging the insufficiency of doctor *Allix's* allegations, run through the *targums* himself, in those places where he thought it most probable to find any thing of this nature.

ture. See "Christology," Volume I. page 139. and at last he fell upon some passages that seemed very plainly to relate to the *Messiah*. One is this, *Gen.* xlix. 18. "My soul waits for thy salvation, O God." Which the *Jerusalem targum* paraphrases thus, "My soul expects not the redemption of *Gideon*, which is a temporal salvation, nor the redemption of *Samson*, which is a transient salvation, but the redemption which thou didst promise should come through thy "memra" to thy people:" Which being compared with the context in the *targum*, shews, that he means the redemption that should come through the *Messiah*. And, indeed, this is the chief proof that the *targums* any where by the "memra" can mean the *Messiah*, viz. that what they attribute to the "memra" in one place, they attribute to the *Messiah* in another, for both these names are frequent in their writings. The defence of this application of the names, see in *Fleming's* "Christology," volume I. page 141, 142.

Yet this learned author would have it noted also, that there are some few passages in the *targums*, wherein it is as plain, that the *Messiah* is distinguished from the "memra" of God, as where it is said, "Moses shall go forth from the desert, and the king *Messiah* from Rome, and the "memra" of God shall be leader between them both, &c." But then he gives this reason for it, that "memra" denotes *Christ* with relation to his divine subsistence, and before his assumption of human nature, and the *Messiah* denotes him only as he was to appear visibly and become man, and therefore these authors generally distinguish the one from the other, page 143. And it is no wonder, since they had not a clear and distinct knowledge of the complete person of the *Messiah*, nor is it evident, that they believed that he should be the true and eternal God.

Objection. But is it not a vain attempt, to pretend to prove the doctrine of the trinity from the *jewish* rabbies, when it is evident in itself, and generally granted by learned men, that the ancient *jews* had no distinct notion of this doctrine, nor did they generally believe the deity of their *Messiah*, according to your own confession.

Answer. I am not proving the sacred doctrine of the trinity from any of their writings. My present chief business is only to shew, that by various intimations and notices which they derived from the old testament, they are frequently led to speak of the word of God, or "memra," as a power of the divine nature; that they also make "memra" to signify a glorious arch-angel; and though the *jews* themselves do not expressly join these two, to make one complex person, yet they attribute so many of the same things to both, that gives a great deal of countenance to the doctrine of the new testament, which seems to have joined or united these two "memra's" in the one person of the *Messiah*, that is, our blessed Saviour. But of this more hereafter.

I grant all the later *jews* have an aversion to the doctrine of the trinity, and the deity of *Christ*, and deny *Jesus of Nazareth* to be the *Messiah*: And therefore they apply a multitude of scriptures to *David*, *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, *Isaiab*, &c. which their ancient rabbies applied to the *Messiah*, for fear lest they should agree to *Jesus*. But doctor *Owen*, in his learned "exercitations on the epistle to the *Hebrews*," especially 8, 9, 10, 11. shews, that the *targums* abound in applying the scripture prophecies to the *Messiah*.

Before I make any more inferences, let us consult the writings of *Philo the jew*; he lived in *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, and was one of the ambassadors of the *jews* to the emperor of *Rome*, a little after the death of our Saviour. He was a great writer, and a very learned man: His language is *Greek*, and he is supposed to write in our

Saviour's life-time. In many of his books he speaks of the "logos," or the word of God, and uses it in most of those senses in which the *targums* use it.

Now, though I have neither health nor leisure enough to throw away much of them in perusing such ancient *jewish* folios, and allegorical writers *, yet I have turned over three or four hundred pages of this author, and read all I could meet with there concerning the "logos," and have also searched out many other of the citations of doctor *Allix*, in his "judgment of the antient *jewish* church," and Mr. *Nye*, in his "four letters against doctor *Allix*," and must declare upon the whole, that their citations for the most part are just, though in some places Mr. *Nye* keeps nearer to the words and sense of the original author.

The senses in which *Philo* may be supposed to use the word "logos" are these.

I. Perhaps he may mean God himself by the Logos, when in his "treatise of the cherubim" he says, "God has two supreme powers, viz. goodness and strength, or dominion, and between these is the Logos which unites, or reconciles, them both." Compare this with his "discourse on the sacrifices of *Cain* and *Abel*," where he says, "God accompanied with his two supreme powers, viz. dominion and goodness, he himself being in the midst of them." What he calls the Logos in one place, he calls God himself in the other. But whether he may not intend the divine mind, reason or wisdom, I will not determine.

I confess he does not so manifestly use the name "logos" to signify God himself, as the *targums* do; though in many places, when God, or *Jehovah*, is said to visit the patriarchs, and transact affairs with them, *Philo* ascribes it to the "logos," or word of God. But it must be acknowledged that he does with much more frequency and plainness use the term "logos" in the following senses.

II. *Philo* uses the word "logos" often for a particular divine power or property, which he frequently represents in a personal manner, and ascribes to it the characters that belong to a person, as the *jews* are wont to do, in a figurative way. As he speaks of those two divine powers, *δυνάμεις*, viz. goodness and dominion, so he sometimes speaks of the "logos," that is, the word, or wisdom, or reason, as of another power, the director and governor of both these. He calls all these powers "uncreated, eternal, infinite, immense and incomprehensible: By one of these powers all things were created; by another all things are governed." But he makes the "logos" to be employed both in creation and government, though eminently in creation.

In his treatise "de mundi opificio" he says, "the vast intelligible world, or the idea according to which God framed the visible world, can have no place but in the *θεῶν λόγος*, or divine word, for the other powers of God do not afford it a proper place." And a little after he saith, "this intelligible idea, in plain words, is nothing else than the *λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ*, the word of God, or the reason of God creating the world." He speaks of God's creation of the world by the "logos," as an instrument, *ὄργανον*, in several places. And in his "plantation of *Noah*," he tells us, that "man's rational soul is the image of the invisible God, whose character, or express image is eternal reason, or his everlasting word, *ἡ χαρακτὴρ ἐστὶν ὁ αἰδίδενος λόγος*, though whether these two last citations refer rather to the angelic "logos," may admit some doubt.

He

* Though *Philo* abound in unreasonable allegories, and turn the literal history of the bible into an allegorical sense, yet this very allegorical sense is a sufficient indication what his opinions were, even though his application of them to particular scriptures be never so ridiculous: And consequently this is sufficient to answer all the purposes for which I cite him.

He supposes this "logos" of God to be the same as *sophia*, or wisdom, which in his allegorical way he makes the "the daughter of God, and the mother of all things, by which the world was brought forth. This is that wisdom which was with God before the world." See doctor *Allix*, page 147. and Mr. *Nye* against doctor *Allix*, page 71, 77.

Now that by this "logos," the divine reason, or wisdom, *Philo* does not mean a real distinct person, in the literal sense of the word person, is evident; because he says, "before the world was made God was $\mu\acute{o}\nu\omicron\varsigma$, alone; $\epsilon\nu$, one being; and $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\kappa\ \pi\omicron\lambda\lambda\acute{\alpha}\nu\ \sigma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\sigma\iota\sigma\acute{\iota}\varsigma$, not consisting of more:" And he often speaks of the person of God, as one; though he represents several powers in him. See *Nye*, page 69.

We may observe, that *Philo* speaks of wisdom in the feminine, and once he gives this reason for it, viz. to "preserve to God the character of a Father." So doctor *Allix*, page 271. But Mr. *Nye* does not remember that this divine essential wisdom is ever called the Son of God; and he cites "*Origen contra Celsum*, book ii. page 79. saying, "I have often disputed with the *jewish* rabbies: They would none of them acknowledge that the $\Lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, that is, the divine reason, word or wisdom, is the Son of God," page 51. Whence we may infer, that this name Son, seems rather to be appropriated to the Logos, considered as the great arch-angel; even as all the angels are in scripture called the sons of God. Doctor *Allix*, indeed, says, page 122. "that *Philo* asserts the word of God to be the eternal Son of God," and quotes his book "de confusione linguarum." Now I have turned over that book, and have not found this express appellation: But what expressions of that kind I have met with there, and in other of his treatises shall be cited under the following heads.

III. The term "logos" is used frequently by *Philo* for a glorious angel, vastly superior to all other angels, whom he calls the most honourable "logos," the arch-angel, prince of angels and stars; and as the *jews*, and scriptures, call all angels sons of God; so this "logos," this arch-angel, according to *Philo*, is the first-born of all his sons.

In his treatise of "the confusion of tongues," he persuades men to endeavour to be adorned like the first-born word of God, the most ancient angel, the arch-angel who has many names, who is called the beginning, $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$, the name of God; the Word of God; the man after God's image; and the seer of *Israel*." And he adds, "Wherefore I commended those who had said, that we are all sons of one man, $\epsilon\nu\delta\epsilon\ \alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\tau\iota$; for though we are not worthy to be called the children of God, yet we are the children of his most holy word, his $\alpha\iota\delta\iota\omicron\varsigma$, everlasting image; for the most ancient word is the image of God." In another place, a little before this, where he is persuading mankind to peace, he says, "How comes it to pass that ye do not hate war, since ye profess to have the same Father, not mortal but immortal, even $\alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\nu\ \theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \tau\upsilon\ \alpha\iota\delta\iota\omicron\ \lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\ \delta\epsilon\ \delta\epsilon$, a man of God, who being the word of the eternal, must himself also be incorruptible."

Again, "from a companion of *Moses*, that is, *Zacchary* a fellow-prophet, we have heard this saying, behold a man whose name is * THE EAST, $\alpha\nu\alpha\lambda\omicron\lambda\eta$. This is a new sort of appellation, if we understand it of a man who consists of a body and a soul; but if it be understood of that incorporeal man †, who differs not from the divine image, you will

* The branch, *Zech.* vi. 12. is rendered $\alpha\nu\alpha\lambda\omicron\lambda\eta$ by the LXX. which signifies also the east.

† Now that *Philo* seems to mean a man here, or a human soul, may be proved; because he speaks of him in direct opposition to a worse sort of man, whom he also calls $\alpha\nu\alpha\lambda\omicron\lambda\eta$, or the east, because he lived in the east: This was *Balak*, who, saith *Philo*, hath a name like the former, but it is very different in reality.

will confess that it is a most happy name for him: For the Father of beings caused this his most ancient Son to arise, ἀντίστοιχόν, whom otherwise he calls his first-born; who being born did immediately imitate his Father's ways: for seeing his archetypal exemplars, he did form copies exactly like them. This *Pbilo* speaks when he cites *Zechariah* vi. 12. "behold the man whose name is 'Ἀνατολή, the east, or the branch:" "De confusione linguarum." And these words bear a very near affinity to the words of our Saviour himself, *John* v. 19. "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doth, these also doth the Son likewise.

In his book "de migratione *Abrahami*," he says, that "God, who is the mind of the universe, ὁ νῦν τῶν ὄλων, has his "logos" for his house.—What house can he have but his word, who is elder than things created, which the pilot of the universe useth as a rudder, to steer or direct all things." This seems to refer to an angel who is his only begotten Son, prior to all mere creatures, and not ranked among mere created beings, one in whom God inhabits, and by whom he transacts his affairs of government.

Again, saith *Pbilo*, "de agricultura," "God governs this universe as a shepherd doth his flock; over-ruling and managing the earth, water, air, fire, the heavens, sun, moon, things mortal and spiritual, having set over them his own righteous "logos," who is his first-born Son; who takes upon himself the care of this sacred flock, as vice-gerent of this great king: Therefore it is said, *Exod.* xxiii. 20. "Behold I send my angel before thee, to keep thee in the way."

Again in another place, "nothing mortal can be formed, that is, immediately, after the image of the supreme God, and Father of all things; but only after the image of the second god, who is the "logos" of God: For the reasonable part of the soul of man is the express image of the "logos" of God." Though whether *Pbilo* meant the divine essential power, called "logos," or the great arch-angel in this place, perhaps, may be questioned; but it is most agreeable to the last. See more in Mr. *Fleming's* "Christology," volume I. page 248, &c. and Mr. *Nye's* answer to doctor *Allix*, page 75.

Pbilo asserts the great dignity of the angel that appeared to the patriarchs, and calls him eminently the Word. It was the "Word appeared to *Adam*; he appeared also to *Jacob* and *Moses*, though in the books of *Moses* he is called an angel. It was the Word that appeared to *Abraham*, as an angel, and that called to him not to hurt his son, when he was about to sacrifice him. It was the Word appeared to *Hagar*, and to *Jacob*, and delivered him out of all his troubles. It was the Word directed him how to manage *Laban's* flock, and advised him to return to the land of his kindred, that appeared to him in the form of an angel, and wrestled with him, and changed his name to *Israel*. It was the Word who led *Israel* through the wilderness. He was the angel in whom God placed his name; the prince of the angels who was in the cloud, and is called the divine vision of fire. He appeared to *Moses*, and the elders of *Israel* on mount *Sinai*. He appeared to *Balaam* like an angel; and it was the Word, who is the Son of God, that conducted *Israel* through the wilderness." See doctor *Allix's* judgment of the *jewish* church, chapter 12, 13.

"This word is not unbegotten, ἀγέννητος, like God, and yet not begotten, or made γεννητός, like his creatures. He is a divine angel, θεῶν ἀγγελός, and a minister of the gifts of God." "Quod deus sit immutabilis." And it is evident, that *Pbilo* makes a great difference between the true God, and this "logos," or Word: He abounds with instances of this kind, especially in his first book "de somniis." And when he makes God to appear to the patriarchs in form of an angel, he adds, "they understand the
image

image of God, the angel, his word, as though it were himself, because a little after he calls him, the mighty word, who is the deputy of God.

It may be also most properly applicable to this glorious arch-angel, what *Pbilo* saith of the word, in his "allegories of the law," book I. where he cites *Jacob* saying, "The God who hath fed me all my life, and the angel who redeemed me from all evil:" On which he remarks, that "*Jacob* speaks very properly of God himself as his feeder; and the angel, which is his word, as a healer of diseases, or deliverer from evils; and he gives this reason for it, feeding and nourishing are something in nature more considerable than deliverance, and therefore he ascribes the chief benefit to God, and the lower benefit to the angel. I mention not this, as approving the justness of *Pbilo's* criticism, but to shew what was *Pbilo's* opinion of this glorious angel, eminently called the "logos."

It must be granted, that *Pbilo* calls common angels also *λόγοι*, "logoi," or words; but it is abundantly manifest to any man who reads *Pbilo*, and Mr. *Nye* himself acknowledges, there is a great distinction that *Pbilo* makes between that first arch-angel, who is so far superior to all the rest, as to be formed before them all, and to be their ruler or director; and to be eminently called the "logos" above all others.

IV. That the "logos" is esteemed by *Pbilo* the Son of God, is manifest from the citations already made: But we may add further out of doctor *Allix*, chapter 17. that when the question is put, *Prov.* xxx. 4. "What is his name? And what is his Son's name?" It implies, that God has a Son. And *Psal.* ii. 7. where God declares, "Thou art my Son," it determines this character to belong to the *Messiah*. And *Pbilo* accordingly declares that the "logos" is the most ancient Son of God, and his first-born before the angels. And in a citation which *Eusebius* has out of *Pbilo*, he makes him "the eternal word of the eternal God, begotten by the Father." Though it may, perhaps, be doubted, whether *Eusebius* has cited the very words of *Pbilo*. And if *Pbilo* did use the words *αἰδιου* and *αἰώνιου*, and apply them to the son-ship of the "logos," it may be justly questioned whether either *Pbilo* or *Eusebius*, considering their character and sentiments, meant any more than *πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων*, that is, "Before the worlds were made, or before all ages;" unless we suppose both the jew and the christian to blend and confound the ideas of the divine eternal "logos," or reason of God, with the first born "logos," or great arch-angel, which was too often done.

V. This "logos," *Pbilo* supposes to be a mediator between God and men; and though he does not distinctly call him the *Messiah*, yet he calls him a man, and attributes the office of mediator between God and man to him. He calls him in his first book "de somniis ὁ θεὸς λόγος, της ἀρεσκείας κεραλή και τέλος," "the divine word, the beginning and end of the atonement." He supposes it was the "logos" which appeared to the jews on mount *Sinai*, and gave them the law, as a sort of mediator between God and them. He affirms, that the "logos" was the true and eternal priest, "libro de profugis." "That he divided the sacrifice when he appeared to *Abraham*, and that he was the priest of God. That the word is a mediator between God and man; that he makes atonement with God." And many other things which plainly belong to the *Messiah*, our great high priest, in scripture, does *Pbilo* apply to the "logos." See doctor *Allix*, chapter 20.

But for this purpose I need cite no other passage than what I met with lately in *Pbilo's* treatise, "*Quis rerum divinarum hæres.*" He saith, "The Father of all things has bestowed this most admirable gift upon this arch angel, that he should stand as a mediator, *μετόριου*, that is, one on the borders of both, to distinguish between the creature and the Creator. He therefore is an intercessor, *ἰκέτης*, with him that is immortal

immortal, in behalf of perishing mortals. And, on the other hand, he acts the part of an ambassador, from the ruler to his subjects. And this gift he doth so willingly accept, that he glories in it, saying, "And I have stood between God and you," See *Deut.* xviii. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. being one who am neither unbegotten as God, nor made as mortals; but being something middle between these, ἡμῆμεν, acting the part of a hostage with both: With the Creator as a pledge, in faith of this, that he may not ever be provoked to destroy or desert the world, so as to suffer it to run from order into confusion: And with creatures, to give them this certain hope, that God being reconciled, will never cease to take care of his own workmanship. For I proclaim peace to the creature, from that God who removes war, and introduceth and preserveth peace for ever." I find Mr. *Fleming* has transcribed this passage at large, in his "Christology;" and Mr. *Nye* has cited the most remarkable part of this passage also in his "four letters."

From all these citations, out of the *targums* and *Philo's* works, it seems plain, that the term "logos" is sometimes attributed to that which is increated, infinite, supreme of all, of the essence of God, and incommunicably divine: It is at other times used to signify an inferior nature, an angel, something that is derived, begotten, dependent, and much below the dignity of godhead. It must be acknowledged, that these ancient jews mingle some confusion with their writings, and do not keep their supreme and inferior ideas so distinct as one would wish. And this is not strange, because they wanted that clear revelation of the union of God and a creature, in one *Jesus Christ*, one complex principle of action, which we christians enjoy by the gospel.

And yet even the most part of christian writers seem to have unhappily fallen into the same confusions, when they treat of these transactions of the word, before the incarnation: And though they have framed different schemes for the reconciliation of these difficulties, it has been hitherto without any great success. And the reason, perhaps, is this, because each of them generally attribute all that is said of the "memra," or "logos," merely to his divine and supreme nature, or they apply it all merely to his created, or inferior nature; or else they drop one of these natures entirely; and thus miss the mark, for want of supposing such an union between a divine and created nature, before the incarnation of *Christ*: Whereas this union discovers a proper complex subject for these different attributions.

The christian writers who cite those passages out of the *targums* and *Philo* the jew, interpret them according to their own scheme of divinity, and their particular sentiments of the person of *Christ*; as appears if we consider their writings.

Sandius is generally known to be a follower, or imitator, of the *arian* scheme, and he applies as many of these glorious expressions as he can, to the great arch-angel, that first-born spirit, which the *arians* suppose to be the divinest nature of *Christ*, and while he makes this to serve for a human spirit to the *Messiah*, he doth not allow any superior, or divine nature, to belong to him. He sums up his collections out of *Philo*, which he had elsewhere made, in these words, "The "logos" is a second god, next to the first; and governs the world by command of the first God: That God himself and his Word are two things: That the supreme God is unbegotten and invisible, and the God of the Logos; but the Logos is begotten and visible, the minister of God, and the intercessor with God for men, the ambassador of God to men, and a middle being, or medium, betwixt God and creatures." *Sandii* "nucleus historiae ecclesiasticae, page 108." See many other citations of his out of *Philo*, in his "interpretationes paradoxae, &c."

Mr.

Mr. *Nye*, on the other hand, who hath been accused as approaching the *fabellian* principles, seems, in his "letters against doctor *Allix*," to drop this glorious spirit, or arch-angel, which is called the "logos," as a mere *jewish* notion; and does not make it enter into the composition of the person of *Christ*; but supposes the sublimer characters of the "logos," to belong to the essential wisdom of God, or the Word, which was personally united to the man *Jesus* at his incarnation. See his "first letter against doctor *Allix*."

Doctor *Allix*, in his "judgment of the *jewish* church," approaches nearer to the *tritheistical* hypothesis, and is charged with it by Mr. *Nye*, because he speaks of three creators, makers and gods, a trinity of uncreated beings and spirits, see "*Nye* against *Allix*, page 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 177, &c." Now on this hypothesis doctor *Allix* distinguishing the divine wisdom, or Word, from God the Father, as a real, proper, distinct person, sometimes he applies what these *jewish* authors say of the arch-angel, called the "logos," to the eternal divine Word, or wisdom, that is, to the second person in the deity; though this seems not to be agreeable to their sense, for these ancient *jews* describe this angel as a superior sort of created, or derivative being, an effect, or production, of the will and power of God, as the christian fathers speak, and though not coming perfectly into the rank of other creatures, yet not as being the true God, or properly divine. Mr. *Nye* justly reprehends doctor *Allix* for this, that he hath heaped together indifferently all that *Philo* says of several "logoi," and applied all to the eternal essential "logos," not being aware that this eternal essential "logos" is very different from the great created "logos," or arch-angel, who presides over the angels and stars. "Letter II. page 80."

In short, all the moderns interpret these ancient *jewish* writings, as every party of men is ready to interpret the scripture, to support their own hypothesis. But I cannot persuade myself that either *Sandius*, doctor *Allix*, or Mr. *Nye*, in their sentiments, do sufficiently answer the expressions of these ancient authors: For each of them doth either join and affix divine characters to a dependent or created nature, or they apply inferior and creatural characters to a divine nature, or else they drop one or more of these senses of the word "logos," and leave it out of the character of the *Messiah*. Whereas, if we would but give ourselves leave to suppose the *Messiah*, or the Logos, even in his pre-existent state as well as after his incarnation, to be a complex, or compounded person, and that the divine Logos, the eternal Word assumed a super-angelic, or inferior nature, called also "logos" into union with himself before he took flesh upon him, and even before the world was made, this would reconcile all these ideas which seem inconsistent, and scatter the darkness that hangs over these ancient writers, and even over the scripture itself, if this opinion be not admitted.

The learned Mr. *Robert Fleming**, seems to come nearer to the sense of these ancients, and explains them more agreeably to scripture, when he supposes the eternal essential Logos to be a person in the godhead, and to be united to the created "logos" or great arch-angel, which is the pre-existent soul of *Christ*; and thus the sublime and inferior expressions of the ancients concerning this complex being may be happily reconciled and explained.

* As *Scotland* has produced some great and illustrious instances of piety and devotion, some men of a heavenly mind, filled with the fire of divine love beyond their fellows, so this learned author, Mr. *Robert Fleming* is an instance of what might be expected from that nation also in respect of light and sacred knowledge, if they did but exert their genius with the same liberty of sentiment that he used, whose constant motto was, "Liberè sed modèstè."

S E C T I O N IV.

The application of the Jewish sentiments to the scriptural account of Christ.

GIVE me leave now to enquire, whether scripture doth not lead us to this conception of things? Whether scripture does not set the Logos, or Word of God, in all these lights and views? Or, whether the scripture does not speak of *Christ* according to the five particular ideas whereby the ancient *Jews* interpret or explain their "Logos," though for conveniency sake I shall not mention them just in the same order?

I. That *Christ*, who is called the Logos in scripture, is the *Messiah*, admits of no doubt or controversy among christians.

II. That *Christ*, or the Logos, is the Son of God, is also asserted so expressly in many texts, as to forbid all dispute about: And he has obtained this name in scripture, upon these accounts*.

1. On the account of his investiture with the office of the *Messiah*; for hereby he was appointed to be the great high priest, and king of his people: And this title was more eminently his due at his resurrection, ascension, and exaltation in heaven, to be a priest upon a throne, where his kingdom and power to save were more illustriously displayed, according to these texts, *Psal.* ii. 6, 7. "I have set my king upon my holy hill of *Zion*. I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, that is, by intercession in heaven, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, &c. Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish." *Psal.* lxxxix. 27. "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." *Heb.* v. 5. "*Christ* glorified not himself to be made a high priest, but he that said to him, thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee." *Acts* xiii. 30. "God hath fulfilled his promise in raising *Jesus* from the dead, as it is written in the second *Psalms*, thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee."

2. He is called the Son of God on the account of the extraordinary birth of his body, which proceeded from the virgin *Mary* without a human father, by the immediate influence of God. *Luke* i. 35. the angel saith to *Mary*, "The power of the highest shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing which is born of thee shall be called the Son of God." This is most express language.

But it is evident by the foregoing citations, that the Logos is not usually called Son of God by these ancient *Jews*, upon either of these two accounts, but rather on that which follows, which is the third idea of the term "Logos."

III. The Logos is the first-born Son of God, as he is a glorious, angelic, or supra angelic spirit, who was often called an angel under the old testament, when he appeared to the patriarchs. May not this be the human soul of our blessed Saviour? May not this illustrious spirit, this great arch-angel, which is called eminently the Logos, be the prince of angels, who was born before them all, and is the first-born of the creation? May not this be the only begotten Son of God in the high heaven, as *Adam* was here on earth, as having, perhaps, some peculiar mode, or unknown

* Some may wonder, that I have omitted the eternal generation of his divine nature in this place. But I know no text that plainly calls *Christ* the Son, considered as pure God; and if revelation does not dictate the doctrine of a begotten God, reason does not at all require it. But I have given a larger account of this matter in another place.

unknown manner of derivation from the Father, different from the rest of the creatures? For even these ancient *jews*, though they acknowledge him to be, in the general sense, a derived being, and not God, yet they, call him rather the first-born of God, as though creation were too low a term to express his original, and would set him too much on a level with other creatures which were so far inferior to him. And, why may we not suppose the human soul of *Christ* to be derived from God in some unknown, transcendent manner, distinct from other creatures, even as his human body was, and thus to become the peculiar Son of God, both as to his body and soul?

One great reason that hath induced me to believe that the scriptures suppose the soul of *Christ* to be this pre-existent being, this glorious arch-angel, is, because there are so many expressions of scripture both in the old testament and the new which represent *Christ*, before his incarnation, under some characters which are inferior to godhead, some of which I have hinted briefly in the beginning of this discourse.

Now, upon this supposition, that the soul of *Christ* is this most honourable "logos," or chief angel, how properly is he called in the old testament the "angel of God's face, or presence," *Isa.* lxiii. 9. "The angel of the covenant," *Mal.* iii. 1. "The angel, the redeemer of *Jacob*," *Gen.* xlviii. 16. "The angel in whom the name of God was," *Exod.* xxiii. 20. And, "the angel who could say, I am that I am, I am the God of *Abraham*," *Exod.* iii. 2, 14, 15, &c. upon the account of his intimate and personal union to the divine nature?

It might be here enquired also, Whether the angel mentioned in *Eccles.* v. 6. be not the same glorious arch-angel, that is, *Christ*. The words are these; "Say not before the face of the angel, it was an error: Wherefore should God be angry at thy voice?" *Solomon* is here advising us against rash vows. And he supposes some eminent angel, "in whom is the name of God," as *Exod.* xxiii. 20. or who is called God, being present to hear the vow, especially in the house of God, as verse 1. It is certain the *jews* had a common notion of some extraordinary angel in whom God dwelt, and the scripture often intimates it.

IV. The "logos," or word, sometimes signifies the wisdom of the Father, or some special power, or divine sufficiency of the godhead, whereby all things were contrived and created, and which is represented sometimes in a personal manner by these *jewish* writers. *Psal.* xxxiii. 6. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens created." *2 Pet.* iii. 5, 7. "By the word of God were the heavens of old, that is, were created, and by the same word they are preserved, and reserved for the fire." And whether *πῦμα*, used on the same occasion, by which "the world was made, and is upheld," *Heb.* i. 3. and xi. 3. may not be the same with this divine *Λογος*, is matter of enquiry, and in my maturest thoughts, it is not improbable.

In this sense *Christ* is also the Logos or Word of God, for God created all things by that Logos, who "was with God, who was God, who was made flesh, and dwelt among us," *John* i. 1, 14. "He created the worlds by this his Son," *Heb.* i. 2. "He created all things, by *Jesus Christ*," *Eph.* iii. 9. He is that divine wisdom which was with God before the foundations of the world were laid, as *Solomon* describes in *Prov.* viii. 22—31.

And if we can suppose this wisdom, or Word, assuming into union with itself the soul of the *Messiah*, or that great arch-angel, when he was first created, or generated, and using his ministration in it's ancient divine operations and transactions, then all those superior and inferior expressions which are used in *John* i. 1—14. and in *Col.* i. 15—19. and in *Heb.* i. 2—11. and in *Prov.* viii. 22—31. and in *John* v. 19, 20,

26, 27, &c. may be applied to *Christ* as a complex person. Then it may be said concerning this person, "he was brought forth before the hills, the Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way before his works of old, he was set up from everlasting, that is, from the beginning, or ever the earth was," &c.

On this text, in *Prov.* viii. 22. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way," it may be farther observed, that the septuagint renders the *hebrew* word $\text{וְיָדָה עָלַי מֵעַתָּה}$ *ἐκτίσας με*, that is, created me, which the primitive christian writers often cite, but are at a great loss how to explain it. Sometimes they apply it to the Father's constituting *Christ* Lord of the creation; which does not seem to be the true meaning of it in this place. Sometimes they refer it to the production, or generation of the Logos, by the will and power of the Father, which is a superior sort of creation, and may be most properly applied to this angelic Logos, or human soul of *Christ*, which was created or produced by the will of the Father, and assumed into union with, or possessed by the divine Logos before all worlds, of which we shall say more hereafter.

These are only remarks by the way: But it is manifest, that the word of God, or "logos," in scripture, sometimes signifies an essential, co-eternal, divine power. And in that famous text, 1 *John* v. 7. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one;" whether the Logos, or Word, signify this divine power, which is called the second person in the deity, or whether it signify *Christ* in his whole complete person as God-man, is hard to determine.

V. In *Heb.* iv. 12. The Word, the Logos, denotes God acting by his word; Logos implies God himself, for a divine power, is deity. And *Christ* is the Logos in this sense also: For the evangelist *John* says, "The Word was God;" *John* i. 1. and *St. Paul* calls *Christ* "God manifest in the flesh:" 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. He is the Lord, and the God of *Thomas* the apostle; *John* xx. 28. he is "God over all blessed for ever." *Rom.* ix. 5. The divine, essential power, called the Logos, is the true God, for every thing essential to God, is God.

Nor is it strange at all, that Logos should signify God himself, since it signifies the wisdom, or reason of God, for the same word "logos," in it's primary, or most usual sense, denoting the reason of any spirit, is upon that account used sometimes to denote the Spirit itself. Thus the human mind, and angelic spirits, are called λόγος among ancient *greek* writers, particularly *Philo* and *Origen*; but *Christ* is called ὁ λόγος , or, the Word, emphatically, and the divine word.

If therefore *Christ* be a divine power, called the "logos," he is God himself.

Thus all these five applications of the terms "logos," or "memra," or word, as used by the ancient *Jews*, are happily reconciled in our blessed Saviour; and a great part of that confusion which seems to be in their expressions is banished by this representation of things: Thus also there seems to be an illustrious light shed upon many dark passages of scripture, and the inferior and superior characters of the *Messiah*, *Christ*, or Logos, are naturally, and easily adjusted, by supposing his sacred person to be composed of a glorious, created spirit, inhabited by the divine, essential, or personal wisdom, or Word. Thus he was the eternal Creator, and also the first-born of all the creatures, and in some sense existed as God-man before his incarnation. And this is what I have endeavoured to evince by the light of scripture, in a distinct treatise of the "glory of *Christ* as God-man," which may shortly see the light.*

* This treatise was published in 1746, and is the last in this volume.

In this view of things we have no need to make *Christ* to be the Son of God, properly in his divine nature, or to attribute any character of derivation, generation, or dependence, to his pure godhead, which carries a seeming impropriety in it. His sonship, even under the old testament, as well as under the new, is better accounted for this way; and his angelic character, as the messenger of God in all ages, and the revealer of his will to the patriarchs, as well as to us, is preserved and explained, without sinking pure godhead down to inferior characters, or attributing superior and divine characters, titles and prerogatives, to an angelic or inferior nature.

The learned and pious doctor *Thomas Goodwin*, that deep and happy enquirer into the sense of scripture, gives numerous instances wherein the divine nature of *Christ*, must be supposed by way of *prolepsis* to be united to man in many of the expressions of scripture concerning *Christ*. Those glorious texts, *John* i. 1—3. *Col.* i. 16, 17. *Heb.* ii. 2, 3. *Phil.* ii. 6. *Prov.* viii. 22—31. are all interpreted by him in this light, in his second book of the “knowledge of God the Father, and his Son *Jesus Christ*,” vol. II. fol.

“It is *Christ*, says he, considered as God-man, who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature, by whom, and for whom, all things were created in heaven or earth, visible or invisible, who is before all things, and by whom all things consist, who is the Son of God, whom he hath appointed the heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds, who is the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, who by himself purged away our sins, who was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, who is the Word by whom all things were made, and who was with God in the beginning, who was set up from everlasting, and brought up before the hills,” &c. And that learned author contends, that these attributions cannot belong to the pure, simple divine nature of *Christ*, without taking in the inferior nature which was designed to be united to him, and therefore, in the language of scripture, it is mentioned in such a manner as though it were actually united.

There is very little difference between my opinion, and the sentiments of that great man in the exposition of all these scriptures, except only, that he attributes to the human nature of *Christ* before it’s existence, and considered only in it’s designed and future union with the divine nature, those same scriptural properties, characters, and transactions, which I would rather ascribe to the human soul of *Christ*, supposing it actually existent, and considered always in a present, real, and personal union with his divine nature. Now, as he supposes those texts must necessarily be explained concerning *Christ* as God-man, so I suppose a literal interpretation of scripture is to be preferred before a figurative and *proleptical* sense, where it will consist with all other points of reason and revelation; and therefore I am ready to persuade myself, that the supposition of the real existence of the glorious human soul of *Christ*, as a super-angelic being, in actual union with the divine, eternal Logos, before the creation, as it happily corresponds with the ancient *jewish* notions, so it will afford a better solution to many scriptural difficulties, will raise a nobler idea of the person of our blessed Lord, and add a lustre to the whole scheme of the gospel, as depending on his person, characters and transactions.

There is one objection will arise here, viz. how can the human soul of *Christ* be called an angel, since it is said in *Heb.* ii. 16. “He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of *Abraham*.”

Answer I. The words in the original are, ἀγγέλων ἐκ ἐπιλαμβάνειν, &c. “He does not lay hold on angels, but he lays hold on the seed of *Abraham*,” that is, to bring them

them out of that bondage in which they were held in the foregoing verse. Then it follows, verse 17. "Wherefore it behoved him in all things to be made like his brethren," that is, It behoved him, who had a soul before, to take flesh and blood upon him now, since he came to lay hold on men, to rescue them from bondage.

As the greek words themselves do not signify taking the nature of angels, or of *Abraham*, so neither will the context allow that translation, as some learned men have supposed, particularly *Camero*. For it would be hardly consistent language to say, "He took not on him the nature of angels, but took on him the nature of the seed of *Abraham*, for which reason it became him to be made like his brethren, that is, to take flesh and blood upon him." This would be proving "idem per idem." Whereas the sense is very natural when we read it thus, "He does not lay hold on angels to rescue them, but he lays hold on the seed of *Abraham*, for their rescue from bondage. Wherefore it became him in all things to be made like his brethren," that is, It became him, who before was a spirit, now to be made flesh, since he came to redeem those who are partakers of flesh.

Answer II. But suppose our *english* translation were exactly true, yet the human soul of *Christ* may be called an angel in it's separate state, though it be really a human spirit, or of a species of spirits different from the angelic world; for since the vulgar hypothesis supposes, the divine nature of *Christ* to be called an angel in the old testament, because of it's appearances like an angel, and being employed as a messenger from the Father, much more may we suppose the human soul of *Christ* to be called an angel for the very same reasons; while at the same time it might have some peculiar distinguishing properties of a human spirit, which are unknown to us.

S E C T I O N V.

The sentiments of the primitive christians concerning the Logos, and their application of this name to Christ.

THUS we have seen how the doctrine of scripture may be enlightened by some acquaintance with the writings of the ancient *jews*. Now, if we find also, that the primitive christians have left us several traces and footsteps of the same notions, if they speak the same sort of language, and correspond with these sentiments, it will be an additional confirmation of the doctrine which I have proposed.

I shall confine my self, chiefly, in this enquiry, to the writings of the three first centuries, which all the world esteems to be of the chief importance, as being nearest to the days of the apostles. Yet even of these I shall cite but few at large in their own language, because I intend this discourse as a mere essay, or hint of thought to others, who may be much better qualified to pursue such a reconciling scheme, and not as a laborious proof and demonstration of my opinion.

I. That the primitive fathers, by the Logos, intended the *Messiah* in his pre-existent state, is a truth so abundantly manifest, and agreed on all hands, that it would be superfluous to make citations on this head.

II. That the Logos is also the Son of God, is as evident as the former: The writings of the fathers, through all the centuries, are full of it: But in what sense he is a Son, and when he began to be a Son, whether from all eternity, or sometime before the creation, is a matter of difference, and doubtful enquiry, which we shall examine by and by.

III. That

III. That the "logos" or word, is a divine power, eternal, infinite, &c. analogous to mind, wisdom, or reason, is so apparent in their writings, as leaves little room for doubt; though it is also represented often in a personal manner by the christian fathers, even as in the sacred and common *jewish* writings.

The primitive fathers frequently call our Saviour the Word, or reason, the wisdom, the light, the virtue, and the power, Νῆς, or the mind, and sometimes *ὄλημα*, or the will of God. Many of them argue for the eternity of the "logos" upon this principle, that God was always λογικὸς, never ἀλογος, always rational, and never without his reason, his word or wisdom. *Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Tatian,* and several others, assert the Logos to be co eternal with the Father, under the character of the divine word or reason, though not under the special character of a Son.

Theophilus in his second book to *Autolytus*, calls him the wisdom and power of the highest, and the word which was conceived in the heart of God, and by which he formed the world. This word was διαποηθὲς ἐν καρδίᾳ Θεοῦ, and presently he adds, τὶτον ἔχε συμελον ἐαυτῷ ἐν κ' ἐβύτισιν ὄντα, that is, always conceived in the heart of God: This word he had for a counsellor, being his own mind and thought, or prudence.

Hippolytus, contra *Noetum* capite x. asserts, that God being alone was many, for he was ἔτε ἀλογος, ἔτε ἀσοφος, ἔτε ἀδύνατος, ἔτε ἀβέβαιος, neither irrational, nor unwise, nor impotent; or, neither without reason, or without wisdom, or without power, or without counsel; which words, saith the learned doctor *Waterland*, correspond to the several names of the Son, and the holy Spirit, and mean the same thing.

Tertullian, contra *Praxeam* capite v. says, "God was alone, because there was nothing eternal but himself; but even then he was not alone, for he had with him, rationem suam, quam habebat in semetipso, his reason, which was within himself." And again, contra *Hermogenem*, "Habuit deus sophiam suam; hæc illi consiliarius fuit. He had his wisdom with him; and this was his counsellor." He supposes reason to be eternal, and to be before the word. "Non sermoneis à principio, sed rationalis deus etiam ante principium, that is, God had not the word with him, or was not a speaker, from the beginning, but was rational even before the beginning:" See contra *Praxeam* capite v. So that *Tertullian* chuses to translate the eternal Logos, reason; supposing him to become the Word, at or a little before the creation.

Clemen of Alexandria, in *Stromatum* libro vii. calls *Christ*, or the Logos, πατρικὴ ἐνέργεια, a certain virtue, or energy of the Father. And *Justin Martyr*, in his dialogue with *Trypho*, calls him a rational power*, which is also called the glory of the Father.

Now it is evident concerning the Logos, or *Christ*, as he is the wisdom, mind, or reason, of the Father, that he must be truly and properly divine, necessarily existent, eternal, infinite, &c. as the Father; for he is of the very essence of godhead; an eternal divine power, which belongs to the nature of God; which was always with God from eternity; is for ever unchangeable, and inseparable from God: And in this sense he is consubstantial and coessential with the Father.

Though it seems manifest, that the Logos in this sense is a power of the divine mind, and is not another conscious mind, distinct from the Father; yet it was the custom of the ancient *jewish* writers, as well as of the primitive christians, sometimes to represent this Logos, this eternal reason, wisdom, or word, in a personal manner; and

* Perhaps, by δύναις λογικῆς in this place *Justin Martyr* may mean some supra-angelic spirit; but I cannot certainly learn from the context, what his idea was.

and that not only because the scripture favours this dialect, or manner of speaking; but because the eastern nations frequently represent human as well as divine powers, in a personal manner; and the early christians learning their christianity from the apostles, and other converted *jews*, were initiated and trained up in the phraseology of the eastern and *jewish* writers.

It is granted, indeed, that we know not how great the distinction is betwixt God the Father, and his eternal Word or wisdom: It is justly supposed to be great enough to lay a sufficient foundation for such a distinct personal representation, as the scriptural language and style give us. This divine Logos seems to be represented both in scripture, and in the primitive writers, as much distinct from the Father as the same essence admits of, or as distinct as may be, without being another conscious mind. Now this seems to be something more than a mere attribute; and therefore I call the Logos a divine power*; imitating herein both the ancient *jews* and the primitive fathers, who call him frequently *Σοφία*, and *Νεϋς*, and *Δύναμις τῷ Θεῷ*, and particularly *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who makes him *πατρικὴ τις ἐνέργεια*. But since God and his co-essential Word do not seem to have two distinct consciousnesses, or to be two conscious minds, this eternal Logos can hardly be called a person, in the common and literal sense of the term, as a distinct man or angel, but only in figurative and metaphorical language, as some zealous trinitarians have expressed it.

Let it be noted here also, that most of the ancient fathers which have been now cited, do not suppose this eternal Logos, to be an eternal Son; but that he became a Son by a certain generation, prolation, or filiation, which some of them call creation, some time before the world was created.

Some of the ancients, indeed, seem to apply the word Son, to this eternal Logos: And some of them have explained their meaning, that the Logos was *ἐνδιδάθητο*, *ἐν καρδίᾳ*, *ἐν σπλάγχνοις*, that is, conceived in the heart, in the bowels of the Father; that he was potentially in the Father, from eternity, though not actually produced: Which was also the express sense of some in the *Nicene* times, and of the emperor *Constantine*, as *Eusebius* relates it, in his letter to the people of *Cæsarea*.

Or there is another sense wherein the Logos, or eternal divine wisdom, may be called a Son as well as a person, by a figure of speech: For in the ancient eastern and scriptural idioms, any thing that has either a logical or a physical sort of dependence, is sometimes called son, or daughter. So the eternal wisdom, or reason, word, or will, flowing from the essence of God, may, possibly, be called a son. So, among our selves, knowledge, or intelligence, resulting from the essence of the human soul, may be called the offspring of the soul. And though I must confess, I doubt whether the scripture ever calls *Christ* the Son of God in this sense, yet where ancient writers use this form of speech, they may be interpreted in the same manner as later and more modern authors, who use the same phraseology, explain themselves; if there be no better interpretation to be put on their words.

Austin has written much of the trinity, and he often derives the Son from the Father, in such a manner as wisdom and knowledge is derived from the essence of the mind. The school-doctors, and the middle ages of the church, and some general councils, have spoken the same sort of language. *Calvin* and his followers describe what sonship they attribute to the eternal word, or wisdom, in this manner: And Mr. *Baxter*,

* In what sense the Logos, or divine Word differs from an attribute; how it appears to be something analogous to a divine power; and how it is taken sometimes to signify the divine nature it self, exerting a particular power; the discourse on the "distinction of persons" in the trinity accounts for it. See dissertation VII.

ter, who differs from *Calvin* in other things, agrees with him in this. This has been a frequent representation of the sonship of the divine Word, among the most orthodox writers. It is in this manner the learned and ingenious doctor *Wallis* accounts for the sonship of the divine nature of *Christ*, in his "letters on the trinity," and many others of the modern and school trinitarian authors do the same.

Upon the whole it is plain, that the ancients generally, if not universally, suppose the "logos" to be a co-eternal power, belonging to God or the Father; though the most primitive writers do not generally express his proper distinct personality and sonship, until at, or some time before, the creation of the world. They suppose that there was then a generation, or a voluntary divine action put forth, whereby the Logos existed in a new state, and became the Son of God; and that it is in this sense that he is called in scripture, "the beginning of the creation of God, and the first-born of every creature." *Rev.* iii. 14. *Col.* i. 15. "And it was at this time according to some of the fathers, that the divine "logos," or eternal wisdom, began to have a personality, or, at least, a more distinct personality than it had before." "*Baxter's methodus theologiae*," page 96. line the last.

IV. I proceed now to shew that these ancient primitive fathers, believed the "logos" to be true God: And there is no need to labour in the proof of this, for since they describe him as a divine power eternally and essentially belonging to the godhead, it follows, that they must attribute proper deity to him, for every thing essential to deity is true God. What *Mr. Baxter* says in his "methodus theologiae de trinitate," seems to demand the assent of intelligent readers, "Christum esse dei λόγος, seu sapientiam, in ecclesia uno quasi ore pronunciatum esse, seculorum omnium testimonia probant. The testimonies of all ages of the church, pronounce, as it were with one mouth, that *Christ* is the Logos, the word or wisdom of God."

Let it be seriously considered, what a multitude of scriptures in the old testament, in which the one supreme God is plainly spoken of, are applied to *Christ*, or the Logos, by the primitive fathers: As, *Gen.* iii. 8, 9. "They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden, and the Lord God called to *Adam*." *Gen.* xix. 24. "The Lord, or *Jehovah*, rained upon *Sodom*, brimstone and fire from the Lord." *Gen.* xvii. 1, 2. "The Lord appeared unto *Abraham*, and said, I am the almighty God." *Gen.* xxviii. 13. "The Lord stood above it, that is, *Jacob's ladder*, and said, I am the Lord God of *Abraham* thy father, and the God of *Isaac*, &c." And many other texts there are, wherein the names, characters, and transactions of *Jehovah*, the Lord and God of *Israel*, are attributed by the fathers to the Logos, or *Christ*. While I have been reading in *Justin Martyr's* dialogue with *Trypho* the jew, how he directly ascribes to *Christ*, those sacred names of the Lord of hosts, the king of glory, God the Saviour, God the Lord, our God and our king, in the xxiv. and xlvi. *Psalms*; and other illustrious divine titles in the xlv. lxiii. xcvi. *Psalms*, and elsewhere; I have been ready to wonder, how any writers could fairly deny true and eternal godhead to be attributed to *Christ*, by any of the primitive fathers.

Besides all this, when I consider the characters of supreme deity, and of perfect unity with the Father, even in the same substance, which are ascribed to the Logos, or to *Christ*, by the primitive writers, I think there is evident proof, that they supposed true godhead to belong to him. Their language represents him as an essential power of God himself. *Origen* says, "Let him that dares to say, there was a time when the Son was not, consider that he also says, there was a time when wisdom was not, and when light was not." And there are others of the ancients that argue just in the same manner, viz. that God could never be ἀλογος or ἀσοφος, that is, without his

word, his reason, and wisdom. *Origen* further asserts, that the "omnipotence of the Father and the Son is one and the same; as the Son is one and the same Lord and God with the Father." He calls him "the divine Word, who is God by nature." *Irenæus* calls him, *Ipse Deus*, or God himself; not another God, but the same God with the Father. This author abounds in expressions which make the Father and Son the one God. *Libro iv. capite 11.* "Qui igitur à prophetis adorabatur Deus vivus, hic est vivorum Deus, et verbum ejus qui locutus est *Moyse*, qui et *Sadducæos* redarguit, &c." And at the end of the chapter he concludes, "Ipse igitur *Christus* cum Patre, vivorum est Deus." "He who was adored by the prophets as the living God, is the God of the living, *Mat. xxii. 32.* and his Word who spake to *Moses*, and refuted the *Sadducees*. Therefore *Christ*, with the Father, is the God of the living." Again, he begins, *libro iii. capite 6.* in this manner, viz. "Neither the Lord, nor the holy Spirit, nor the apostles, would have definitively and absolutely called him God, who was not God, nor any one unless he were the true God." Then he goes on to shew, how *Christ* is called God, *Psal. xlv. 6.* "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." *Psal. l. 1.* "The God of gods, the Lord hath spoken;" on which he comments thus, "What God is this of whom it is said, God shall come, even our God, and shall not keep silence? This is the Son, who says openly, I am found of them who seek me not, &c."

If we consult the ancients, with one mouth they all declare, that God alone is to be worshipped; and yet they declare also for the worship of the Son, or the divine Word: And when I read these expressions, I cannot suffer my self to believe, that while they wrote those things, they could deny *Christ* to be the true God. It is evident to me, they believed his godhead.

But I forbid my self to proceed in this work: It seems to be a needless and useless thing, to prove that the Fathers, in a multitude of their expressions, asserted the true deity of the Logos, after those great and learned authors, bishop *Pearson*, bishop *Bull*, doctor *Waterland*, and doctor *Knight*, have done it so effectually, in their large and laboured writings.

V. The remaining sense in which the ancient *jewish* writers used the term Logos, is that of a "glorious angel, or arch-angel, formed before the creation of the world; called the first-born Son of God; the man after the image of God; the one man who is the father of all others; the beginning; the name of God;" and who was employed as a messenger to the ancient patriarchs, and an instrument, or medium, by which God transacted many other important affairs, with regard to this lower world. Now the great enquiry is, Whether the primitive christian fathers ever used the word "logos" in this sense.

Here I must acknowledge, that they speak with much confusion, and mingle the ideas of the increated or eternal Logos together with some inferior and creatural ideas; which they attribute also to the Logos. This would make one think, that some of them might have some obscure notices, intimations, and conceptions of this angelic Logos, as personally joined, and made one with the divine eternal Logos: Though neither the primitive christians, nor the ancient *jews*, keep the ideas of these two beings distinct; for sometimes they seem to attribute different, and seemingly inconsistent properties and actions to one and the same single "logos." But an enquiry into this matter is the business of the next section.

SECTION

S E C T I O N VI.

An enquiry whether the most primitive christian fathers spake of the Logos as an angel, or a glorious spirit inferior to God.

THAT I may give some general idea of the language of the fathers on this subject, I will range their sentiments under these four heads.

I. They represent the Logos as being produced by, or derived from God the Father, by his will and power. He is called by some of the ancients, a birth, γέννημα; a production, πρόβλημα; a second God, δευτέρος θεός; and, sometimes, θεός γενήσθαι, a made God; and represented as being made God, θεοποιούμενος, by communication, or participation of the godhead of the Father. They speak frequently of the "Son's subordination to the Father, as to his being; of his proceeding, or leaping forth, or being produced from the Father by generation, being the first-born of every creature." They speak of his "existence, and his godhead being derived from the Father, together with all his power and glory:" "Of his receiving all that he has from the Father:" "Of his being generated by the power, by the will, and even by the design and counsel of the Father*:" "Of his becoming God by the generation of the Father, which generation proceeded from his will." And *Tatian* calls him "a heavenly spirit, begotten by the Father; and the first-born work of the spirit," πρῶτόγονον ἔργου.

When they speak of God the Father, they greatly advance their style; they bear witness to his self-existent, unbegotten, and underived nature, and call him ἀψιθελός, that is, God of himself; which sort of expressions they utterly deny concerning the Son. When they explain that text, *John* xiv. 28. "The Father is greater than I," the ancients generally confess it to belong to *Christ* in his pre-existent nature, before his incarnation: And because the Father is the principle and original of the Son, therefore they say, he is greater.

It is true, they sometimes make the nature of the Father and Son the same: But they had such a settled belief and universal maxim among them, that the Father had some pre-eminence and prerogative above the Son, that they express his priority and superiority to the Son, in various forms of speech. Bishop *Bull* affirms this in "Defensione fidei nicaenae," sectione iv. capite 2. de subordinatione filii. And capite 1. he asserts, that "All the fathers without fear pronounced him principium, causa et autor filii, ἀρχη, αἴτια, & αἴτιος τῆ ἑναι, the principle or spring, the cause, the au-

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* It is a frequent expression among the ancients, that *Christ* was begotten by the will, or counsel, and power of the Father: And I humbly conceive, that the ancients in these places, speak of the temporal, voluntary and ante-mundane generation of the Son, and not of his eternal existence. The common sense of these expressions, by the will of God, or by the power of God, in scripture, doth not imply a necessity of nature, but arbitrary will. So *St. Paul* is often called an apostle by the will of God: And there are above thirty places in the new testament, where the will of God carries the same idea. And throughout all the bible, when things are said to exist, or come to pass by the power of God, I think it always implies the voluntary, or arbitrary exercise of divine power. And the most early fathers use these phrases in the same sense.

Let it be observed also, That in the same primitive writers I have found the same phrase, "By the will of God," used several times, and applied to the incarnation of *Christ*, or his mission into this world by the will of the Father; which is, certainly, his arbitrary will. I might add also, that bishop *Bull* himself, speaking of the generation of *Christ*, θελήσει καὶ βούλησι, by the will and counsel of the Father, declares, "Fructra sudant theologi, ut hæc dicta conciliant cum æterna filii generatione." Breves animadvertiones in *Cuibernum Clerik*. Annotata ad paginam 117.

thor of the Son, the cause of h's being;" as well as that the Father is said to be the spring of his godhead and power. He is the fountain, the root, the head of the Son, and has the peculiar title of the only true God. And as the Father is the cause, so the Son is *αἰτιατός*, the thing, or person, caused. And bishop *Bull* expressly grants, that in the sense of the fathers, and in his own opinion, "The Son received not only his person, but his nature and deity from the Father." See "Defensionem fidei nicaenae," sectione iv. capite. 1. § 7.

II. The Logos is not only represented by these writers as generated, and existing by the will and power of God, but a great part of the ante-nicene fathers, and some of the post-nicenes also represent the procession, prolation, production, or generation of the Son, as temporary, and at some time before this world was made; or in order to form, make, or to adorn this world.

It must be confessed, that the post-nicene writers speak more of the eternal generation than the primitive ancients had done, yet they make his ante-mundane production from the Father to be a generation alio, and suppose this to be voluntary as well as temporal.

Though all of them grant the co-eternal existence of the Logos, as a divine power, as the reason or wisdom of God, and in this sense some of them say, the Father was always a Father, and never was without the Son, considered as the internal word, wisdom or reason of God, or considering God the Father, as having the Son always potentially within him, yet many of the most early writers make the generation, and distinct Sonship of the Logos, to be temporary and voluntary, and ante-mundane, and speak not plainly of any other, as *Justin*, *Athenagoras*, *Theophilus*, and several more besides them. Some of the most ingenious, and learned defenders of the eternal godhead of *Christ*, have constantly allowed the highest generation of the Son, spoken of by *Justin*, and several others of the fathers, to be temporal, and that, perhaps, even the nicene bishops, meant the same, when they call the Son light of light, &c.

Tertullian saith plainly, "Though God is a Father, yet he was not always a Father, for he could not be a Father before there was a Son, now there was a time when the Son was not." He speaks always of the generation of the Son as a voluntary thing, and brought about in time: He calls this the "perfecta nativitas sermonis," though the "logos," considered as reason, was in the heart of God from eternity. So *Theophilus*, libro ii. ad *Autolyicum*, speaks of the *Λόγος* which was always *ἐνδιάβητος ἐν καρδίᾳ θεοῦ*, but afterwards God generated and produced this Word, *τὸν λόγον ἐγέννησε προφύρικτον, πρωτότοκον πάσης κτίσεως*. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who is a zealous assertor of the deity of the Logos, the divine word or wisdom, speaks of the Son of God as *πρωτότης σοφίας*, the first created wisdom: And many of the fathers speak of *σοφία*, or wisdom, as created, when God sent her forth to make the world, and they imitate herein the words of the LXX, in *Prov. viii. 22*. "where wisdom saith, "The Lord created me the beginning of his ways." *Κύριος ἔκτισε με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἔργα αὐτῆ*, or he made me as his first way towards his other works, as some of them seem to explain it.

Not only the most ancient writers, but even some in the times of the nicene council had this notion of the eternal existence of the Logos in God the Father, and the production of him as a distinct Son in Time, or at least, not co-eternally. For *Atanasius* himself speaking concerning *Christ*, or the Word, says, "He who had an existence before was afterward begotten into a Son, *τὸν ὄντα πρότερον, ὕστερον γεννηθέντα ἐν υἱῶν*

vid. And the emperor *Constantine*, in *Eusebius's* letter to the church at *Cæsarea*, says, that "with respect to his divine generation he had a prior existence before all ages, forasmuch as before his actual generation he was potentially in the Father after an unbegotten manner." And this we may suppose they spoke in direct opposition to the *arian* error, who denied *Christ* to be any thing before he was begotten or born, and which was one of the errors which was anathematized in the council.

Let it be noted also, that though the distinct generation of the Son is not supposed to be co-eternal with the existence of the Logos in the heart of the Father, yet it is by some of the ancients described as before all worlds or ages, *πρὸ πάντων αἰώνων*, and that must be in some unknown moment of the divine eternity.

III. This Logos, or Son of God, is represented under various other characters, which seem to denote an inferiority to the supreme God over all, and would lead one to suppose, they might have some idea of an angelic being. He is called frequently an angel by the ancients, and yet they say, "It is impious to call the supreme God over all an angel." He is acknowledged to "receive all his power from the Father, and that he is subject to the Father; that in all things he ministers to the will of the Father, and acts by his authority:" He is sometimes said *ὑπηρετῶν* καὶ *ὑπαρχῶν*, to serve the Father or to work under him; that he is not stronger than the Father, but inferior or weaker, so *Origen*, *ἐκ ἰσχυρότερος ἀλλ' ὑποδέεστος*. That the Father is stronger, more powerful, more sublime, than the Son, so *Tertullian*. "Innatum nato fortius; infectum facto validius; quod, ut esset, nullius eguit auctoris, multo sublimius erit eo, quod, ut esset, aliquem habuit autorem. Contra *Hermogenem*, capite xviii. That the Son is the second God, or the next power after the first God; that he pays due honour to the Father by calling him "The only true God," *John* xvii. 3. owning "the Father to be greater than he," *John* xiv. 28. and all this with regard to his pre-existent nature before his incarnation.

The learned bishop *Bull*, that excellent defender of the deity of *Christ*, in his defence of the nicene faith, section iv. chapter 3. acknowledges that "almost all the catholics before the days of *Arius* seem not to have known the invisible and immense nature of the Son of God, and they spake sometimes of him as though, even according to his divine nature, he were finite, visible, included in a certain place, and circumscribed in certain limits, while they, at the same time assert, and prove the Father to be immense, to fill all places, and to be included in none. Thence they infer, that it is not the Father that appeared as God and *Jehovah* to the patriarchs, but the Son." For this he cites *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Novatian*, and mentions also *Theophilus*, *Ireneus*, *Origen*, and six other bishops, as speaking the same sort of language*. I confess, bishop *Bull* attempts a solution of this difficulty, both in that treatise, and in his remarks on *Gilbert Clerk*, and excuses the fathers, by "assigning invisibility to the real nature of the Son, but visibility to his oeconomic character; it being condecant and agreeable that the Son should exhibit sensible tokens of his presence in certain places rather than the Father; because he had undertaken, even from the fall of man, to be a mediator, and thus gave some pre-significations of his incarnate state, being sent by the Father to appear amongst men." But the various manners of solving these difficulties shall be considered more particularly in the following section; I insert this account of the writings of the ancients in this place, only as

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* It is worthy our notice, that *Philo the jew*, in his book "De somniis," speaks the same language too, asserting that the "true God cannot be seen," but when he appeared to men it was in the form of an angel, of his most ancient and sacred Word, who is his deputy.

an intimation, that it is possible the ancients might have some confused idea of an inferior nature belonging to the Son before his incarnation.

.. IV. Another circumstance that would lead one to think, that some of the primitive ancients might have some intimations of a Logos inferior to God, is, that they assert the very Logos himself to be made passible, and to suffer upon the cross; and that in a real and proper manner the Logos, or Word, was sensible of the sorrows which *Christ* endured for our sakes. Now we cannot suppose that they ever imagined that Logos, which was the eternal word, or wisdom of God, to become passible, or to suffer pain or sorrow, any otherwise than in a mere relative manner, that is, as it was united to that soul and body which did suffer; for every thing of godhead is for ever impassible. And for this reason, when they write against the *Patripassians*, they abominate the thought of God the Father becoming passible. But there is a Logos which they suppose to become passible, and actually to feel and suffer shame and sorrow: It seems to be the labour of their expression, and the very thing in view, to shew, that the Word itself was passible and suffered. *Ireneus* was engaged in his writings against those who supposed that *Christ* fled away and left *Jesus* only to suffer, because they imagined that the true *Christ* was always impassible, and therefore his business was to shew, that the Word, the Son of God, became passible and suffered. See libro iii. capite 17, 18. and several other places. And *Justin Martyr*, in his dialogue with *Trypho*, speaks of the Son of God being ἀληθῶς ἐν πάθειν, really in sufferings for us; and λόγον παθόντα, the word suffering*. Thence I infer they might have some notion of a Logos inferior to godhead.

These are the four particulars whereby I proposed to enquire, whether the primitive fathers of the christian church might be supposed to have any notion of an angelic Logos, who is the Son of God, and yet inferior to the divine Logos, or the eternal word, or wisdom, of the Father.

I have now finished my account of the Logos, as exhibited in the ancient christian writers. I dare not pronounce them all of one mind in the things I have mentioned, nor that the same authors are always steady in asserting the same things, either in a consistence with themselves, or with one another: But I think in the main, these opinions which I have recited in these two last sections concerning the Logos, seem to be the more general sense of the primitive fathers, before the controversy of *Arius* arose, or the council of *Nice* was called: And it is known also, that some of the ancients, both at that time, and afterward, express themselves almost in the same manner.

* It is granted, that some of the ancients might perhaps believe a certain animal soul in *Christ* considered as a man, which was the immediate subject of the sensations of wounding, scourging, nailing, &c. for their philosophy did hardly suppose the rational soul in man to be capable of these sensations. But it seems to be their general apprehension that the Logos or Word itself did really and truly sustain, if not sensible pain, yet, sorrows and afflictions, in opposition to those who asserted him to suffer only putative, that is, relatively, or by construction.

S E C T I O N VII.

A bumble attempt to reconcile the difficulties arising from the various expressions of the primitive fathers.

Whoever reads all this variety of language concerning the Logos, in these two last sections, where he is represented in the sublime characters of true and eternal godhead, and in the inferior characters of a dependent being, must readily confess that there is some difficulty in reconciling them.

From these different expressions of the primitive fathers arises the controversy in the church in later ages, concerning their sentiments of the godhead of *Christ*.

The *arians*, and all the rest who imitate their opinions, finding such a multitude of phrases, and forms of speech in these primitive writers, wherein the Logos is sunk below the dignity of godhead, they are tempted utterly to deny the true and proper deity of the Logos. And either they interpret the most sublime and divine characters given to the Logos in a rhetorical way, and reduce them to an inferior sense, by a hard and unreasonable strain of the words, or else they drop the sublimest expressions, as not belonging to *Christ*, or as inconsistent with the inferior characters given him; and then applying the inferior expressions only to him, they claim these ancients entirely on their side, though I think, without just reason.

The *athanasians*, together with the scholastic trinitarians, and all their followers, reading the several glorious, eternal, and divine characters, ascribed to the Logos, plainly find, that the ancients believed him to have true and proper godhead; and I think they prove it with sufficient brightness and evidence. But they are sometimes hard put to it to find out methods of accounting, how all the inferior and creatural characters may be given to the self-same Logos.

Were there not such a number of expressions in these ancient writers which ascribe so different, and seemingly inconsistent characters, viz. both the properties of God, and a creature, to the Logos, we can hardly suppose that modern writers of such sense and sagacity, such probity and great learning, could run into so different extremes, could maintain such warm contentions to defend their own opinions, which are so widely distant, and that each should alledge and believe the ancient fathers to be on their side. There seems to be so much darkness and perplexity amongst the fathers in this matter, as constrained bishop *Bull*, that great and sincere defender of the deity of *Christ*, to call some of their expressions "parum cautæ locutiones, duræ, et incommodæ, &c." He makes a honest and ingenuous complaint on this occasion, "ad mira hæc patrum dicta quis non planè obstupescat? Quo sensu hæc istius modi ipsorum dicta sanari possunt?" *Defensione fidei nicaenæ, sectione iv. capite 3. § 4.* And in the beginning of this chapter he mentions a particular set of expressions concerning the visibility and locality of the Son, and the invisibility and unconfineableness of the Father, which run through almost all the monuments of the primitive writers, and which seem to contradict the deity of the Son, and this is, says he, nodus vindice dignissimus, fateor me ad istum lapidem olim offendisse, &c. The sense, in english, is this. "These are hard sayings, uncautious expressions, and inconvenient speeches. Who is there would not stand amazed at such strange expressions of the fathers? What wise and happy method will reconcile them? What medicine will make them found?"

found? This is a difficulty worthy of a solution; I confess I was once ready to stumble at this stone:" &c. So hard is it for a honest and good man not to acknowledge the perplexity, darkness, and seeming inconsistency of those venerable writers, on this subject! And the reverend doctor *Waterland*, with the same ingenuity, now and then confesses the difficulty of reconciling some of their expressions, and gives up a few of them, as improprieties or mistakes.

I might take notice here also, that there are some writers of name and worth among the *athanasians*, that speak with more freedom, and plainly declare, that several of the ancients, by their frequent ascriptions of creatural ideas to the Logos, laid a foundation for *arianism* in the following ages, and therefore they will not abide by their sentiments, nor pretend to vindicate or excuse their expressions, because they cannot be all applied to the divine nature of *Christ*.

But let us consider more particularly, how the learned authors among the *athanasians*, who are most favourable to the ancients, attempt to remove this stumbling block. So far as I can gather light from their several works, they seem to depend upon these following principles of solution.

I. That the temporal and voluntary generation of the Logos, which is the only generation many of the anti-nicene fathers speak of, is not properly a generation, but a mere manifestation of him, when God created the world by this Logos, or Word; and that he was, indeed, eternally, and properly, a distinct person from God the Father, and that he was the Son of God from all eternity, though he was not discovered as such until the creation. All these words, of generation, prolation, production, &c. therefore must mean nothing but manifestation. They make his eternal existence to arise from eternal generation, which those ancients do not mention, and they make his procession to create the world to be no real generation, which is the only generation those ancients speak of.

And they add further, that where the Logos is said to be "begotten, or produced by the will, counsel, and power of God," when these words refer to this "temporary, ante-mundane generation, or manifestation," they may signify the free or arbitrary will of God the Father: But if ever these words do refer to the eternal, and proper generation of the Son, that is, his emanation from the Father, then they must signify nothing but the acquiescence, or consent of the Father, to the natural and necessary emanation of this Logos, or co-eternal Son.

II. Some of the *athanasians* suppose there may be some "real and natural subordination of an eternal Son to an eternal Father, though the divine nature be equal in them both," and that is, by supposing the Father only to be self-existent and independent, and by referring the Son's existence, and his godhead and power to the Father, as the spring and fountain of it, from which it is derived by way of natural and necessary emanation; and they think that this will account for all those inferior sort of expressions which are used concerning the derivation of the Logos from God the Father, and the Father being greater than the Son.

III. They add in the next place, that the distinctions of priority and posteriority of order between the Father and the Son, even in the divine nature, will solve many of the expressions of the Fathers without a real subordination of nature.

IV. Another principle of accommodation is this, That the Son, though equal to the Father in nature, or essence, yet is oeconomically subordinate, that is, it is appointed in the dispensations of God toward his creatures, that the Son should act an obedient and subjective part by the relation in which he stands, and the office which he sustains

sustains with regard to God and creatures : And that all this may be done by the divine condescension of the eternal Logos ; and thus the inferior and creatural sort of expressions applied to the Logos by the primitive fathers, must be construed oeconomically.

V. They suppose, in the last place, that the eternity and necessity of the existence of the Son, are sufficient to secure his true and proper deity, even though it be really derived from the Father, and therefore cannot be self-existent. They suppose also, that the eternal, necessary, and inseparable union of the Father, Son, and Spirit, is sufficient to secure the unity of the godhead, though they be really three distinct, intelligent agents or natures, and proper, different persons, almost in the complete and literal sense of the words as used among men.

I shall not make it my business to attempt to destroy any of these solutions. I freely acknowledge, that these methods of reconciling the strange, and jarring expressions of the primitive writers, are candid and ingenious ; and some of them have some colour and support from scripture, as well as from the writings of the fathers themselves ; yet after all the mollifying constructions of interpreters, I think still the difficulties can scarce be solved upon that hypothesis, without allowing too many "catchreses," and too hard figures of speech, by speaking of God like a creature, and of a creature like God. These lay a foundation for very obscure and perplexed ideas, and thereby introduce perpetual contests betwixt learned men, concerning the sense of the fathers.

May it not be lawful therefore, to propose another method of reconciling the various, and seeming inconsistent expressions of the primitive fathers concerning the Logos ? The proposal is as follows.

If the same single subject, the same simple Logos, cannot sustain such different and contrary characters, let us enquire, whether the Logos be not a complex subject, made up of two distinct subjects, each of which has had the appellation of Logos, or the Word, both in the *jewish* and christian writings ?

May we not suppose the Logos, or Word, considered as something in the godhead analogous to a power or virtue, to be infinite, uncreated, co-essential, and co-eternal with God the Father, as being of his very essence, and in this sense true God ? May not this sometimes be represented in a personal manner as distinct from the Father ? Would not this be the proper subject of the most sublime attributions given to the Logos ?

May we not suppose also, that in some unknown moment of the divine eternity, God, by his sovereign will and power, produced a glorious spirit in an immediate manner, and in a very near likeness to himself, and called him his Son, his only begotten Son ? Would not this be a proper subject for all the inferior attributions ? Might not this be that Logos of *Philo*, and the other ancient *jews*, who was called the first born of God, the eldest arch-angel, the man after God's own image ? &c. and might not this be the human soul of our blessed Saviour ?

Supposing further this angelic spirit to be assumed into a personal union with the divine Logos, from the first moment of his existence, might he not be called the Son of God also, upon this account ? May it not be said, that true godhead is communicated to the Son of God in this manner, and that by the free will of the Father ? "For it pleased the Father that the fulness of the godhead should dwell in him." *Col. i. 19.* And in this sense the Father may be called the author and the cause both of his existence, his godhead, and all his powers ; for though the godhead of the Logos, or divine wisdom be essential to the nature of God, and eternally independent, yet it may be communicated, that is, united, to an inferior spirit, by the will of the Father, with-

out any diminution of it's divine independency. Now by virtue of this personal union, or inhabitation, of the divine mind, or wisdom, in this glorious angelic being, the Son becomes more eminently the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

Then will it not follow, that this whole complex being, viz. God and a creature, might be that Logos, or Word of God, which the scripture so frequently speaks of in the old and new testament? Might not this be the glorious God-angel, who appeared to the patriarchs, as an angel, and as a man; and assumed the names and titles of God, *Jehovah*, the almighty, the God of *Abraham*? &c. Might not this be that sacred Logos, that Word of the Lord, who visited the prophets, and holy men of old, and brought divine messages to them? Might not this be that God, and *Jehovah*, who led the *Israelites* through the red sea, in the pillar of cloud, and fire, and that *Christ* whom they tempted in the wilderness? In short, might not this be that Logos, or glorious person, called the Word of God, by whom God transacted all his ancient affairs in the creation of the world, and in the government of his church? And would not this complex being be a proper subject, to receive either the divine or creatural ascriptions which are given to *Christ* in scripture, and in the ancient fathers?

Might not this Logos, in the complex character of God and a creature, or the Son of God inhabited personally by eternal wisdom, according to scripture, in the fulness of time assume flesh and blood into union with himself? Might he not thus be made in the likeness of man, become complete God-man, and be sent into this world that he might become a redeemer and Saviour, by his death, his resurrection, and his succeeding advancement in heaven?

May not this be the true scriptural notion and description of the person of *Christ*, or God incarnate, God manifest in the flesh? Is not this that Son of God who is one with the Father, as he is the wisdom of God? Who was the angel of the Lord, and the angel of the covenant, as he was the soul of *Christ* before his incarnation? And who is the man *Jesus*, the perfect mediator, since he was made partaker of flesh and blood? And may not this be supposed to be the easiest and happiest way of reconciling the different and almost inconsistent characters, which are attributed to the Logos by the ancients? Where one single being is not a sufficient subject to sustain both characters, a complex subject may easily sustain them.

So some of the ancient philosophers supposed man to be one single being, and attributed all the powers and properties both of reason and vegetation, to the human animal: But the moderns having well considered, that the powers of reasoning, and the powers of vegetation, cannot belong to the same simple subject, one being the property of matter, and the other of mind, they are led necessarily to infer, that man is a compound being, made up both of matter and mind: The scripture itself also confirms this inference, and assures us of the truth of it, by making the soul and body of man two distinct beings.

Thus scripture and reason seem to agree to inform us, that as man, with his distinct properties of reason and vegetation is composed of body and spirit; so they lead us to suppose, that the pre-existent nature of *Christ*, which is called the Logos, is composed, or constituted of God and a creature, or an inferior spirit, personally inhabited by the divine Word, to which the distinct properties of God and a creature may be attributed.

S E C T I O N VIII.

Considerations which tend to support this construction of the primitive fathers.

Consideration I. **T**H E ancient *jews*, viz. the *targumists*, or commentators, and *Philo*, give us these descriptions, both of a divine and an inferior Logos, and they seem to have borrowed them from the bible, and their old traditional explications of it. Let it be observed now, that these persons lived near the time when the new testament was written, and that the apostles themselves were *jews*, and used the phrases of their country, and that the primitive christians learned their notions of theology from the apostles, and from others of the first christians, who were themselves converted *jews*. Thence we may naturally and easily suppose, that those phrases, idioms, sentiments, and manners of thinking and speaking, which were borrowed by the *jews* from their traditional sense of the old testament, might be the common and most natural language and sentiments of the first christians. The phrases and notions of both of them concerning the Logos, have something akin, and the strain of their expressions are plainly tinged by similar and correspondent ideas.

Consideration II. It is evident, from what we have said before, that the holy scripture gives the name of Logos, or Word of God, to a certain power of the divine nature, whereby all things were created, *Psal. xxiii. 6.* and *2 Pet. iii. 5.* It gives the same name also to our blessed Saviour in his incarnate state, *1 John i. 1, 2.* and *Rev. xix. 13.* So that here is a Logos who is true God, and a Logos who is a man.

It is also manifest, that our Saviour, since his incarnation is a complex person: "He is the child born, and the mighty God:" *Isai. ix. 6.* "He is God manifest in the flesh:" *1 Tim. iii. 16.* "He is a man of the seed of *David*, and God over all, blessed for ever." *Rom. ix. 5.*

It is generally agreed also, that before his incarnation, he was the angel of the Lord, and also the almighty God: He was "the God who fed *Jacob*, and the angel who redeemed him:" *Gen. xlviii. 15, 16.* "He was the man who wrestled with *Jacob*, and God, the Lord of hosts, whose name and memorial is *Jehovah*," *Gen. xxxii. 24.* and *Hosea xii. 5.* which seem to imply a complex nature, as I have manifested at large in another discourse, "of the glory of *Christ* as God-man."*

Now since the scripture has revealed to us a superior and inferior nature in *Christ*, to sustain the divine and creatural characters attributed to him, why may we not suppose the primitive fathers, under the influence of these scriptural representations, might be led to attribute both divine and creatural characters to *Christ*, the Logos, the Son of God, in his pre-existent state, though they do not evidently keep up the just and distinct ideas of two beings, united in one complex person.

Consideration III. Perhaps this construction of the ancient christian writers, may be the easiest and happiest method of reconciling their strange and jarring expressions, both to one another, and to scripture; and, perhaps, it may be the only, or, at least, the best way, whereby we can affix clear, distinct, and intelligible ideas to them. Let us make a few experiments.

When *Theophilus* says, the Logos, or eternal word, which was always in the heart of God, was afterwards produced, generated, and became a son; this may be explained, by God's producing a human spirit, or angelic Logos, a first-born Son, by a voluntary act of his will, and then assuming this first-born Son into a personal union

* This discourse was published in 1746.

with his divine word, or wisdom: And thus he made this divine Word become his Son. The divine Word which had an existence before, was then made his Son, by union with his Son. And this is very agreeable to scripture language; for when in *John i. 14*. "The Word is said to be made flesh," all christians agree, that it signifies only, that flesh was assumed into a personal union with the Word.

If *Justin Martyr*, who in the judgment of the learned, speaks the sense of the other *ante-nicene* fathers, assert the Logos "always to have co-existed with the Father, and that he was then begotten, when God by him created the world;" this may be exactly explained in the same manner as *Theophilus*: And all the rest of the fathers, before and after the council of *Nice*, who speak of the Logos existing eternally with God, before he was generated and became a Son, may be interpreted in the same manner.

When they speak of the generation of the Son, by the will and power of God the Father; when they assert the Father to be the cause, fountain, spring of his existence, and of all his powers; when they call him *conditio*, *δημιούργημα*, *κτίσμα*; a creature, and the first-born work of the Spirit, &c. Here is an angelic Logos, or human soul, a proper subject for those inferior ascriptions.

And when the Father is said to be the author of his godhead, or to communicate godhead to him, this is done by the Father's voluntary act, of uniting the divine Logos, that is, his own eternal word or wisdom to this angelic spirit, and by this union the angelic Logos becomes true God, and the more express image of the Father.

If the ancients speak of the divine wisdom, as being created, first-created, the first of the works of God: If they call the Logos, God of God, the second God, light of light, &c. since it is granted these expressions may have a reference to the temporal ante-mundane generation, they may all be explained by the real derivation or production of the angelic Logos from God, who in the first moment of his existence was united to and made one with God's eternal Logos, that is, his divine word, or wisdom, and thus became a glorious and proper medium of God's manifestations and operations, which is the ancient and original notion of the *Λόγος*, or word.

As the divine Logos becomes the Son of God, and receives inferior attributions, by a personal union to the angelic Logos, who is God's first born Son, so the angelic Logos, or human soul of *Christ*, who is properly the Son of God, becomes true God, and receives supreme attributions, by his most intimate and personal union with the divine Logos, or godhead, and thereby becoming one complex person of action and passion. The common figure of the "communicatio idiomatum," in all languages, makes this very easy and intelligible.

Thus in the language of philosophy, and the schools, when man is called a rational animal, we do not suppose that an animal body can be the subject of rational properties; but the animal is made rational by being personally united to a rational spirit, and thereby becoming one person, one complex principle of action and passion.

This would account also for any such expressions, as an inferior nature being made God, *θεοποιούμενος*, by a participation of the godhead of the Father. The human or angelic Logos, who is most properly the Son of God, was made, or became God, by the union of the divine Logos to him, even as in scripture language, "The Word became flesh," by the union of the flesh to him, *John i. 14*. And in the same sense *Justin Martyr* calls the Logos *σαρνωσάμενος*, made flesh. Nor is it strange that any expressions of *Origen* should be so interpreted, when we consider that he supposes the soul and body of *Christ*, even the whole man; to be made partaker of godhead, and to pass into God, or become God in the same manner, *κακοιωνηκίτα τῆς θεότητος εἰς θεὸν μεταβέβαιοναι*.

contra

contra *Celsum*, libro iii. And the council of *Antioch* says, "The body that was born of the virgin was united to godhead, and was made God, τῆ θεότητι ἥνωται καὶ τεθεοποιῖται.

This hypothesis easily explains how the Logos comes to be called the angel, for in his lower nature he is a separate created spirit, and thus may well be called the messenger, the minister, the servant of his Father. This shews how he is subject to the Father in all things, how he is employed, and sent by the Father on various transactions, how he derives his godhead from the Father, how the Father is God originally, and of himself; how the Son acknowledges the Father to be eminently the only true God, though the eternal deity of the Father and the Son be really the same.

This supposition also makes it easy to conceive, how the Logos himself might become passible, and condescend to indure the sensation of sorrow, pain, and dying agonies: For if we suppose this angelic Logos to be the human soul of *Jesus Christ*, then as it was united to godhead in it's pre-existent state, and often appeared in the form and majesty of God, so it was united to a human body at the incarnation, it emptied itself of it's ancient glory, ἐκένωσεν ἑαυτὸν, *Phil.* ii. 7. and became subject to the weaknesses; and the painful sensations of animal nature. Thus the Son of God himself really and truly suffered on the cross for sinners. A glorious and unparalleled example of humility, and amazing love, exerted in such a manner as the vulgar explanations of this doctrine could never shew!

Thus I have given my reasons briefly for supposing, that many of the expressions of the ancients may be construed into the notion of a complex Logos, or a double nature belonging to *Christ* before his incarnation, viz. the divine Word, and a created, or inferior spirit.

Objection. But it will be readily and immediately objected against all this discourse, that it is in vain for us to contrive suppositions, and invent schemes, how the language and expressions of the primitive fathers may be understood, when it is sufficiently evident from a multitude of places in their own writings, that they had no such notion of a complex Logos, made up of two distinct beings, viz. the true God, and an inferior spirit: It is manifest that they had but one single idea under the term Logos, and they ascribed all the superior and inferior characters to the same single spirit.

Answer I. If a man were to begin, and read over all the fathers with this very view and design, to search for a complex Logos, it is probable that he might find this opinion favoured in more of their expressions, since several of those ancients with whom I have the greatest acquaintance, use so many expressions that can hardly be construed into any just consistence any other way. Nor is this a mere fond, and imaginary conjecture of my own: The learned author of "*primitive christianity vindicated, against Mr. Whiston*, in his second letter to the author of the history of *Montanism*," seems to indulge this opinion. He tells us that *Origen* supposed the human soul of *Christ*, united to his divine nature, to exist long before his incarnation. See page 43. "It is, says this author, a very ancient tradition among the *jews*, that the soul of the *Messiah* existed from the beginning of the world. And some learned men are of opinion, that certain passages of scripture cannot be so easily and naturally interpreted without this notion: Such as *John* iii. 13. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, which is, or was, in heaven;" and *Phil.* ii. 7. "That he emptied himself." *Origen* was no stranger to this opinion, when he says, "perhaps the soul of the Son in it's perfection, was in God, and his fulness, and coming out thence when he was sent by the Father, took a body of *Mary*." And again, upon these words of *John* the baptist, "After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me," *John* i. 30. He says thus, "That it

is spoken of *Christ*, that we may learn that the man, or manhood, also of the Son of God, mixed with his divinity, had a prior subsistence to his birth of the virgin. This man, says the learned author, must be the rational soul; which is confirmed by the appearances of the *Messiah* made to the patriarchs and *Jewish* fathers in the form of a man, the proper indication of a human soul. Hence then we may justly infer, that the rational soul, united to the Word, was the first created essence, or first fruits of the creation, holy to the Lord, and claimed by the Son as his own right. For if he was to be first, or have the pre-eminence in all things, can that advantage be denied him in relation to his soul? *Origen*, who holds it's pre-existence, seems to allow it to be first created. For speaking of the formation of wisdom before the world, he says, God created $\epsilon\mu\psi\chi\epsilon\varsigma\ \sigma\omega\phi\iota\alpha$, an animated wisdom, or, wisdom with a soul. In another place he calls this, $\epsilon\mu\psi\chi\epsilon\varsigma\ \lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$. And this opinion appeared so very reasonable, that we find some marks of it in the later centuries. For the author of the meditations called *St. Austin's*, distinguishes between eternal wisdom, the Son of God, and the first created wisdom; which he makes to be a rational and intellectual mind.

Again, the same learned author, in his "considerations on Mr. *Whiston's* historical preface," pages 55, 56. supposes, "The Son of God may be called $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\iota\mu\alpha$, $\chi\lambda\omicron\sigma\mu\alpha$, &c. not only in respect of his coming forth to create the world, in which sense he is the beginning of all things, but also in respect of a created intellectual nature, which he is supposed, by some, to have assumed at the beginning of the creation, as the first fruits of it." And the same author grants, that "he may, perhaps, be mentioned oftener by the ancient fathers in relation to his coming forth, and to his created nature, than his eternal subsistence." And if it should be so in scripture too, which he doth not actually grant, yet he proposes this reason for it, viz. "That it concerns us, more to know him in this state of humility and condescension, than in that of his natural immensity and exaltation, since it is owing to his humility that we are both made and redeemed." Now the author from whom I cite these passages has testified both his zeal and his learning in several of his works against the *arian* cause.

The late reverend bishop *Fowler*, in his "defense of his discourse of the descent of the man *Christ Jesus*," gives his testimony also, that *Origen* was of this opinion: And perhaps this might be the occasion why that ancient writer sometimes exalts the *Logos* to such sublime characters of divinity, as represent him to be $\alpha\omega\tau\omega\sigma\phi\iota\alpha$, &c. the very wisdom, the very truth of God himself, and makes him co-eternal with the Father, and at other times calls him $\theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \delta\epsilon\upsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$, $\theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \gamma\epsilon\upsilon\eta\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$, $\theta\epsilon\omicron\pi\omicron\lambda\iota\mu\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\varsigma$, &c. a second God, a made God, &c.

I have also the concurring suffrage of Mr. *Baxter*, in his "methodus theologiae," page 96. he seems to be of this opinion concerning some of the fathers, by what observations he had made in reading the ancients. For when he had there recited several of the expressions of the primitive fathers, viz. *Justin*, *Tatian*, *Theophilus*, *Irenaeus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Diionysius Alexandrinus*, &c. he adds, "et videntur quidem eorum seculorum nonnulli putasse duplicem in Christo nondum incarnato naturam fuisse; primam divinam, qua sapientia Dei seu $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ aeternus fuit, & secundam, quam solum *Arius* agnovit, creatam, super-angelicam, creaturarum primogenitam, & administram. Some of the writers of those ages seem to think there were two natures in *Christ* before his incarnation: The first divine, whereby he was the wisdom of God, or his eternal Word: The second a super-angelic, created nature, first born of creatures, ministering to God, &c. which is the only nature the *arians* allow." And the author adds, that "*Gregory Thaumaturgus* seems to have believed this double nature." I confess I was surprized, when I had almost finished this dissertation, to find such a

sentence

sentence in this learned author. And it is evident that nothing but the various expressions of the fathers themselves could have constrained him to have spoken thus, since Mr. *Baxter* himself did not approve of this opinion; but it is plain that he could hardly interpret some of the fathers into any other sense.

Answer II. Yet I readily grant, and believe, that the greatest part of them do not seem to have any distinct idea of a complex Logos, or a double nature in *Christ* before the incarnation; for they frequently seem to apply both increased and created characters to the same single being. But the question is, whether a reader can have any clear and distinct ideas under this language of their's? Whether they can be made to talk very consistently with themselves in this strange phraseology? Are we not forced to correct the philosophy of those ancients, who apply rationality and vegetation to man as one simple animal substance? Do we not plainly find, that, though their ideas are right in general, when they ascribe both these to man, yet they mistook a complex for a simple being? And might not the primitive fathers fall into such an innocent mistake in theology, when they determined too hastily, that both the divine and inferior ideas ascribed to *Christ* in his pre-existent state belonged to one simple Logos? Will all their invented relief of natural subordination, of oeconomical subordination, of strong metaphors, and "catachreses," ever fairly reconcile the variety, and seeming contradiction of their expressions, without such a supposition as this, of a complex, or twofold nature in *Christ*?

We may reasonably suppose, that they had derived from scripture, and from the apostles, and the traditions of apostolic men, the great doctrine of the Logos, being the eternal divine word, or wisdom, whereby God contrived and created the world; They had also derived from the same springs the doctrine of the Logos, who was the Son of God, the beginning of the creation, the first-born of every creature, the only begotten of the Father; and that though he was produced, as they express, by his will and power, yet it was in some such immediate and superior way, as is rather called generation than creation in scripture, that in all things *Christ* might have the pre-eminence, *Col. i. 18.*

Now hence perhaps might arise some of their mistakes, or, as bishop *Bull* calls them, their strange, hard, and uncautious expressions.

1. Because scripture, or apostolic tradition, doth not directly call this inferior, or angelic Logos, who was the Son of God, a creature, and rank him with other created beings, some of them might raise him entirely up to godhead, and give him the very same, simple, numerical idea, with the eternal Logos, or the divine wisdom.

2. Because this angelic Logos was truly the Son of God, and his only begotten Son, therefore they might attribute a sort of sonship to the eternal Logos, or divine wisdom, entirely abstracted from this angelic being.

3. When they found supreme and inferior characters attributed to a person, whose name was the Logos, or Word of God, they did not infer the union of the divine eternal Logos, and of this first-born Son of God, who is also called the Logos, into one complex person, but they, by an easy mistake, might blend them together into one simple substance; and thus they attributed inconsistent properties and actions to one and the same simple subject. Whereas scripture seems to inform us, that these different properties might be more safely and happily attributed to this glorious person, composed of the divine and the angelic Logos united, that is, the human soul of *Christ* with the indwelling godhead.

SECTION IX.

CONCLUSION.

UPON the whole it appears, that the ancient *jewish* writers give us an account of a divine membra, or Logos, or word, which is of the very essence of God, and is represented as a power of the divine nature, and they speak also of another Logos or Word, which is the first-born of all creatures, a glorious super-angelic spirit; there appear also plain traces, and evident footsteps of the same divine and inferior Logos among the primitive christian writers. Now these ancient intimations and notices of a twofold Logos in human writings, under the sacred and superior conduct of the old and new testament, lead us to suppose, that our blessed Saviour, who is the true Logos, or Word of God, had a double nature before his incarnation, and that his human soul had a real existence as the Son of God, and a personal union to deity before the foundation of the world.

From this representation of things there are these two very considerable advantages derived.

I. Hereby both the divine and the human natures of *Christ* receive more honour, and more exalted dignity, than the common representation of this matter will allow.

If the Logos, in it's divine sense, signify an essential power of the deity, then this divine Logos has proper supreme godhead, and, shall I say, shares with the Father even in self-existence and independency, for the Logos belongs to the very nature of God; and yet it is sometimes represented in a distinct, personal manner, for wise purposes, in the holy scriptures; for it has a sufficient distinction from the Father to lay a just foundation for such a figurative personality. Whereas, in the common and current exposition of these ancient writers, as well as of scripture, there are too many secondary and inferior characters ascribed to the Logos in it's divinest sense, or to the divine nature of *Christ*. In the language of the primitive christians, and in the avowed declarations of the *athanasian* writers, he is denied the dignity of self-existence and independency, and is declared to derive both his real existence and his godhead, his power, and all his glory from the Father, and that, as the ancients assert, by the Father's will too, though this will is sometimes construed into a mere acquiescence. Now these derivative characters or properties seem a little to diminish the lustre, and degrade the supreme dignity of the godhead of *Christ*.

The human nature of *Christ* also in this my explication is most gloriously exalted far above all the ideas of such a common human soul, which according to the usual hypothesis, began it's existence when the child *Jesus* was conceived or born: Whereas in the scheme which I propose, the human soul of *Christ* is a sublime spirit*, superior to all angels and every created being, the first-born of every creature, and possessed of such capacious powers as, by virtue of the indwelling godhead, perhaps might be some way employed in the great and wonderful transactions of creation and providence in past ages.

Now let it be considered to what a superior height this doctrine advances the whole person of *Christ*, God and man. Nor let those who love the Lord *Jesus* in sincerity be afraid to hear of his various glories.

2. Another

* How this sublime and singular character is every way consistent with the idea of a true human soul, I have shewn in a "treatise on the glory of *Christ* as God-man," which may possibly appear in the world hereafter. This treatise was published in 1746. See also page 587.

II. Another considerable advantage that arises from this exposition of the *jews* and the christian fathers into the sense of a complex Logos, is this, that it lays a foundation for reconciling those great and bitter contentions that have troubled the church in almost all ages from the beginning of christianity. Surely we should think it a mighty happiness, if there were any possibility of uniting the contending parties into one scheme of trinitarian doctrine, agreeable to the representations of scripture: And I know no hypothesis bids so fair for it as this, if the spirit of candour, and unprejudiced sincerity, the spirit of love and zeal, and unity, be given down from on high, to influence us all in our sacred studies on this subject.

In this scheme the *athanasians*, and all the orthodox trinitarians, find that sacred doctrine, for which they so justly, and zealously contend, viz. the true and proper deity of *Jesus Christ* personally united to an inferior nature, even of the soul and body of the man *Jesus*. The *sabellians*, and all unitarians, may find here the unity of the divine nature not divided into three conscious minds, or three infinite spirits, but diversified, or distinguished, into God the Father, with his two distinct, essential powers; the Word, and the Spirit. Here the *arians* and *semiarians* may read all the exalted properties of their Logos, that is, the pre-existent soul of our Saviour, for which they shew so warm and constant a zeal in all their writings, and may be conducted onward to his indwelling godhead.

I confess, the two more eminent contesting parties in this very question, about the sense of the ancients, are the *arians*, or *semiarians*, and the *athanasians*: And while one of them imagines the fathers, in all their expressions, intend a Logos inferior to godhead, and the other supposes them to describe and represent him as true and eternal God, it is my opinion, that all the expressions of the ancients can scarce ever be reconciled fairly and entirely to either of these extremes. But a supposition, that God and a creature united before the foundations of the world, may compose this glorious person, this Logos, leads the way to allow both of these parties, to be in a great measure in the right with regard to the fathers, and happily to reconcile them in one sentiment and opinion, without the least derogation from the supreme deity of *Christ*, as revealed in the holy scriptures.

If I might venture into a comparison on this occasion, I would liken the writings of the ancients concerning the Logos to a mine of rich metal, where two travellers taking up the oar, find some brighter, and some baser properties in the mass. One of them asserts, that the metal is all silver, and he gives the most favourable and exalted turn that he can to the coarser phenomena of lead, which discover themselves there. The other sinks and beclouds the brighter phenomena of silver, till he has construed the whole mine into lead. Here it is possible that a less knowing traveller may come by and happen to make such an experiment on the mingled mass, as discovers that there is both silver and lead united in the same oar; by this means the different properties appear to belong to the different metals, and the contenders are reconciled.

Thus I have gathered what light and assistance I could out of ancient *jewish* and christian writings, to explain and confirm that doctrine concerning the Logos, or Word, which seems to be revealed and contained in the holy scripture: And I hope I have said nothing inconsistent with the divine grandeur or godhead of our blessed Saviour, nor with any necessary articles of faith. I am sensible the performance must, on many accounts, be very defective. But if I have been so happy, as to have given any hints, whereby persons of greater learning, health and sagacity, may be encouraged to pursue, to establish, or correct the hypothesis which I have proposed, and to introduce clearer ideas into divine things, by a further explication of this great mystery of godliness, I shall have cause to rejoice, and give thanks to God.

If I have asserted any peculiar opinions with too positive an air, and used the language of unbecoming assurance in doubtful matters, in the course of this dissertation, I here disclaim and retract it. I am but a searcher into the deep things of the gospel, and endeavour, according to my slender measure, to trace out the unsearchable riches and glories of the person of my redeemer, God and man. Now, upon the best survey I can take, both of the revelation of scripture, and the expressions of ancient writers, I am inclined to believe, that his human soul was formed, and united to his divine nature before the foundation of the world: And as both parts of the constitution of his person are called the Logos, or Word, so the whole complex person is manifested under the same name. I adore the Word dwelling in flesh. I trust in him for eternal life, and call him, as *Thomas* did, *John* xx. 28. "my Lord and my God." To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

DISSERTATION V.

Of the HOLY SPIRIT.

S E C T I O N I.

The general ideas of the Word and Spirit.

THE great and blessed God, considered in his own nature, is far superior to all our thoughts, and exalted high above our most raised apprehensions. It is utterly impossible for a creature to search out the almighty Creator to perfection. When we shall be admitted to heaven, and behold him in the light of glory, we shall then see him as he is in himself; but even then, and for ever, our knowledge of him will be imperfect, for we are creatures and not God, and our understandings will never be infinite.

In this world we must be content to know him as he has revealed himself in the light of grace, and discovered himself in his word: And because we are not capable of taking in heavenly ideas in their own sublimest nature, God has been pleased to teach us the heavenly things that relate to himself, in earthly language; and by way of analogy to creatures, he has let us know something what God is.

Among all the creatures that come within the reach of our common and obvious cognisance, human nature is the most perfect, and therefore it has pleased the great and glorious God, by resemblances drawn from ourselves, to accommodate the descriptions of himself to our capacities. When he speaks of his own nature in the language of men, he often uses the names of human parts, and members, and faculties, to represent his own properties and actions, thereby that he may bring them within the notice of the lowest capacity, and the meanest understanding among the children of men. Therefore he speaks of his face, to signify the discoveries of himself; his eyes, to describe his knowledge; his heart, to describe his thoughts; his hand

hand and arm, to signify his power and activity; and his mouth, to denote his resolutions, or revelations.

But since in the composition of human nature there are two distinct parts, a soul and a body, and the soul is much the nobler and more exalted principle, it has also pleased God to rise above corporeal images, and to describe himself, his attributes, properties, powers, and operations, by way of analogy to a human soul. We know by our own consciousness, or by an inward inspection into ourselves, that our soul, or spirit, is a being which has understanding and will, thoughts, inclinations, knowledge, desires, and various powers to move the body: Therefore our Saviour has told us, God is a spirit, and the brightest and sublimest representations of God in scripture, are such as bear an analogy and resemblance to the soul of man, or a spiritual, thinking nature.

As the chief faculties of our souls are the mind and will, or rather a power of knowing, and a power of acting, so God seems to have revealed himself to us as indued with two divine faculties, his Word or Wisdom, and his Spirit, or efficient power. It is by this word, and this spirit, that he is represented in scripture as managing the great concerns of the creation, providence, redemption, and salvation: And these three, viz. God the Father, his Word, and his Spirit, are held forth to us in scripture as one God, even as the soul of man, his mind, and his will, are one spiritual being.

Now though the soul be the nobler part in man, though the brightest, the fairest, and most correspondent resemblances of God, are borrowed from the soul, yet when we consider the terms which are used to express the sacred trinity, as well as the divine essence, we find them borrowed from the body, as well as from the soul of man; and probably this was done also, that the lowest capacities among men might attain some idea of them.

The first person in the trinity is called the Father, which is a name given him as he is the first origin, spring, and creator of all things, as he is the former of the human soul and body of our Lord *Jesus Christ* his Son, and as he is represented as the prime agent, employing his Word, and his Spirit, in the great affairs of creation, providence, redemption and salvation. Now this term Father is evidently derived from some resemblance which he bears to human nature, or mankind, in the body, as much as in the soul.

If we consider the second person of the trinity under the character of the Son, this is apparently borrowed from mankind in the same manner.

The term *Logos*, which denotes the second person in the trinity, abstracted from flesh and blood, signifies both reason and word: And therefore we may suppose the sacred analogy borrowed both from the body, and from the soul of man. It is borrowed from the soul of man, as *Logos* signifies reason; from the body of man, as it signifies a word; or from body and soul together, as it signifies an external word, or speech, manifesting internal wisdom or reason.

In the same manner the term Spirit, which denotes the third of the sacred three, does both in *latin*, *greek*, and *hebrew*, signify the breath; it signifies also vital activity*, and it signifies an intelligent principle. And therefore we may suppose the sacred analogy, and use of this word, to be derived both from the body and the soul of man. It is derived from the soul, as it signifies an intelligent principle of action;

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* The term spirit, in other languages, as well as in *english*, signifies power, vigour and vital activity. It is so taken in several places of scripture: I need cite no more than, *John* vi. 63. "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

it is derived from the body, as it signifies breath. And perhaps it is derived from the body and soul united, as it signifies vital activity and efficiency, though in this sense it seems to be chiefly borrowed from the soul.

There are several places in scripture where the Spirit of God seems to bear an analogy to breath, and to signify the breath of God; as *Psal.* xxxiii. 6. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Here the term רוח, that is, breath, or spirit, is either a synonymous term for word, in the first part of the verse, which is formed by the breath; or it signifies the Spirit of God, as a divine power, by way of analogy to human breath. So *Psal.* civ. 30. "Thou takest away their breath, and the creatures die: Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, and they are created," that is, thou sendest forth the breath of life by the agency of thy Spirit. So *Job* xxxiv. 14. "If he gather his spirit and his breath, all flesh shall perish together," that is, If he withhold his vital influence, which gives breath to all animals. *Job* xxxiii. 4. "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the almighty hath given me life." And, *Mal.* ii. 15. where the prophet argues, that God made but one woman for one man, yet he had the residue of the spirit, that is, more vital influence to create more women if he had pleased. These two last texts may refer either to the animal life of man, which is maintained by breath; or to the rational soul, which in the *jewish* philosophy was the vital principle of the animal, both which seem to be included in that metaphorical language in *Gen.* ii. 7. "The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Thus it appears, that as outward speech, and breath, are powers of the human body, as reason and vital activity, or efficiency, are powers of the human soul, so the great God, in scripture, has revealed himself to us as a glorious being, who has two eternal, essential, divine powers, which in condescension to our weakness he is pleased to describe by way of analogy to our souls and bodies; and this he doth by the terms דבר and רוח in *hebrew*, Λόγος and Πνεῦμα in *greek*, and in *english*, word and spirit, or speech and breath, or reason and vital activity, or efficiency.

Though I call the word and the spirit two divine powers, to comport with the analogy which scripture seems to have established between the idea of God, and the idea of man, yet I am far from determining precisely, what, or how great, is that real and divine difference which is between them, or what is the true and inward distinction between the essence of God himself, who is called the Father, and his Word, and his Spirit. It is represented in scripture to be something more than such a difference as is between divine attributes, or nominal relations, and yet it seems to be something less than is between three distinct conscious minds, or three different intelligent agents, in the literal sense of the word. Perhaps in godhead the difference between the several powers, or principles of action, may be much greater than they are in a human, or created spirit. It is most likely there is no human idea that exactly answers it. This is a problem too high, and too hard for us to resolve, who know heavenly things only by way of distant analogy to things earthly, and have not yet learned the unspeakable words which St. Paul heard in paradise. This we know, that these two, viz. the Word and Spirit, are often in scripture, as well as by the ancient *jews* and first christians, represented as divine powers; yet they are also by the sacred writers, by *jews* and christians, sometimes represented in a personal character, or in the way and manner of distinct personal agents. How this is to be accounted for, I have shewn in the sequel of this, as well as in other dissertations.

SECTION

SECTION II.

The particular representations of the holy Spirit in scripture.

HA V I N G spoken in the former discourse particularly of the Logos, or Word of God, in it's several senses, as it relates to *Jesus Christ*, or the second person in the trinity, I apply myself now more directly to say a few things concerning the third person, or the blessed Spirit, so far as I can derive light from the holy scriptures. Now if we consult them, I humbly conceive we shall find these following discoveries.

I. The Spirit of God is represented as a principle of divine operation, as the active power, or faculty of effience belonging to the divine nature, in several places in scripture*. It is exhibited to us as something in, and of God, which seems to be expressed and explained by power, virtue, and a principle of efficiency, or as a divine power belonging to godhead, together with the influence of it. See *Luke i. 35.* "The holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee," which two expressions seem to be parallel and explicative of each other; for our Saviour is called the Son of God, in that text, for this reason, because the Father "prepared a body for him," as *Heb. x. 5.* Or the power of God formed him in the womb in a transcendent manner above other children, without any earthly father.

John iii. 34. *Christ* had the "Spirit of God given him without measure," which is explained, *Acts x. 38.* "*Jesus of Nazareth* was anointed with the holy Ghost, and with power," that is, the Spirit of God dwelt in him with it's powerful influences, and was represented as descending upon him at his baptism.

It was by this Spirit that he wrought miracles, and cast out devils, *Matth. xii. 28.* And yet when *Christ* taught the people, and diseased persons were brought to him, it is said, *Luke v. 17.* "The power of the Lord was present to heal them."

The apostles were ordered to "wait at *Jerusalem* for the promise of the Spirit," *Acts i. 4.* and *ii. 33.* that is, the holy Spirit, which was promised to them, and this in *Luke xxiv. 49.* is called "their being endued with power from on high:" The word is *δύναμις* in the original, which properly signifieth force, not authority.

When *St. Paul* preached to the *corinthians*, *1 Cor. ii. 4.* he confirmed his doctrine by the demonstration of the Spirit and power, that is, the Spirit of God, or divine power, concurring with him to work miracles for the proof of his gospel.

When it is said, *Psal. xxxiii. 6.* "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath, or Spirit, of his mouth." This seems to be a parallel text to those other scriptures where God is described as creating, or establishing the earth, or the heavens, by his wisdom, and by his power, that is, by his Word and Spirit, the two sacred persons being represented as divine powers, or principles of operation.

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* Let it be noted here, that the word power is an ambiguous term both in the *english*, and in the learned languages; sometimes it signifies a faculty or principle of operation, and sometimes it denotes the force and influence of that faculty. Now the word being so often used, and these two senses of it being somewhat akin, it is hardly possible to limit the precise bounds of each of these senses or ideas in every place of scripture. My chief design therefore, in these citations, is to shew, that the idea of a certain divine power, or faculty, with it's force of operation, runs through them all.

When the creatures languish and die, *Psal.* civ. 30. "He sends his Spirit and they are created." *Job* xxxvi. 13. "By his Spirit he garnished the heavens; and the Spirit of God made man," *Job* xxxiii. 4. which works are frequently ascribed to the power, or effieience of God.

Zech. iv. 6. God will accomplish his work, "not by might, nor by power, that is, neither by armies, nor the power of men, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts:" The Spirit, or power of God, stands in opposition to the power of men.

Christ is said to be raised from the dead by the power of God, *Eph.* i. 19. and *2 Cor.* xiii. 4. yet his resurrection is attributed to the Spirit, *1 Pet.* iii. 18. "Quickened by the Spirit." So our resurrection is ascribed to the power of God, *1 Cor.* vi. 14. which is attributed to the Spirit, *Rom.* viii. 11.

In the phraseology of scripture the hand of the Lord, the finger of God, the arm of the Lord, are various expressions to represent the divine principle of effieience, and especially in miraculous operations. Now there are several places wherein these are used to represent the Spirit of the Lord, and the same effects are attributed to the blessed Spirit, which shew that a principle of divine power, or efficacy, is the thing meant by the term Spirit.

In the old testament, the influence of this divine power was exerted on *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*: They were filled with the Spirit of God; the divine power influenced them to devise curious works, to work in silver and gold, &c. for the tabernacle, *Exod.* xxxi. 2, 3, 6. and xxxv. 31, &c. So the Spirit of the Lord began to move *Sampson* at times in the camp of *Dan*, to perform works of strength or courage, *Judg.* xiii. 25. that is, the divine principle of effieience wrought in him, or on him, for these purposes. So the Spirit of the Lord came upon *Ezekiel* and lifted him up, which is called the hand of the Lord in several other places. See *Ezek.* i. 3. and iii. 12, 14, 22. and viii. 1, 3. where these words seem to be used promiscuously.

In the language of the apostles, the conversion of sinners, the assistance of ministers, the support of the afflicted, the preservation of the saints, &c. are sometimes expressly attributed to the power of God, which yet are the peculiar offices, or works of the blessed Spirit, and in other parts of the sacred writings are attributed to him.

I do not explain the term Spirit, as I said before, to signify that attribute of God called power, or omnipotence, but rather, something in the divine nature which we may conceive of after the manner of men, by way of a power or faculty, represented in the various exercises or influences thereof towards creatures, and that frequently for their instruction, sanctification, comfort or assistance, in any peculiar services, or miraculous operations. This seems to be the most common sense of it in the new testament, and often in the old. Upon this account it is called "the Spirit of knowledge," *Ijai.* xi. 2. "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding," *Ephes.* i. 17. "the Spirit of holiness," *Rom.* i. 4. "and the Spirit of grace and supplication," *Zech.* xiii. 10. with regard to it's various effects.

And herein appears a very plain difference between the *socinian* doctrine, and the scheme which I here propose; *Socinus*, *Schlielingius*, *Crellius*, and others of them, make the Spirit of God to signify the mere efficacy, or influence of God's power on creatures: And therefore they roundly and unanimously deny the holy Spirit to be the true God. But as *Bisterfeld* justly distinguishes in answer to *Crellius*, "the Spirit of God is indeed the power of God, *virtus Dei*, yet not that accidental power, which is the mere influence, or effect, of divine agency upon the creatures, but that essential, or substantial power, which is called a person in the divine nature." And though

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it is hard to determine in every single text, whether the Spirit of God, mean the divine agent himself, or his influences, yet there are several scriptures wherein it implies true and proper godhead, or a principle of action in the divine nature, and not merely the influence of that principle, or the effects of that power, as will plainly appear in the following parts of the discourse.

Now it is no wonder that the name of Spirit of God, in the scriptural writings, should be given to a power of the true God, or sometimes to the influence of a divine power, since this name was used even by heathens in those eastern nations, in the same sense, concerning their false gods. *Nebuchadnezzar* the king of *Affyria*, and the king *Belshazzar* his son, and several of their courtiers, use this same expression, and say concerning *Daniel*, that the spirit of the holy gods is in him. See *Dan.* iv. 8, 9, 18. and *Dan.* v. 11, 14. *Pharaoh*, king of *Egypt*, uses the same language, *Gen.* xl. 38. "Can we find such a man as *Joseph*, in whom is the spirit of the gods." *Elohim*, that is, they supposed the powers of the gods dwelt in *Joseph* and *Daniel*, and instructed them in the knowledge of secrets. And if we had greater acquaintance with the ancient and oriental ways of speaking, it is very probable we should find, that when God spoke to his people the *jews*, he used the same sort of language that was customary in those nations.

And if we consider the common phraseology of scripture, which speaks of God acting by his Word and Spirit, in a way of analogy to man acting by his natural powers of mind, will, conscience, his breath, his hand, his face, his eye, &c. far the greatest part of texts where the Spirit of God is mentioned, are most naturally explained, by supposing it a power of his nature.

What objections may be raised against this first head, shall be considered afterward.

II. Though the Spirit of God be represented sometimes as a power, or principle of action in the divine nature, yet in several places in scripture it is set forth in a personal character, or under the idea of a person, distinct both from God the Father, and his Son *Jesus Christ*. The Spirit is spoken of in such a way as persons are represented in human language: I need not cite many scriptures to prove this, see *John* xv. 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." *John* xvi. 13, 14. "When 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 shall shew you things to come: He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you." And several other passages there are in the word of God which represent the holy Spirit in a personal manner.

But it is not very hard to account for this personal representation of a power of the divine nature, when we consider,

1. That we know not how great is the distinction between different powers, or principles of agency, in so sublime and incomprehensible a nature as the godhead. "God is great, and we know him not," *Job* xxxvi. 26.

2. The powers of man, viz. his mind, his will, his reason, his fancy, his conscience, are often represented as persons, in modern nations and languages; the man himself is sometimes described as conversing with his own spirit, with his soul, with his conscience, with his fancy, or reason, as though they were persons; and employing his reason or conscience, as agents, in any operation, even as God is said to send, or employ his own Spirit in his sacred affairs, as a divine agent.

Besides,

Besides, we may consider, that this personal manner of speaking was very customary among the eastern nations, and the sacred writers. They frequently personalize not only the powers of human nature, but the virtues, vices, dispositions of men; and even things without life are often called sons and daughters, and exhibited to the reader, as though they were persons. But of this subject I have treated more at large in the dissertation on the word person*, and would not repeat it here. See also some further solution of this difficulty under the answer to the first objection.

III. The Spirit of God is represented as so intimate with the divine nature, and so much one with God, that it is sometimes exhibited as God himself, even as the spirit of a man is properly the man himself, or his soul. It was common with *hebrew, jewish* writers, to speak of the spirit of a thing to signify the thing itself. See, *Eph. iv. 23.* "Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind," that is, let your mind itself be renewed: Where we may suppose the same sort of *pleonasm*, as when the body, or flesh of *Christ*, is called the body of his flesh, *Col. i. 22.* So the Spirit of God is represented to us as one and the same with God, by analogy to human spirits. *1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.* "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God; for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God;" that is, as the spirit of a man knows the secret things of his own soul by a primary and immediate consciousness, inherent in himself, and not derived from any other, so the Spirit of God is as much that God whose Spirit he is, as the spirit of a man is the man himself; and therefore he knows the secrets of the godhead by a primary and immediate consciousness inherent in himself, and not derived from another.

There are other scriptures wherein the Spirit may be taken for God himself; as *Isa. lxiii. 10.* "They rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them." God himself seems to be the proper object of their rebellion and provocation. So when *David* says, *2 Sam. xxiii, 2, 3.* "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, the God of *Israel* said, he that ruleth over men must be just."

That which is done by this Spirit is done by God himself; and that which is done to this Spirit is represented as done to God himself.

When in *Acts xiii. 2.* "The holy Ghost said, separate unto me *Paul* and *Barnabas* for the work whereunto I have called them," it is very naturally interpreted as the voice of God by his Spirit, for it was God that called them to the ministry, and to him they were separated.

When *Ananias*, *Acts v. 3.* told a lie to the holy Ghost, *St. Peter* says, verse 4. "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God," that is, to God dwelling in the apostles by his Spirit.

So *Isa. xl. 13.* "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him;" The Spirit of the Lord here seems to be put for God himself, as the spirit of a man in the same sort of sentence would be naturally construed the man himself, or his soul.

Psal. cxxxix. 7. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or, whither shall I flee from thy presence?" The plain meaning is, whither shall I go where the knowledge and power of God cannot reach me? The Spirit of God is not a distinct being from God himself, or another conscious mind.

It is the Spirit of God, and it is God himself, who inspired the prophets, *2 Pet. i. 21. 2 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. i. 1.* It is the Spirit of God which dwells in his saints,

* See dissertation VI.

as in a temple, for they are called the temple of God, 2 Cor. vi. 16. compared with 1 Cor. vi. 19.

It is the Spirit of God that sanctifies his people, that gives light and comfort, and hope to them; all which are attributed to God himself, and that not as acting by an under-agent; or an inferior nature, but by some intimate and essential power of his own. And were it not for some personal characters which are sometimes attributed to the blessed Spirit, by a figurative, and eastern manner of speech, I am persuaded scarce any reader of the bible would ever have imagined, that the Spirit of God signified any thing else but a power of the divine nature; the influence of that power, or God himself acting by that power. The proof of the deity of the holy Spirit is more particularly insisted on in "the christian doctrine of the trinity," propositions viii. ix. *

To confirm this head, viz. that the Spirit of God, in some places, may signify God himself, let it be observed, that the soul of God in several scriptures signifieth God himself. *Isa. i. 14.* "Your new moons my soul hateth." *Isa. xlii. 1.* "My elect, in whom my soul delighteth." *Heb. x. 38.* "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." And this is a very common way of speaking among the *hebrews*, for the soul of a man signifies the man himself, as well as the spirit of a man does.

In confirmation of the same position let it be observed also, that as the term Logos, Word, or the second of the sacred three, is sometimes used to include the whole divine nature, though it more directly and frequently is explained by wisdom, so the term spirit, though it more naturally and frequently signifies a divine principle of efficiency, yet it may be used sometimes in a more extensive sense for the divine nature itself, as I have mentioned in the vii. "dissertation on the distinction of persons in the godhead."

IV: As the Spirit of God, in some scriptures, signifies a divine power, or principle of efficiency in the godhead, and is called the third person in the trinity, so in other texts the term Spirit denotes the influence, or operation of this power, together with the various effects of it communicated to men, which are usually called the gifts and graces of the holy Spirit. Nor is it strange at all that this term should be thus used; for as the Word of God, in several places of scripture, does plainly signify the second person in the blessed trinity, who hath been employed through all ages to reveal the mind and will of God to men, so there are many other places wherein the word of God signifies the revelation itself, or the effect of the agency of this divine Word: And it is much more frequently used to signify either the scripture, or some revelation of God to men, than to denote the second person in the trinity.

Perhaps it is in this sense of influence and gifts, that we may best interpret some of those expressions, both in the old testament and the new, where the Spirit is said to "be given to men, to be poured out upon men, to be shed down on the apostles, to be given by the laying on of hands, to have the spirit in greater or less degrees, to be full of the holy Ghost, or filled with the Spirit, and anointed with the Spirit." It is true, that such sort of expressions may be much better applied to a certain power of the divine nature, in it's various agencies, than to a real proper person, or distinct conscious mind; and this is one reason that inclines me to think, that the holy Spirit is not another conscious mind, or a distinct person, in the full, proper, and human sense of the word. But still if some of these scriptural phrases be explained concerning the gifts and graces of the holy Spirit, as the effects of the operation of that divine power, it may render the scriptural language a little more plain, easy and intelligible, in those places.

Note, there are some texts which mention the Word of God, wherein it is pretty hard to say, whether the person of *Christ*, or his revelation of divine things be meant, as, *Joh. x. 35.* "He called them gods, to whom the word of God came." *Heb. xiii. 7.* "Those who have spoken to you the word of God:" And in the next verse, "*Jesus Christ*, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." *Rev. i. 2.* "*Joh. who* bare record of the word of God:" Which is the remarkable character of this apostle, because he spake much of the Logos, or of *Christ* under the title of the Word. And in like manner there may be some particular texts wherein it is difficult to determine whether the Spirit of God signify the very power of the divine nature itself, or whether it signify the effect of that power. I will mention but one, which is agreed to be dubious. *Acts xix. 2.* "We have not so much as heard whether there be any holy Ghost." Some interpret the holy Ghost here to signify his nature and existence, and some make it only to denote the effusion of his gifts, graces, or influences. But I do not think that this difficulty is of any very great importance, while it is agreed that these various gifts, graces, and blessings, conferred upon men, are all entirely attributed to the Spirit of God, or to a certain divine executive power, or principle of efficiency belonging to the divine nature.

Thus I have represented the clearest and best ideas I have yet attained, concerning the Spirit of God, who is generally called the third person in the sacred trinity. As *Christ*, in his divine nature, is represented as the eternal word, or wisdom of the Father, which, perhaps, may include in it the power of knowledge, or knowledge and volition; so the Spirit seems to be another divine power, which may be called the power of efficiency: And though it is sometimes described in scripture as a personal agent, after the manner of *Jewish* and eastern writers, yet if we put all the scriptures relating to this subject together, and view them in a correspondent light, the Spirit of God does not seem to be described as a distinct spirit from the Father, or as another conscious mind, but as an eternal essential power, belonging to the Father, whereby all things are effected: And thus the supreme godhead of the blessed Spirit is maintained in it's glory.

It is proper here to take notice, that what I have said elsewhere of the Logos, or divine Word, may be also applied to the blessed Spirit, viz. That sometimes it carries with it an inadequate idea of godhead, when it signifies a power in the divine nature; and sometimes an adequate idea, when it intends God himself exerting that power. And this is no strange and unnatural supposition, since the same sort of phraseology, is in frequent use when we speak of the soul of man, and it's various powers; for sometimes by the words reason, will, conscience, &c. we mean those particular powers of the soul, which are inadequate ideas of the soul; at other times we mean the soul itself acting by one or another of those powers, and then the idea is full and adequate. And it is my opinion, that there can scarce be any cavils framed against these representations of the Spirit of God in scripture, but what may be also raised against many of our human forms of speaking, concerning the spirit of a man, or some of his intellectual and active powers.

SECTION

SECTION III.

An occasional reflexion on the glory of the holy Spirit.

AS this explication of the doctrine of the blessed Spirit, seems to give a more easy and natural interpretation to most of the scriptures where he is mentioned, so it tends to aggrandize the character of God, and of his divine Spirit, and exalt him infinitely above all created powers: Perhaps, no creature has any real proper effi- cence belonging to it, when abstracted from that universal influence of God, which is commonly called the divine concurse, whereby all beings are preserved and kept in actuation, according to their several natures, that is, according to the laws appoint- ed by the Creator: And if so, then the divine Spirit may be the proper univer- sal efficient of all created being, and of all motion whatsoever. Let us enquire into this sentiment a little further.

When one body is moved by another moving body which impels it, I think it is agreed by the latest and best philosophers, such as Mr. *Locke* and Sir *Isaac Newton*, that this is not owing to any innate power in the impelling body, but that it is effect- ed according to a law of motion, which the sovereign will of the Creator has appointed; so that the second body is not so properly moved by the first, as by the universal and all-pervading force of that original divine efficacious volition, that one body should thus give place; when another of sufficient bulk and motion impels it.

This is yet more evident in the great law of attraction, or gravitation, which Sir *Isaac Newton*, has found to be observed in the corporeal world. He acknowledges that there can no mechanical reason be given, why all bodies should gravitate toward a center, or why all the parts of matter should have a mutual tendency toward each o- ther; but it is the Creator's original, and everlasting power and will, acting uniform- ly on all the parts of matter.

It is also this original will and power of the Creator, that gave a projectile motion to the several planetary bodies, and that this projectile motion concurring with, or rather resisting the gravitation toward their several centers, keeps the whole system of planets in their proper order and periodical revolutions.

And this is not only applicable to one body moving another; but when a spirit wills to move a body, it has no innate efficient power of its own to put the least atom in motion: A spirit can neither touch, nor be touched. The strongest and wisest man upon earth cannot move a grain of sand or feather, by a mere act of his will; yet he can move the whole animal body to which he is particularly united, by an act of his will. The true meaning of it is this; that God has appointed that when- soever the human soul puts forth a volition, the limbs and muscles of that particu- lar animal body shall be effectually moved. This motion is really and originally owing to the divine original volition, and his universal efficient power. *Εὐ εὐζὶ γὰρ ἡ ζωὴ, καὶ κινήσεις; ἡ τοῦ παντός, Αἰτ. xvii. 28.* "In or by him we live, and are moved, and have our being."

Thus all the motion that is found in our material world is the proper effect of the prime divine volition and executive power, which continues through all ages, and per- vades all worlds; which acts according to its own supreme appointed laws, and is the real but universal cause of all the motions of every atom in the universe: And

though the particular motions are attributed sometimes to bodies, by way of attraction or impulsion, and sometimes to minds, or spirits, as the effects of their volition, yet it is really owing to the infinite and all-pervading efficiency of the great God that formed at first, and still preserves and actuates the whole material system of beings, in one uniform and unchanging manner of operation. What a glorious and magnificent idea does this give us of the blessed Spirit, the executive power of God; Well may it be said, *Gen. i. 2.* "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," or the watry chaos; that is, put the parts of it into their several proper motions, towards the formation of a beautiful world. And when creatures die, "God sends forth his Spirit and they are created again," and the face of the animal and vegetable world is renewed by the agency of this Spirit, *Psal. civ. 30.*

And how happily does this scheme correspond with the doctrine of miracles, which when they were wrought by our blessed Saviour, or by his apostles, are still attributed to the Spirit of God. As it is he who manages all nature by settled rules of his own, or of the divine Logos, or wisdom, so it is he who unsettles the course of nature, and changes it when he pleases. It is he interposes with his immediate and miraculous influence, to act upon the various parts of matter, and give them motions, or appearances, contrary to his own established rules. He can bid the sun stand still, the shadow go backward, and command the waters of *Jordan* to run towards their spring. He causes the blind to see, he unstops the ear of the deaf, and puts vital motion into the dead.

When the divine Logos, or Word, performs a miracle, it is by the efficient force of this divine power, the Spirit of God, who is naturally and inseparably joined to the Word. When *Christ Jesus* wrought miracles on earth, he did it by virtue of godhead dwelling in him personally, in the character of the Logos, or Word, inseparably united to, and one with, the blessed Spirit: Though for special reasons in the divine oeconomy, these miracles are rather ascribed to the holy Spirit than to the divine Logos, or Word. And when he condescends to make any of the children of men, conscious instruments of these miraculous performances, all that they can do is to lift up a prayer, and put forth a humble volition that such a supernatural effect may appear; but it is really by the agency of the blessed Spirit, that the laws of nature are counteracted: Nature herself obeys none but her sovereign, the miracle appears in it's divine glory, and confesses the presence of a divine power.

Thus, by the concurrent demonstration of the Spirit of God, and of power, *St. Paul* preached the gospel among the heathen nations: The Spirit, as a divine efficient, impressed on his brain, and on his tongue, a train of languages which he understood not before, for he spake with a multitude of tongues; and the same blessed Spirit, as a divine efficient power, dictated to the apostle how to preach, and when to attempt a miraculous operation; and this glorious almighty agent produced the marvellous effect, surprized and amazed their eyes and their ears with sensible wonders, and enlightened and converted the souls of the blind heathens. He bid nature yield to miracle; he made heathenism in the heart give place to christianity, and turned sinners into saints. Thus the Spirit of God is the universal efficient of all the common events in the course of nature, and of all supernatural appearances, whether in the kingdom of nature, or of grace.

It is possible that some weak and unskillful reader may be ready to scruple this representation, as though it attributed all the visible actions of men, whether

good

good or bad, to the Spirit of God, and thus tended to represent God as the author of sin.

But those who understand the doctrine of the divine concurrence to the works of inanimate nature, as well as to the actions of men, know, that there is a great deal of difference between the uniform universal agency and influence of a prime cause, according to his own original established laws of nature, and the particular agency of created intelligent causes. The particular actions of intelligent creatures may be very culpable, for abusing the general influence of the first cause to vicious purposes, while the prime, uniform, universal cause is blameless. The Spirit of God, though it be the universal efficient of all life and motion, yet is by no means chargeable with the guilt of a murderer, even though he gives vital motion and power to those limbs which perform a bloody action, for he does not incline the will of men to any iniquity, nor are their limbs moved but by the original force of his law of creation, according to their own free will, and their own resolution.

It is granted by modern philosophers that the divine will, or power, is the immediate cause of gravitation; and it is evident, that if a man push a boy from a precipice, it is gravitation that dashes out his brains; yet the man is properly guilty of the boy's death, and not the divine power, which is an universal and uniform agent, according to the settled laws of the creation.

I thought it necessary for the sake of weaker readers, to remove this cavil by the way. But these last pages are rather an occasional digression, and a meditation "en passant." Whether this be approved or no, it does not at all affect my present hypothesis, of explaining the sacred three. It is time now to endeavour to solve some of the special difficulties relating to the doctrine of the trinity, that are supposed to attend on this representation of the blessed Spirit.

S E C T I O N IV.

Objections answered.

Objection I. **I**S not the personal language, in which the Spirit of God is represented in scripture, too strong and emphatical, to be applied merely to a divine power? Is he not described as a real proper person, an intelligent being, distinct from God the Father and the Son?

Answer I. I grant the personal representations of the holy Spirit seem to be strong in some places of scripture: But let it be noted, that the more general and constant language speaks of him as a power, or a medium of divine operation, in the very essence of God.

We must also consider that it was the frequent custom amongst the *jewish* writers, and the oriental nations, not only in their oratorical or poetical works, but even in their common phraseology, to speak of powers and qualities, under personal characters. Now it is no wonder at all that the blessed Spirit of God should be so represented, especially since we know not how great the real and divine distinction may be between God and his essential powers. This may be so great, for ought we know, as to lay a juster foundation for the ascription of personal characters to the blessed Spirit, than can be found amongst any human powers or properties whatsoever.

Is not the wisdom of man, as well as the wisdom of God represented in strong personal characters in the book of *Proverbs*? See *Prov. i. 20—23*. "Wisdom crieth without

without, she uttereth her voice in the streets, &c." *Prov.* ii. 10—12. iii. 13—20. iv. 6—13. ix. 1. as well as in the eighth chapter, where it is supposed the second person in the trinity is meant. Is not charity represented as a person, *1 Cor.* xiii? Is not the scripture itself represented in a personal manner, as a prophet having fore-knowledge and a power of speaking? *Gal.* iii. 8. "The scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached the gospel to *Abraham*." Is not the law described as a person? *Gal.* iii. 24. "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to *Christ*." And in several other places. Is not the grace of God exhibited as a person, labouring together with *St. Paul*? *1 Cor.* xv. 10. "I laboured more than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." And why may not the Spirit of God, or his efficient power, be so described too, since it has so great, so universal, and all-prevading an agency in the affairs of creation and salvation?

Are not the water and the blood described in a personal manner, as witnesses, "οἱ μαρτυροῦντες," *1 John* v. 8. Take these words in any sense, yet they are not real proper persons: Why then may not the Spirit be called a witness, and be represented personally too, whether in that verse it signifies a divine power, or the influence of that power?

Let it be observed, as I hinted before, that among men nothing is more naturally represented in a personal manner, than the several actions, qualities, or powers of human nature, viz. virtue, vice, wisdom, fancy, reason, conscience, will, &c. and this both in scripture, and in common writings. I will mention but one at present. The very approbation, and concurrent sentiments of *St. Paul* are called his spirit, and represented in a personal manner, *1 Cor.* v. 4. "When ye are gathered together, and my Spirit with you." *Col.* ii. 5. "Though I be absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order." Now if the very will, inclination, and concurrent sentiments of a man may be called the spirit of a man, and represented as being present, and acting in a distant place, is there not much more reason why a divine efficient power should be called the Spirit of God, and be represented as imployed and acting in all distant places, by virtue of the divine omnipresence.

Answer II. I might give a second answer to this objection, in this manner. It is granted by all trinitarians, that there are some places of scripture where the Spirit must be construed as a power, or a divine influence, and must signify the gifts, graces, or operations of the Spirit, viz. Where the Spirit is represented as poured out, as shed down, as communicated in greater or less degrees, &c. Now since the Spirit, if he be a proper, real, literal person, yet is confessed to be sometimes represented as a power, why may he not be sometimes represented as a person; though in his own nature he be a proper, real, literal power? Things are represented in scripture as persons, more frequently than persons are represented as things.

Objection. But here it will be objected still, If the Spirit of God be but one power of the divine nature, how can it be described as vested with all manner of intelligent characters, powers, and properties, such as understanding, will, affections, &c? "The Spirit has knowledge, for he searches the deep things of God," *1 Cor.* ii. 10. "He has will, for he distributes gifts to every man severally as he will," *1 Cor.* xii. 11. "He has affections, for he is grieved," *Eph.* iv. 30. This seems to represent the Spirit as a complete person, and not as one power.

Answer I. To this I reply, first, I have already acknowledged that in some places of scripture the Spirit of God signifies God acting by his Spirit: So that the divine essence is included in the term, together with his almighty efficient power; and

and this gives a solution to that difficulty in several texts of scripture: God considered as acting by his Spirit, has also all other divine powers belonging to him.

Answer II. But, in the next place, I add also, that wheresoever things are represented in a personal manner, or as persons, there all personal or intelligent characters, viz. understanding, will, affections, &c. are ascribed to them. Even human wisdom as well as divine, in the book of *Proverbs*, has various intelligent and voluntary characters and actions ascribed unto it, when it is personalized. The same may be said of charity, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4—8. It has knowledge and thoughts; “charity thinketh no evil, charity believeth all things. It has a will and design; charity seeketh not her own. It has affections; charity is kind, it rejoiceth not at iniquity, but it rejoiceth in the truth.” That this sort of language is common among the *jews*, may be seen abundantly in the apocryphal books of *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus*, where all manner of powers, strength, knowledge, will, motion, &c. are ascribed to wisdom. Even inanimate things, when represented personally, have knowledge, will, and affections, ascribed to them. The sun is said to have knowledge, for he knoweth his going down, *Psal.* civ. 19. The sun has affections, for he rejoiceth to run his race, *Psal.* xix. 5. The wind itself, to which the holy Spirit is compared, *John* iii. 8. has a will ascribed to it. “The wind bloweth where it listeth, *Inc. bidet*, where it will.” By all these instances, and many others which might be added, it appears, that though the blessed Spirit may have both understanding and will, and affections, attributed to it in scripture language, it may still be one divine power, and not a proper literal person, or a distinct conscious mind.

But I have said many other things toward the solution of this difficulty in the discourse about the “use of the word person,” and in another that treats of the “distinctions in the divine nature*,” and I shall add something further on this head in the end of this discourse, by giving several specimens how even those scriptures may be interpreted upon this foot, which represent the Spirit of God in the strongest language of personality.

Objection II. If the Spirit of God be really but a power of the divine nature, how is that consistent with those texts of scripture which speak of the power of the Spirit of God and the power of the holy Ghost; *Rom.* xv. 13, 19. Can there be the power of a power? Or, is this proper language?

Answer I. Yes, the language is proper enough, while we remember that the word power in one place signifies a faculty, in the other, the force of that faculty: Are not reason and conscience powers of a human soul, and yet it is never thought improper to speak of the power, that is, force of these powers or faculties. May we not say, that one man subdued his appetites by the power of his reason? And that the conscience of another man had power over his vices? Even the divine will is represented in scripture as a power in the godhead, and yet it is very proper to attribute various effects to the power of the divine will: And by the same reason we may speak of operations wrought by the power of the holy Spirit, especially when he is represented as a divine power.

! It is natural and easy in this case to suppose the word power, in those texts to be an attribute, or property of this divine power, or faculty, personalized: For
 when

* See dissertations VI. VII.

when any thing is represented as a person, it is no impropriety at all to attribute powers to it.

Answer II. Or, if we should suppose the power of the holy Spirit to be a pleonastic expression, it is no more than is common in scripture, and there are many instances of it, as, *Eph. i. 5.* according to the good pleasure of his will, that is, the will of his will, so in *Eph. vi. 10.* "Be strong in the power of his might." *Eph. i. 19.* "Κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ ἣν ἐνέργησεν." "According to the working of the might of his power which he worked, or wrought." *Col. i. 22.* "In the body of his flesh." And a multitude of such oriental pleonasm are found in scripture.

Objection III. If the Spirit of God be properly a power of the divine nature, or a distinct principle of action, and not a real and proper person, or distinct intelligent being, how can we offer a doxology to the Spirit, and ascribe honour and glory to him, together with the Father and the Son?

Answer I. Though I think it may be very proper, upon some occasions, to join the holy Spirit in a doxology, and to offer glory and praise to him, together with the Father and the Son, yet I think it may be affirmed, that there is not any one plain and express instance in all the scripture, of a doxology directly and distinctly addressed to the holy Spirit. Perhaps one reason, among others, may be, because both the Father, and the Son, considered as God man, are proper distinct persons, while the proper, distinct, and real character of the Spirit, is that of a divine power, or principle of action, and it is only personalized by idioms of speech.

Now though there may be two or three examples of such a doxology in the writers of the three first centuries, and though it may be properly practised in many cases, yet if their be neither precept nor pattern for it in scripture, it ought not to be esteemed so constant, and so necessary a part of worship as modern ages have made it, and as I once thought it to be. For it is the scripture which alone could reveal the Father, Son and Spirit to us, and it is that must be the rule and ground of the particular worship we pay to each of the sacred three. See a larger discourse on this subject in my "christian doctrine of the trinity," proposition XX. question ii. *

Answer II. Since I believe the Spirit of God to be co-eternal with God, and essential and necessary to his very being, and in that sense true God, and since he is represented in scripture in a personal manner, or under the character of a distinct person, therefore forms of praise may be lawfully addressed to him, as well as peculiar blessings may be said to descend from him. Though the scripture has not taught us distinctly to offer praise and honour to the holy Spirit; yet it has taught us to hearken to the voice of the Spirit, to obey the Spirit, to hope and wait for the enlightening, the sanctifying, and the comforting influences of the Spirit, and not to resist him; and since the holy Spirit is true God, I think it follows by evident consequence, that we may offer him the sacrifice of praise for the blessings which he bestows. There is no more necessity that he should be a real, proper, distinct person, or another conscious mind, in order to receive such addresses than in order to bestow such blessings. A figurative personality is sufficient for both.

Answer III. I add yet further, that if the holy Spirit had never been represented in a personal manner in scripture, yet a distinct power of the divine nature may surely be as proper an object of doxology, as a divine attribute or perfection, which does

* See page 481. in this volume.

does not seem to carry in the idea of it so great a distinction as a divine power. I think there is no impropriety in ascribing praise and glory to the wisdom, or the grace of God. May we not properly use such language as this, "We give thanks to the grace of God? Let us give praise to the almighty power of God? Glory be given to God and his mercy? Let God the Father, and his eternal wisdom, and his love, be glorified for ever?" Now if these expressions may be sometimes used on particular occasions, with propriety and devotion, though we are not necessarily bound to use them*, I see no reason why we may not, upon particular occasions, ascribe glory to God the Father, to his eternal Word, and his almighty Spirit, even though the Word, together with the Spirit, considered purely in their divine nature, may be really distinct principles of action in the godhead, and not real, proper, distinct beings.

It may be still further argued: Suppose the powers, or even the attributes or agencies of God, were expressed in yet more metaphorical language, yet they might lawfully be doxologized. May we not say, "Glory be to God and his victorious arm? Or to his watchful eye? Or, may we not ascribe glory to the Father and the Son, and their counsels of mercy?" and such like; surely then the blessed Spirit, whatsoever be his philosophical character, or idea in the godhead, may receive ascriptions of glory with as much propriety.

But if all these considerations were not sufficient to make us allow of doxologies to the holy Spirit, I say, in the last place,

Answer IV. As in some scriptures the Spirit of God seems to include in it the whole idea of godhead, acting by the blessed Spirit, why we may not ascribe glory to the blessed Spirit under this idea? May we not say, "Glory be given to God who sanctifies and comforts us by his blessed Spirit, as well as, glory to him who sustains the supreme dignity of godhead under the idea of a Father?" Perhaps if this sense be put upon the words, it may please some persons better, who are sincere and zealous believers of the doctrine of the trinity, according to the common orthodox explication: For this idea of the Spirit approaches nearer to the orthodox scheme, wherein the whole divine essence is included in each person, together with a distinct modality of that essence which is called the personality.

Upon any of these principles which I have mentioned, there is sufficient ground for a doxology to be given to the blessed Spirit, without supposing him to be a distinct, intelligent being, or another mind.

Objection IV. If the Spirit of God be properly a power, or principle of agency, in the divine nature, how can it be said, according to the common doctrine of divines, that he proceeds from the Father and the Son?

Answer I. It was proper in the objection to name the common doctrine of divines, and not the doctrine of scripture, for the text from which this is derived, *John xv. 26.* only saith, "that the Spirit cometh forth, or proceedeth from the Father, and that he is sent by the Son." But the scripture never says, that the Spirit, as to his nature, proceeds from the Son; no, nor properly from the Father, as to his

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nature,

* I might here take occasion to give a full answer to that objection which has been raised by some trinitarians and unitarians, against my proposal of occasional doxologies to the holy Spirit, as prudence and expedience may require. See "christian doctrine of the trinity," page 485. We are not necessarily bound to doxologize the divine attribute of grace, goodness, or wisdom, explicitly and distinctly; and yet prudence and expedience may sometimes direct it. The same may be justly said concerning any explicit doxologies to the holy Spirit, which is a power of the godhead.

nature, though his mission is originally from the Father; and, perhaps, it is in this sense that he is described in scripture as proceeding from the Father, because he is the divine efficient power of the Father, which is employed in all divine operations.

The notion of the Spirit's procession, or derivation, as to his essence and personality both from the Father and the Son, how current soever it has been, is not a plain and express scriptural doctrine, but a human inference drawn from this doubtful argument, viz. "That if the Spirit be sent by the Son as to his commission in the economy, he must proceed from the Son as to his nature, existence, or personality." But this argument, if thoroughly examined, has no great force in it. The *greek* churches were not influenced by it, for in elder and later days they have supposed the Spirit to proceed from the Father only, though they confess he is sent by the Son as well as by the Father; and this seems to come nearer to the plain and express language of scripture.

The common explication of the eternal generation of the Son, and eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father and Son, which was authorized in the *latin* churches, was derived down to us from the popish schoolmen; though it is now become a part of the established, or orthodox faith, in most of the protestant nations, because at the reformation they knew no better way to explain the doctrine of the sacred trinity. They contented themselves to say, it was incomprehensible, and thus forbid all further enquiries. But this scholastic, popish explication, of the manner of the derivation of the Son and Spirit from the Father, is, perhaps, the most unconceivable, and indefensible part of all the common scheme of the trinity which is called orthodox. I heartily agree to several other parts of it, viz. "That God is one infinite and eternal spirit, or conscious being. That the divine essence is but one and the same, though distinguished into three sacred persons. That the Word and the Spirit are so distinct from the Father, and from each other in the godhead, as to lay a just foundation for them to be represented as three persons." But their account of the generation and the procession, that is, of the manner of the derivation of the Word and Spirit from the Father, seems to me, at present, to be a set of words of which I can attain no ideas, invented by subtle and metaphysical schoolmen to guard and fence, as far as possible, against the charge of inconsistency, and was never designed to convey a clear conception to the mind of christians. Let us take a short survey what this scholastic notion is.

The most approved writers represent it thus; "that the generation of the Son is the Father's communication of his own self-same, individual, self-existent essence to the Son, together with the personal property of being begotten, in and by which property he differs from the Father."

And, "that the procession of the Spirit is a communication of the self-same, individual, self-existent essence, both from the Father and the Son, unto the Spirit, together with the personal property of spiration or proceeding, by which property he differs from the Father and the Son."

How strange soever this language appears to persons, who seek for ideas together with words, I seriously profess this is the justest, truest, and, I think, the plainest description that I can give of this opinion. If it be possible to make it plainer, I will repeat the same in another form of words.

The scholastic scheme supposes the eternal generation of the Son to be a sort of repetition of the self-same numerical divine essence of the Father, together with some new personal property, called filiation, which joined to the divine essence, makes up the

the person of the Son: And that this repetition, or reproduction of the same divine essence with it's new personality, is owing to the Father only.

It also supposes the proceſſion of the holy Spirit to be another sort of repetition of the self-same numerical divine essence of the Father, together with some new personal property, called proceſſion, which joined to the divine essence, makes up the person of the holy Spirit: And that this repetition, or reproduction of the same divine essence with it's new personality, is owing both to the Father and the Son conjointly; or as some rather say, it is from the Father as the original principle, by the Son as a medium.

There have been some writers, indeed, who thought it was not proper to say of the divine essence itself, that it did generate, or could be generated or derived; and therefore they supposed only the personality of the Son to be generated, or derived from the Father, and the personality of the Spirit to proceed, or be derived from the Father and the Son. But when you enquire what these personalities are, they can only tell you, that it is filiation or sonship, and spiration or proceſſion. Upon the whole therefore, according to this opinion, it is sonship is generated, and proceſſion proceeds. But the generality of the scholastic, or orthodox trinitarians go into the former sentiments, of the generation and proceſſion of the divine essence itself, together with the distinct personalities.

With a solemn and unfeigned veneration I reverence the names and memories of those excellent men, those learned and pious authors of the last age, who asserted and defended these opinions. Nor do I think the devotion, and zeal, and piety, of our present times, equal to their's. But when I enquire of my own heart, whether ever I could form any ideas of all this sort of language, while I was taught it in my younger days, and firmly asserted to these sounds, I must honestly confess, I could not. Sometimes I was ready to enquire further; but then I satisfied all my inquisitive thoughts with this general notion, that it was incomprehensible. I found it sufficiently evident in scripture, that the Father was God, that the Son was God, and the holy Spirit was God; and that they were usually represented in scripture as three persons: And though I had no distinct idea of the modus of it, yet I thought myself sufficiently defended, and intrenched in the forms of scholastic language, and armed with that set of phrases which make up this part of the common, or orthodox explanation, without being too solicitous about conceiving that which was asserted to be utterly unconceivable.

I humbly adore the sacred three, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, as one God, inconceivably glorious, beyond, and above, all the thoughts and reasonings of men: And therefore I would not willingly indulge an unreasonable, and an ambitious curiosity, in any of the mysterious things of God. Yet where, after my laborious enquiry, and daily prayer, I think I have discovered some mistake in my former opinions, not as to the doctrine itself, but as to the mode of explaining it, I humbly hope I may be permitted to part with a set of phrases which scripture never uses, which the popish schools composed, and which I never could understand, without the censure of heresy, or departing from the faith.

Let it be observed here, that the ancient *athanasian* explication of the sacred doctrine of the trinity, is a very different thing from this scholastic scheme, as I have manifested elsewhere. And though in the last century there were but few trinitarians who knew and believed the ancient *athanasian* doctrine, because they generally went into the scholastic hypothesis, yet in the present age this scholastic explication, of the genera-

tion and procession of the Son and Spirit, derived from the popish schools, is supposed to be indefensible, even by some of the most learned and zealous defenders of the deity of the sacred three.

But to return to the objection. If it were needful to maintain the eternal generation of the Son in his divine nature, and the eternal procession of the Spirit, in a way of derivation from the Father, there is scarce any scheme of explication that might be construed into a more rational and intelligible idea of it, than the hypothesis which I now propose: For if we suppose the eternal Word, and the eternal Spirit, to be two essential powers of the divine nature, they may be said to flow, at least in a logical sense, from the very essence of God the Father, as I have described in other parts of these dissertations.

And as for that text on which this objection is founded, *John xv. 26.* "The Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, whom I will send unto you." See a particular paraphrase of it at the end of this discourse.

Objection V. You have described the Spirit of God under various ideas; you make it to signify either a divine power, or God himself acting by his Spirit, or the agency and operation of this divine power, or the gifts and graces of the holy Spirit; thus, according to your account, there is not one single, settled, uniform idea, that belongs to this sacred name, the Spirit of God, or holy Spirit, in scripture.

Answer. This is freely granted: And it is the eastern custom, and particularly the *jewish* manner of writing, to use the same word in various senses. This sort of writing runs through the scripture, both in the old and new testament. Shall I instance in the word law? Sometimes it signifies the five books of *Moses*, sometimes the ten commandments, sometimes a doctrine of religion, sometimes the gospel, and sometimes it denotes a principle of sin, or a principle of holiness. The word grace also, in one place, signifies the favour of God, in another a christian virtue, and in a third text it denotes beauty or decency; and the *greek* word *χαρις* signifies also thanks. The word faith sometimes means an act of the mind, believing the revelation of *Christ*, and sometimes the object of that act, that is, the truth, or the gospel. And many other words might be produced of the same kind, such as righteousness, flesh, body, soul, &c.

But let me come nearer the point, and give an instance of the name of the second person in the trinity, that is, the Logos, or Word, sometimes it signifies a power of the divine nature, *Psal. xxxiii. 6.* and *2 Pet. iii. 5.* "By the Word of God the heavens were of old." Sometimes it denotes God himself acting by his Word, *Heb. iv. 12.* "The Word of God is living and powerful, a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Sometimes it intends the complete person of our Lord *Jesus Christ* incarnate, *Rev. xix. 13.* "His name is called the Word of God." And at other times it means the Word of God, either written or spoken, as *Prov. xxx. 5.* "Every Word of God is pure." And in a multitude of other texts it has the same sense.

It is plain that the sacred writers had different ideas under the same word in different places, and if we should confine the terms faith, grace, law, righteousness, word, to one uniform sense and idea, it would be impossible to explain, or interpret, many texts of scripture.

Now, since many other words are used in this manner, in scripture, and even that sacred name, the Word of God, which denotes the second person of the blessed three,

why

why may not the name Spirit, which denotes the third person, be construed with the same latitude ?

Let it be observed here, that it is not the custom of the sacred penmen, to write according to learned rules, and forms of logic, nor to confine the same term always to the same idea. They generally chuse a more lax and vulgar way of speaking; they use the same word in several senses, and apply the same term not only to the original, and chief idea, but to various things which are causes, effects, parts, properties, or adjuncts of that original idea: Which modes of speech, though they are very common and familiar, yet the critics afterwards invented learned names for them, viz. metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, &c.

I add further, that the most orthodox writers on this subject have found it necessary to construe the term holy Spirit in some variety of ideas: For they make it signify his influences, or his gifts, or his effusion on men, in such places where they thought it could never be applied to his person. The learned Mr. *Pool*, author of the "Synopsis criticorum," in his excellent little treatise of the "deity of the holy Spirit," affirms, that it must needs be taken so in many places of scripture, page 64, 65. he cites several of them. And that learned author, *J. H. Bisterfeld*, in his answer to *Crellius*, about fourscore years ago, and all writers besides of the orthodox sentiments, confess the necessity of applying different senses to the term holy Spirit, and that it must sometimes denote the effusion or influences thereof: As in *John* vii. 39. "The holy Ghost was not yet, given, because *Jesus* was not yet glorified." The learned know, that the word, given, is not in the *greek* original, but they all explain it by the gift of the Spirit in their translation. And so in *Acts* xix. 2. "We have not so much as heard whether there be any holy Ghost:" Which most expositors interpret merely concerning the plentiful effusion of the Spirit at *Pentecost*. And in other places, where the holy Ghost is said to "be given by the laying on of the hands of the apostles," as *Acts* viii. 18. it seems necessary to interpret it concerning his gifts, lest it appear too assuming to suppose a sacred person in the eternal godhead to be given to one man by the hands of another.

S E C T I O N V.

An explication of various texts according to this account of the holy Spirit.

TH E several texts already cited, and interpreted in the former parts of this discourse, shew how necessary it is to understand this term, the holy Spirit, with such a latitude, and in this variety of ideas. Here I shall add a few more scriptures, and those even of the greatest difficulty, and of the most considerable importance, to make it appear, that this discourse of the holy Spirit, is adapted to explain the several descriptions that are given of him in the scripture. The rest will easily fall in with it.

I. One of the most remarkable and important texts, wherein the holy Spirit is represented as a person distinct from the Father, and the Son, is in *John* xvi. 13, 14. "When 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 shew you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you." Here let it be noted, that the holy Spirit, who inspired the prophets, and

and revealed the mind of God under the *jewish* dispensation, was now appointed more explicitly to perform this work, in a more evident and conspicuous appearance than before, and a more plentiful and magnificent manner; and to empower multitudes to preach, prophesy, and work miracles in the name of *Christ*. Now as the Father did not design, under the gospel, to manifest his will by the appearance of angels, so much as in ancient times, and was about to recal the person of his Son from this lower world, this blessed Spirit, or the divine efficient power, was to reside in the church as the deputy, or resident, and prime minister, both of the Father and the Son. Upon these accounts it seemed proper to our Saviour, who is the divine wisdom incarnate, to describe this divine power by a strong *protopopoeia*, and a noble allegory, as a messenger sent forth from God for this glorious design: And because the extraordinary effusions of the holy Ghost were not to be made till *Christ* was ascended to heaven to dispatch this messenger to the earth, and to send him on this great errand, therefore saith our Lord, "Except I go, the comforter will not come," verse 7.

Now, when a messenger delivers what his principal gives him in charge, he is then justly declared a true and faithful messenger: But when he devises things of his own head, and delivers them in the name of his principal, he is then said to speak of himself, and then he loses the character of truth or veracity. It is in this sense *Christ*, who was the messenger of the Father, says, "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself," *John* xiv. 10. that is, "I did not invent this doctrine, it is no new contrivance of mine, but I delivered to you what my Father gave me in charge." And according to this allegory, when *Christ* says of the Spirit, under the representation of God's messenger, that he "shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak," the meaning may be twofold, 1. That he should not teach any new doctrine, different from the doctrine of *Christ*. 2. That he should not act like a false messenger, and impose upon them; but he should deliver to them the doctrines of *Christ* as one entrusted and sent by the Father and the Son: And in this sense he justly deserves the character of the Spirit of truth, as well as because divine veracity belongs to his nature as God, who is the God of truth.

Perhaps this explication of this text may seem a little too unnatural and figurative to some persons, who are truly zealous for the deity of the holy Spirit: But let them consider, that every interpreter of this scripture, who preserves the doctrine of his deity, is constrained to near as figurative a sense as this is. And whatsoever subordinations are ascribed to a supposed, real, proper, divine person, may be better ascribed to a divine power, under the subordinate character of a messenger in the divine oeconomy. It is none but the *arians* who can keep precisely to the letter of the text here, because they make the Spirit an inferior or created being.

II. Another remarkable text is, *John* xv. 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:" Which may be explained thus, the Spirit may be said to proceed from the Father, because God, in the person of the Father, is considered as exhibiting the prime physical idea or essence of god-head, and thus may be conceived as the original of the two divine powers, viz. the Word and the Spirit: Thus the Word and the Spirit may be said to proceed from the Father, as powers from the essence.

Again,

Again, God the Father is considered as sustaining the prime moral idea or dignity of godhead, and thus has the original right and power of sending the Spirit, of bestowing the gifts and graces of his own Spirit, or of conferring gifts and graces by his own Spirit, and in this sense also the Spirit is said to proceed from the Father; the Father is the original agent, and sustains the supreme character in the divine oeconomy, and as such he is called the Father.

Sometimes God condescends to confer these gifts by the ministration of the apostles, and by imposition of their hands. Many persons received the holy Ghost by the hands of the apostles, as instruments, when in reality it was God communicated those sacred gifts, even as miracles were said to be wrought by men, when in reality the Spirit of God performed them. Sometimes *Jesus Christ* is said to send the Spirit from heaven, but then *Christ* is not only considered as the most glorious vicegerent, or minister of God, by whose mediation and ministration divine influences descend on the disciples from the Father; but he is considered also as one in whom the fulness of the godhead dwells bodily, as one who is God in human nature, as the eternal Word or wisdom of the Father dwelling in flesh. Now, in this respect the Spirit may be properly called the Spirit of *Christ*, and is said to be given, sent, and shed forth by *Jesus Christ*, in a superior character of grandeur and authority, than is, or can ever be expressed concerning any of his apostles.

When divine wisdom is represented in a personal manner, as in *Prov. i. 20, 23.* it is frequently supposed to denote our blessed Saviour. Now wisdom speaks there in a majestic manner, "Turn you at my reproof, and behold I will pour out my Spirit upon you;" and when our Lord was departing from the world, "he breathed on the disciples, and said, receive ye the holy Ghost," *John xx. 22.*

The Son of God, or the man *Christ Jesus*, personally united to the eternal Logos, or divine Word, is God over all blessed for ever: And being now ascended to heaven, he sustains the office of his Father's vicegerent, and deputed king in the sacred oeconomy, and therefore the Spirit is represented as proceeding from the Father in an original manner, but as being sent by *Jesus Christ*; the authority of the Father and the Son concur in this matter. The lamb is raised to sit upon the Father's throne, that is, to exercise his Father's authority, *Rev. iii. 21.* and therefore the river of the water of life, which may denote the blessed Spirit, is represented, *Rev. xxii. 1.* "To proceed from the throne both of God and the lamb," that is, from the royal authority of the Father and the Son.

III. Text, *1 Cor. xii. 4.* "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." Verse 5. "And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord." Verse 6. "And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." Which is easily explained thus. Though the gifts are different, it is the same divine Spirit, the same principle of efficiency, or power of God, that gives them. Though the administrations, or services in the church, are various, yet *Christ* is the same Lord and master. Though there are divers miraculous operations, yet it is the same God which worketh them all in all believers who receive them. Now, that the same Spirit in the fourth verse signifies a power in the divine nature, or God himself operating by this power, may be learned from verse 11. compared with verse 6. "But all these worketh that one and the self same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." Both the will and the operation which are proper to God himself, and which are ascribed to him, verse 6. are ascribed to the Spirit, verse 11. where by it seems plain that the Spirit is sometimes construed to signify God himself, and
some-

sometimes to signify a power in the divine nature. Thus the scripture attributes true godhead to the Spirit, under some distinction both from the Father and the Son.

IV. Text, *Isa.* xliv. 3. "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground. I will pour out my Spirit on thy seed, and my blessing on thy off-spring." And, *Joel* ii. 28. "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." *Acts* ii. 33. "*Christ* having received of the Father the promise of the holy Ghost he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." In these, and many other scriptures, it is evident that the Spirit of God is represented under the character or metaphor of water, which is more plainly expressed, *John* vii. 38, 39. "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the holy Ghost was not yet, given, because that *Jesus* was not yet glorified." Now, if the Spirit of God, in these texts, be explained to signify his influences, his operations, his gifts and graces, which are distributed and dispersed abroad like streams of living water in the church, and poured down or conferred on men, perhaps this may come nearest to the sense and idea of the sacred writers: And, as I hinted before, if we compare those scriptures herewith wherein the Spirit of God is said to be given by the laying on of the hands of men, such as *Acts* viii. 18. it will further confirm the explication of the term Spirit by gifts and influences.

V. The last text I shall mention, is that famous and contested place, *1 John* v. 7, 8. "There are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Spirit, and these three are one: And there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one."

Now the three witnesses in heaven, in the seventh verse, may be well interpreted, God the Father with his two divine powers, the Word and the Spirit, which in this place, as well as in many others, are represented personally, for they are called *τρεις μαρτυρες*, that is, three witnesses, or three persons bearing witness: And perhaps there may be some special congruity in representing them as three persons in this place, because they succeed each other, and chiefly witnessed in different successive oeconomies or administrations; viz. the Father eminently under the old testament bearing witness to the gospel by prophecy; the Word eminently in his incarnate state by his own ministrations; and the Spirit eminently after the ascension of *Christ* by his extraordinary and divine operations: And yet these three are one, *εν εις*, are one thing, one being, one deity, not considered in a personal manner, but as a nature or essence.

In the eighth verse, "There are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood." These are represented also as three persons, for they are called *τρεις μαρτυρες*. The best expositions that are given of them are these two.

1. They may be all considered as belonging to *Christ* himself, and then the water signifies the pure and holy doctrine and life of *Christ*. And the blood denotes the sealing his doctrine by his own death and martyrdom, and there is this reason why these witnesses belong to our Lord himself, viz. because it is said, verse 6. "He came not by water only, but by water and blood. And then it is the Spirit who beareth the third witness," that is, the glorious power of miraculous operations which attended our Saviour's preaching. Or,

2. They may be all considered as belonging to christianity, or exhibited among christians: And then the blood signifies the blood or atonement of *Christ*: Exhibited, perhaps, in the Lord's supper, which witnesseth to the truth of the gospel by it's power to speak peace to the guilty conscience: The water represents the
grace

grace of regeneration, held forth, perhaps, in the baptismal water, which by changing sinners into saints witnesses to the truth of the gospel: And the Spirit most probably signifies the miraculous gifts of the Spirit in the apostles and primitive christians, which join to confirm the same gospel.

I think it most proper to refer the term Spirit among the witnesses on earth to the miraculous gifts of the holy Ghost, because the term Spirit, considered as a distinct power in the divine nature itself, is described as a witness in heaven.

Thus I have endeavoured to explain the doctrine of the holy Spirit, and to apply this explication to the most difficult texts of scripture. Upon the whole, I conclude, that since the scripture represents him under the characters of true godhead, and under the character of a person distinct from the Father and the Son, since also it is exceeding hard to reconcile strict and proper deity with three strict and proper personalities in the godhead itself, in a fair consistence with reason and scripture, it seems to be most agreeable to the word of God, that we should explain the personality of the Spirit in a figurative sense, that we may better maintain his proper eternal deity, and his unity with the Father. This seems to be much more eligible than that we should explain his personality in a strict literal sense, for this would lead us into one of these two dangers, viz. either to make three distinct consciousnesses, or intelligent minds, in the one true and eternal God, or to sink the character of the holy Spirit into a creature, that we might save the proper personality.

I grant, when we have been accustomed all our lives to a particular set of words and ideas, it is pretty hard to persuade ourselves to make any little change in our ideas or words, even though the greatest advantages might be attained by it toward the defence of the gospel, and though it might remove some of the chief embarrassments which attend any particular article of faith. I wish heartily for myself and my friends, greater freedom of soul in the humble pursuit of truth. Yet I think I have not much varied from the defensible parts of the common explication of the trinity; and I have taken care religiously to secure all the foundations of divine worship, which concern the honour of the holy Spirit, and all our practical regards to him which concern our salvation.

I impose my thoughts on no man; and if there be any thing found in all this discourse which may indanger any necessary part of our christian belief; or which may diminish any thing of the divine honour which is due to the blessed Spirit, our sanctifier and comforter, I disclaim and renounce it utterly, and would be glad to receive a better explication which might be more secure from any such danger and inconvenience.

It is an easy matter for persons of wit and subtlety, and critical artifice, to embarrass the clearest explication of such sublime doctrines. It is easy to raise up a dust of confusion around the incomprehensible things of God, which have some darkness and difficulty in them when set in the fairest light. I wish every disputant of this sacred article, of the trinity in unity, would set it in a better view, and represent it in more easy and distinct ideas, rather than studiously batter down every scheme without building up any.

While we are tracing out these abstruse and awful subjects by the light of scripture, in this dark world, I am sure it becomes us all to keep our spirits in a modest and humble frame, and in a constant dependence on the divine aids of that blessed Spirit, which searcheth the deep things of God, and reveals them to men. As in my feeble pursuit of these enquiries I have always laid myself at the foot of this heavenly teacher,

that according to the promise of our departing Saviour, I might be guided by him into all truth, so I would now humbly recommend these papers to him, that if there be any thing in them proper to lead christians into clearer conceptions of his own sacred nature and operations, he would condescend to make them happily successful for that purpose: And beseeching my Saviour, that whatsoever sentiments of mine are inconsistent with divine truth, he would graciously forgive and cancel them, and never suffer any thing that I have written to have so unhappy an influence, as to lead the meanest professor of christianity into a mistake, in matters of so glorious concernment.

However, since there is some difficulty and darkness attends our enquiries into the metaphysical nature and essence of the blessed Spirit, his unity with, and distinction from the Father and Son, and since he has not condescended to reveal this mystery to us in his word in evident and express language, we may be well assured, that he has not made our participation of his divine and salutary influences to depend upon any clear, explicit, and certain knowledge hereof. Many a humble christian has been richly endowed with his gifts and graces, who had obtained but very imperfect and confused ideas of his abstracted nature. He has taught the holy penmen to write down his sacred titles and offices, as an enlightener, a sanctifier, and a comforter, in more plain and express language, than his sublime essence, and metaphysical idea or nature. And while we depend on his divine all-sufficiency for these purposes, and seek to God the Father, and his Son *Christ Jesus*, for the communications of his blessed Spirit, we have a divine promise that we shall not seek in vain. "If men, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?" *Luke xi. 13.* And this is the spring of our light, and our hope, on this depends our present holiness and our eternal comfort. Amen.

DISSER-

DISSERTATION VI.

Of the use of the word person in the doctrine of the trinity.

SINCE the word person has been used in most ages of the christian church, in setting forth the doctrine of the blessed trinity, and hath been applied to those three sacred ideas, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, it becomes almost necessary when we write on this subject, to declare the sense of this word, as it is variously applied in discoursing on this doctrine.

The sense of the word person, in the common language of men, is one single, intelligent, voluntary agent, or a principle of action that has understanding and will; so three men, or three angels, are properly called three distinct persons. Now, since it has pleased God in his word, to represent to us the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, under the character of three such intelligent agents, they may be called in human language three persons, according to this scriptural representation.

The distinctive character of a person is the application of the personal pronouns I, ΤΗΟΥ, ΗΕ, to any thing; and wheresoever these are applied to any being, either simple or compound, that being is there exhibited in a personal manner, and may in that respect be called a person. Now, all the three pronouns, I, thou, and he, being frequently applied in scripture to the Father and the Son, and the pronoun he to the blessed Spirit, we therefore call them three persons.

I confess, I know of but two particular places in scripture where this word person is ever supposed to be used with reference to this doctrine.

One is in *Heb. i. 3.* where *Christ* is called "the express image of his Father's person:" And though the greek word *hypostasis* sometimes signifies substance, as it is translated *Heb. xi. 1.* yet in this place it seems to intimate such a distinction of the Father, from the Son, as is strong enough to answer the word person.

The next place is *2 Cor. iv. 6.* "The glory of God shines forth in the face, or person, of *Jesus Christ*;" for the greek word *πρόσωπον* signifies also person. In the first of these texts person is applied to God the Father, and in the second to *Christ* incarnate: Though it must also be confessed, that the critics in the learned languages, will hardly allow either of these words, *hypostasis*, or *prosopon*, among the

ancient *greeks*, to signify properly a person in the sense in which it is used in this controversy *.

I confess, I am not aware of any text, where any term that expressly signifies person is applied to the holy Spirit, or to the divine nature of *Christ*, considered apart from the man *Jesus*; yet since the sacred three have such sort of distinct actions and characters attributed to them in scripture, as we usually ascribe to three distinct intelligent agents, we make no scruple to call them all persons, and think there is sufficient foundation for it in scripture.

Yet let it be noted, that though the word *person* may be fitly used, and applied to the doctrine of the trinity, we are not to imagine that it should be always taken here exactly in the same sense and include precisely the same ideas, as when we call three men, or three angels, three distinct persons. This I gave notice of in my "christian doctrine of the trinity," pages 456—464.

In almost all arts and sciences it has been ever accounted a very lawful and practicable thing, to borrow several terms from familiar language and common speech, and to use them in a sense peculiar to some one art or science, though it be different from their vulgar and more usual signification. We may borrow a plain example from every mechanic trade; as for instance, a watch maker talks of a balance, a pinion, a hand, a spring, a barrel, a key, &c. and affixes ideas to those words very different from their original or common meaning. So when a metaphysician speaks of simplicity, passion, substance, subject, a patient, matter, form, &c. he gives those words a different meaning from what they have in common life. And why shall it not be lawful in theology, while we are treating of sacred and divine subjects, which are so much superior to our common ideas, to borrow the word *person* from familiar and common language, and use it in a sense that has some analogy to the common meaning of it, though it be not entirely the same.

In explaining this article of the trinity it is well known that there are two special cases wherein we make use of the word *person*; and both of them may require such a sense of the word as is a little different from the common usage; for human languages have not furnished us with words sufficiently distinct and apposite to express divine ideas; and therefore men have borrowed those words from common speech, which, in their opinion, come near to those divine ideas which they would express. The two cases are these.

The first is, when we apply the word *person* to three distinctions in the divine nature, and call the Word and Spirit persons as well as the Father; all these being represented in scripture as intelligent agents, or principles of action, we call them three persons.

The second case is, when we apply the word *person* to the human and divine natures of our Lord *Jesus Christ* united, and call this God-man, this compound or complex being, one person.

In the first case we suppose three distinctions in one divine nature to be represented in scripture, under three personal characters, or as three persons, who are all employed in our creation and salvation.

In

* *Πρόσωπον* is supposed to signify a person, 2 Cor. i. 11. "The gift bestowed on us by the prayers of many persons;" and I think this is the only text where it necessarily signifies a distinct intelligent agent, and this does not refer to any of the sacred three, but to men only. As for *ὑπόστασις*, some critics say, it must rather signify substance, in Heb. i. 3. because in the apostolic age they think it was never used to express person.

In the second case we suppose two natures united into one personal character, for the scripture represents God manifest in the flesh as one person, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. "He was seen of angels, and received up into glory.

The application of the word person to *Christ* as God-man, has been largely vindicated in my second "dissertation on the trinity," where I have made it appear, that as any two material beings which are united together as two houses, trees, or fruits, may be called one complex house, one complex tree, &c. So the human and divine natures of *Christ*, though possibly each of them may be called one single person, yet when intimately united, may be called one complex person, or one complex principle of intelligent action and passion. I refer the reader to that discourse. See pages 511—517.

But when we consider the distinctions in the divine nature, and call the Father, the Word, and Spirit, three persons, it requires a little farther explication in what sense the characters of personal agents may be attributed to the Word and Spirit as well as to the Father, and that shall be the subject of the present dissertation.

As in the case which concerns *Christ* as God-man, the word person has it's signification enlarged to include two natures in it, which is more than common language admits; so in this case, which concerns three persons in one divine essence, the word person has it's signification narrowed, to admit rather less into it than common language generally includes. I think these things have been generally so understood by all learned trinitarians; at least in that common explication of the trinity which hath been called orthodox for four hundred years, wherein three distinct consciousnesses, or spirits, are not supposed to make up the godhead, but one single consciousness only, or one single spirit.

Now, if the complete divine nature, or the infinite spirit, be represented as including in it two distinct powers, which are called the Word and the Spirit, by way of analogy to the human soul, which includes in it the powers of mind and * will, and if we suppose the human soul acting by the mind and will, to represent God the Father as acting by his two divine powers, the Word and Spirit, it is evident that the Father is properly called a person, an intelligent voluntary agent, with very little or no alteration of the common sense of the word in human language; and this appellation is what all the opponents of our doctrine will allow.

But when the Word and Spirit are called persons, which are supposed to be really but divine powers of the Father, whose inward distinction we know not, the term person is then used in a figurative or metaphorical sense, and not in so proper and literal a sense as when the Father is called a person. Yet that there is sufficient distinction between them to lay a foundation for such a distinct personal representation of them in scripture, will appear by the following considerations.

Consideration I. Are not the various faculties of man often represented under personal characters in common discourse? How frequently is a man represented as conversing with his own mind, communing with his own heart, following the dictates of his

* Though I represent the divine Word and Spirit by way of analogy to the mind and will of a human soul, let it be observed, that the chief reason why I use the words mind and will, is, because they are the two single names generally given to the two chief powers of the soul; and as the mind denotes the knowing power, so the will is commonly understood to signify the active power. But if there were any single word that did include the intelligent and volitive power, and another single word that did denote the efficient or executive power of moving the body, I would much rather chuse two such names to set forth the divine Word and divine Spirit, as I have noted elsewhere, because I think this would come nearer to the scriptural representation.

his own will, or subduing his will and subjecting it to his reason? Do we not freely say, "My mind has laboured hard to find out such a difficulty, my will is resolutely bent to pursue such a course; my mind denies her assent to such a doctrine; or my will resists no more, but yields itself up to the conduct of my understanding?" How frequently are reason and fancy introduced like two opponents or disputants? Is not conscience at every turn brought in as a person speaking to the sinner, as an accuser charging him with secret crimes, or as a judge approving the actions of a good man, and condemning a rebel, and all this under a personal character and in personal language? Are not dialogues introduced oftentimes between reason and fancy, between a man and his conscience? And this not merely in studied rhetorical language, but in common discourse.

And since human powers are thus represented as persons, why may not the Word and Spirit, which are divine powers, be thus represented also? And why may not God be represented as a person, transacting his own divine affairs with his Word and his Spirit, under personal characters; since a man is represented as transacting human affairs with his understanding, mind, will, reason, fancy, or conscience, in a personal manner?

Consideration II. There is yet a further reason why we may expect such personal representations of the divine powers in scripture: For it is the custom of eastern writers and particularly of the penmen of the holy scripture to represent the several parts, principles, characters, or virtues of a man in a personal manner. So the body and the soul are called the outward and inward man, *2 Cor. iv. 16.* So the principles of grace and principles of sin are represented personally, and have personal actions and characters attributed to them under the names of flesh and spirit, *Gal. v. 17.* These same principles are called the old man and the new man, which are personal names, *Rom. vi. 6. Eph. iv. 24.* So charity is represented as a person, *1 Cor. xiii.* And understanding, or wisdom, is frequently made a person, in the book of *Proverbs*, even where it doth not so evidently signify the *Messiah*; and much more may it be exhibited as a person where *Christ* himself is prefigured and designed.

It is so customary with eastern writers to personalize every thing, that even inanimate beings, as well as virtues and vices, are represented by them under personal characters. The sun and the wind have personal properties ascribed to them *Psal. civ. 19.* "The sun knoweth his going down." *John iii. 8.* "The wind bloweth where it listeth." Here are knowledge and will attributed to mere corporeal beings.

The countries of *Edom* and *Egypt*, the cities of *Tyre* and *Jerusalem*, are called the daughters of *Edom* and *Egypt*, of *Jerusalem* and of *Tyre*, &c. *Job* said to corruption, "thou art my father, as well as to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister," *Job xvii. 24.* Sparks of fire are called the sons of the burning coal, *Job v. 7.* And the word son and daughter are applied almost to every thing in their style, which names denote personal ideas. It is no wonder then if in scripture the powers of the divine nature are described as persons.

Consideration III. I add further, that the *jews* were wont to distinguish the powers of a spirit personally from that spirit: And this comes close and home to our present case. When they represent a man as purposing and resolving any thing in his own heart, they say he speaks to his memra, that is, his word, his understanding, his soul, his will, or any of his powers. So the great God is oftentimes distinguished from his memra, or word, or will, or powers, or affections, in the same

same *jewish* writings. Thus the term *memra*, when put for God or man is often put for himself under a distinct personal character. There are some few places wherein this very word *memra* is evidently attributed to the *Messiah*, or *Christ* who was to come. See Mr. *Robert Fleming's* "christology, vol. I. pages 137—142." where are many citations of this kind from the *jewish* writings.

Philo the *jew*, who wrote about the time our Saviour was upon earth, and has left his writings as one of the noblest monuments we have of the ancient *jewish* sentiments, speaks frequently of distinct powers in the divine nature; and represents them in a personal manner. He acknowledges that God has two chief supreme powers, one of which is called God, and the other Lord, and supposes these two powers to be uncreated, eternal, infinite, immense, incomprehensible, and speaks of them upon very many occasions. And though he does not directly give these two powers the name of mind and will, for he calls them sometimes dominion and goodness, yet he speaks of them as divine powers, by which all things are created and governed. He makes the *Logos*, or wisdom, another divine power, or God himself. "These things, saith he, being considered, as it appears how God is three, and yet but one;" which in his allegorizing way he represents by the vision of *Abraham*, when *Jehovah* appeared to him. *Gen.* xviii. 1. "And *Abraham* looked, and behold three men stood by him:" This vision, in a literal sense he expounds of the *Logos*, and two angels: By the mystical sense, he saith, here was denoted δ ω , the great *Jehovah* with his two powers; and he repeats this in another place: "In the middle is the Father of all things; on each side of him are the two powers, the oldest and the nearest to the δ ω ." See doctor *Allix's* judgment of the *jewish* church, page 147. Thus we see there was some shadow of the doctrine of the trinity, among the *jews* of the ancient synagogue; though they were as zealous asserters of the unity of the godhead, as either the *sozinians* or *arians* can pretend to be: And it appears also by this sort of discourse, that they conceived of the sacred trinity as God with his two powers, which I have taken more notice of in another place.

Consideration IV. To make this the more evident, I add also, that most of the very primitive fathers of the christian church, when they speak of these things, describe the divine *Logos*, or eternal reason, or wisdom of God, as a personal power, or as a divine power under a personal character; and represent the *Logos*, or ω , or *Σοφία*, that is, the divine wisdom, or mind, as a counsellor, with whom God consulted, in the formation of his works, and who was with God before all worlds, even from all eternity. And whosoever will read those early authors will find the *Logos*, or second person in the blessed-trinity, frequently so described, that every reader would imagine a proper divine power, rather than a proper literal person to be there represented; though sometimes also they figuratively affix personal names to this *Logos*, this eternal Word, or wisdom. See the dissertation on the name *Logos*, page 533.

Consideration V. The common and usual explications of this sacred doctrine, which have been esteemed most orthodox among the protestant churches, both at home and abroad, have supposed the distinctions of the sacred three in the divine nature not to arise to the complete, proper, and literal idea of person among men; because they generally make the essence of all the three to be numerically the same. Therefore it can be but a metaphorical or figurative personality which they allow; and they call them three persons, only by way of analogy to three men, or three angels, since there are not, in their opinion, three distinct conscious beings in the godhead.

The

The most ingenious and learned doctor *Wallis*, in his letters on the doctrine of the trinity, makes no scruple at all to say, that the word person, when applied to the distinctions of the Word and Spirit in the divine nature, is metaphorical, analogical, and figurative: And he frequently uses this manner of speech, supposing that three literal persons would not consist with the divine unity; and yet, I think, he has always been esteemed an orthodox trinitarian. "We mean no more, says he, by the word person, but somewhat analogous thereto; the words person and personality here are but metaphorical, and so are the words Father, Son, generate, &c." See his third letter, pages 31, 39. I might cite many other writers who have been known and approved authors in this controversy in the last age, who make the distinction of divine persons to be a distinction of internal relative properties, in the self-same individual essence; which can never arise to the idea of a distinct, literal, and proper personality.

Consideration VI. To vindicate this metaphorical sense in which the word person is attributed to the sacred three, consider, that godhead, or deity, is ascribed in scripture to the Word, and to the Spirit; and there are also personal characters ascribed to them: Now if this sacred doctrine cannot be well explained in a proper and literal sense, both with regard to the deity and to the personality, lest we run into tritheism, and make three gods; I esteem it much safer to construe the terms of personality in a figurative sense, than to construe the terms of deity in that manner, and to allow only a figurative godhead to the Word and Spirit: For the proofs of their true and proper deity seem to me stronger than the proofs of their literal and proper personality.

And, indeed, most, if not all, the common orthodox trinitarian schemes, as I said before, agree with me in this, that the word person is not applied to all the sacred three in the full and literal sense of it, though the word God is attributed to them in the literal sense. If some have supposed a particular manner of subsistence, to be a person in the godhead; and others say, a person is the divine being in a particular manner of subsistence, and that the three divine persons are the same numerical divine being repeated in three manners of subsistence, it is much the same in this respect; for every one perceives, that neither of these are three distinct persons in the literal and proper meaning of the word; therefore it is plain the word person is here used by them figuratively or analogically, though they use the word God in it's proper and literal sense.

Consideration VII. If the personal characters which are attributed to *Christ* in scripture are too strong, and proper, and literal, to be solved by such a figurative personality, then let it be observed, that *Christ* had a distinct human nature, a soul and body in union with the divine Word; and surely this assumption of human nature strengthens the personal characters of I, thou, and he: This will abundantly solve the attribution of personal ideas to *Christ*. If the divine Word, in the sense and explication which I have given, be not sufficiently distinct from the Father, to be called a person, yet surely it may be allowed that the man *Christ Jesus* is a proper person, and his union to the divine Word does not abate or destroy his personality. The whole complex being, or God-man, may have a sufficient claim to personality, and all the personal pronouns I, thou, and he, are properly applied to him.

And as this sufficiently solves the personal ascriptions to *Christ*, since his incarnation, it will solve such personal ascriptions before his incarnation also: For I think there are many reasons to believe, that the divine nature of *Christ* formed and assumed his human soul into union with itself before the creation: That the soul of *Messiah* was the first

first of all creatures, was personally united to the divine Logos or wisdom before the world was, and continued so through all the ancient ages of the church, often appearing as the angel of the covenant, till at last he veiled himself in flesh and blood, and took upon him the likeness of man, which I have endeavoured to prove in another discourse.

Consideration VIII. If this scheme does not sufficiently account for the distinct expressions of the personality of the holy Spirit, let us remember that the personal characters of the blessed Spirit are not expressed in so frequent, nor in so strong, and plain terms in scripture as those of *Christ*.

1. In all the new testament there is only the pronoun HE attributed to the Spirit, but I think neither I nor THOU, nor WE, are applied once in all that sacred book; whereas I, thou, he, and we, are all ascribed both to the Father and Son.

2. The holy Spirit is often described in the notion of a divine power, or influence, rather than a person. He is said to be given to men, to be shed forth, or poured out on them; the apostles are said to be baptized with the holy Spirit, even with this very same Spirit, who is yet in another place called the comforter, and the Spirit of truth, and is represented in as strong language of personality as any where in the bible. *John* xiv. 26. and xvi. 13, 14. compared with *Acts* i. 5. The believers are anointed with the Spirit. *1 John* ii. 27. and filled with the holy Spirit, in opposition to wine, *Eph.* v. 18. And in *Acts* vi. 5. and xi. 24. they are full of faith and of the holy Ghost. And in *1 John* iv. 13. "He hath given us of his Spirit," that is, a portion or measure of his Spirit. And in *Tit.* iii. 6. "He shed his Spirit on us abundantly," that is, in a large measure. There is a part of the Spirit which was on *Moses*, that was given to the elders of *Israel*, *Num.* xi. 25. So a double portion of the Spirit which was in *Elijah* rested on *Elisha*, *2 Kings* ii. 10, 15. The Spirit is not given by measure to *Jesus Christ*, *John* iii. 34. See more in the fifth dissertation,* where he is represented as the power of God. All which modes of expression seem to describe properly a divine power in greater or lesser degrees of influence, rather than a proper person; though at other times this Spirit may be represented personally in an oriental and figurative way of speaking.

3. The holy Spirit is represented at other times in the sense of some writers, as a complication of divine virtues, because in *Rev.* i. 4. it is called the seven spirits which are before the throne. And in *Rev.* v. 6. "The lamb had seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God;" which seems to hold forth the seven-fold virtues or powers of God which dwell in *Christ*, that is, a perfection of divine powers to answer his oeconomical exaltation, by the residence of the Spirit of God in him in the completest manner.

4. Let us remember also, what was before mentioned, that though there be one scripture in the bible, viz. *Heb.* i. 3. where the word *hypostasis* or person, is attributed to the Father; and one text, viz. *2 Cor.* iv. 6. where the word *prosopon* or person, is applied to the Son of God incarnate, yet I can find no verse in the bible where any word that directly signifies person is attributed to the holy Spirit, and therefore the personal characters attributed to him may be supposed to be only figurative, and such as may be attributed to a divine power.

Consideration IX. If it should be granted, that the powers of a human soul, a finite being, are not substantial and distinct enough to admit such personal ascriptions as belong to the divine Word and Spirit in scripture, yet the powers of a divine and

* See page 597—602.

infinite being may be substantial and distinct enough to support such ascriptions. We know little of the divine essence but by way of analogy to human souls: And as the divine nature, or God, has something in him transcendently superior to all our ideas of human souls, so the powers of a God, which, in condescension to our weakness are called his Word and his Spirit, may have something in them, even in this respect, so transcendently superior to the powers of a human soul, as to be more proper subjects of such personal characters and ascriptions as the holy scripture has attributed to them; and yet their distinction or difference may not be so great as to make them distinct conscious minds.

Consideration X. I add in the last place, that if there be any expressions in scripture, either relating to the eternal divine Word, or the holy Spirit, which cannot be construed, or interpreted, concerning a particular power of the divine nature represented in such a figurative personality, I would then enquire, whether it may not be interpreted concerning the divine nature itself exerting that particular power: And in this sense the personality will appear more complete and more literal.

In this view of things the Logos, or Word, may signify God acting by his Word, as *Heb. iv. 12.* "The Word of God is living and powerful,—and a discern-er of the thoughts and intents of the heart." And the Spirit of God may signify God acting by his Spirit, as when *Ananias* lied to the holy Ghost, *Acts v. 3, 4.* He lied to God acting by the holy Ghost, God residing and operating in the apostles by his Spirit.

Now this representation of things approaches very near to the common orthodox explication of the trinity, wherein the Son and Spirit are represented as having the same numerical divine essence with the Father, but considered in a particular manner of subsistence, or vested with peculiar personal properties. Yet at the same time, the scheme which I have proposed is free from the heaviest difficulties that lie upon the common orthodox scheme, viz. The eternal communication of the same individual divine essence from the Father to the Son and Spirit: For my hypothesis supposes the generation of the Son to refer to his pre-existent human soul, or to his body or to his mediatorial office; and the procession of the Spirit to refer to his mission rather than to his existence.

Now, if we review all these considerations, and joyn the force of them together, perhaps it will appear, that the explication of the trinity, by the idea of a divine being with his two divine powers, will allow such a personality to the Word and holy Spirit, as may be sufficient to answer the representation given of them in scripture.

Yet I will by no means contend for the use of the word person to express the divine nature of *Christ*, or the holy Spirit. I have often asserted, and repeat it again, that when I express the doctrine of the trinity by three persons being one God, I mean no more, than that there "are three, who have sufficient communion in one godhead to have proper divine names, titles and attributes ascribed to them, and sufficient distinction from each other to sustain the various characters and offices that are assigned to them in scripture.

Perhaps the word person may be the best word we have to express the character of God the Father, or of *Christ* as God-man, in his complete constitution, as a complex being: Yet, perhaps, it may not be the very clearest and happiest term that could possibly have been found to express the characters of the Word and Spirit in a philosophical

sophical manner, considered as mere distinctions in the divine nature. But let it be remembered, that it is not the custom of scripture, nor the design of the great and blessed God, to represent either heavenly or earthly things to us in their own philosophical nature, where our concern in them does not depend upon a philosophical knowledge of them: And therefore in these matters God is pleased to accommodate his language to the sentiments of the bulk of the people to whom they were first written. So the scripture speaks of the motion of the sun, of the fixation, or establishment and foundation of the earth, of the pillars of the heavens, of the heart and the reins giving instruction, as being the seat of the soul, according to the *hebrew* opinion, though these things are not literally and philosophically true. Now since our salvation, does not depend upon the knowledge of the precise points of unity and distinction, between Father and Son, and Spirit; or whether the Word and Spirit be proper powers, or proper persons in their own sublime nature; but upon their divine almsufficiency to fulfil their offices, and support their relations to us: It is very probable that God condescended to talk to his people according to their own way of thinking and talking, and to represent himself as acting by his divine powers under the character of persons, without giving us any account of the real philosophical distinctions in his incomprehensible essence, how great or how little they are: And the reason of this his conduct may be, because an exact and just philosophical account of these things is, perhaps, too transcendent for our conceptions in the present state, or that it was not necessary to meliorate our temper and practice, or promote our salvation.

Let it be further observed, that though the term person has been long and generally used in the christian churches to express the distinctions in the divine nature, yet it has not been universally made use of for this purpose; nor has the doctrine been confined only to this word, either in elder or in later times. Several centuries had run out after the beginning of christianity, before this word was publicly and frequently used. *Justin Martyr*, a very early writer, calls the distinctions in the trinity, different manners of being, *τρόποι ὑπόστασις*. Others of the Fathers call the Logos, or eternal Word, a power of God, according to the language of the ancient jews.

The “programma” of the emperor *Justin*, to which all the churches gave their consent, as *Evagrius* witnesses, “*historiæ ecclesiasticæ, libro v. capite 4.*” saith, “We adore the trinity in unity, and the unity in trinity; an unity as to essence, or godhead, a trinity as to properties or persons, *ιδιότητας ἕτοι πρόσωπα.*” Here person is explained by property. *St. Austin*, who uses the term person, explains the trinity by modes or powers of the divine nature; representing the Father, Son, and Spirit, as mind, wisdom, and love; or God considered as an original eternal mind, knowing and willing himself. *J. Damascene*, the first of the fathers that collected a regular system of divinity, defines a person in the holy trinity, to be an eternal mode of eternal subsistence; *ἡ ἀναρχὸς τριπλῶς τῆς αἰδίης ὑπόστασις*.

Thus also later christian writers, use the words mode and property, to describe a divine person, and that sometimes even in confessions of faith. The *Wirtemberg* confession calls the sacred three properties as well as persons. The confession of the *greek* church, 1453, calls the Father, Son, and Spirit, three properties, which are as it were the principles of all the other properties of God, and which are named three subsistences or persons. The *polish* confession, 1570, says, “They are three in their subsisting properties and dispensatory offices, yet these three are one.” The same divine essence considered in a particular mode of subsistence, is the common way where-

in a divine person hath been represented by most of our modern theological writers. The sacred trinity is usually described by them as the divine essence with three relative properties.

The great *Calvin*, one of the chief glories of the reformation, describes the Son and Spirit as the wisdom and power of God the Father; and yet he calls them persons. But he resolves not to quarrel with any man merely because he will not admit the word person. See "Institutionum libro i. capite 13." I might cite many authors to this purpose, who, though they use the word person, yet do by no means make it necessary: And there have been some who have rather disliked the word than approved of it. St. *Austin* himself, who uses the term with great freedom, declares, "It is not because he finds it in scripture, but because the scriptures do not contradict it, and that we use it by a kind of necessity, as labouring under a want of words," libro vii. de trinitate. And as *Calvin* has cited him, "Institutionum libro i. capite 13." he declares, "It is not so much to express what is the real divine distinction, but that we might not be utterly silent how the Father, Son and Spirit, are three."

Since therefore, neither scripture itself applies the term person to the Word or Spirit, nor the elder nor later writers of the church, have confined themselves to the use of this term, I can see no necessity of the confinement of ourselves, or others, to it, when we are speaking of the pure distinctions in the divine nature. And when we are endeavouring to explain them in a rational manner, and to form and adjust our clearest ideas of them, I think we may use the term divine properties, or rather divine powers, for this end: Perhaps this word powers comes nearest to the genuine ideas of things, so far as we can apply human words to divine ideas; and this word powers makes the distinction greater than properties, and I think it is so much the better. But we have several precedents for the use of both these terms among ancient writers.

And yet after all, since the scripture has represented the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, in a personal manner, and exhibited these divine ideas to us as three distinct personal agents concerned in the works of creation and salvation; and since it has been the general custom of the christian churches, for above a thousand years, to apply the word person to the sacred three, I think we may infer, that it may be safely and conveniently used in discoursing on this subject. Perhaps an introduction of any new terms into our common and popular discourses on this doctrine, would give a greater uneasiness and confusion to the minds of christians, than would be easily counterbalanced by the advantages we might expect from any unusual words, which might be introduced under a pretence of clearer ideas.

It is true, that when we are constrained by opposers of the truth, to explain these things in a rational and philosophical manner, we may then distinguish names more accurately: We may then shew, how the term person may be more properly and literally understood, when it is applied to God the Father, or to the complete person of *Christ* the mediator, as the scripture, perhaps, has applied *hypostasis* and *prosopon*: But that the same term person may be metaphorical and figurative when applied to the Word and Spirit, considered as mere distinctions in the divine nature.

Yet as the scripture frequently speaks in this figurative way, and the great God, who indited it, foreknew that multitudes of christian readers would be ready to form personal ideas under his own inspired words, I cannot think it a matter of so great importance,

importance, as that we would change all our usual forms of popular discourse on this subject. The scriptural representations are, doubtless, sufficiently adapted both to instruct and incite us to perform all our necessary duties to the Father, Son, and Spirit, as our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier; and it is on these depend our peace and pardon, and our hopes of everlasting happiness. And if these are well secured, let not terms and phrases engage the fury and contention of those who profess the gospel of peace. He that "dotes about vain questions, and strifes of words, incurs the censure of the apostle, that he is proud, knowing nothing." This is the way to stir up envy, strife and railings, with evil surmises, and perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds," *1 Tim. vi. 4.* It is time for christians to have done with all these: It is time for us to seek the truth in love, and to "follow after the things which make for peace, and the things whereby one may edify another." *Rom. xiv. 19.* We believe in God the Father our Creator; in the Son our Redeemer, and in the eternal Spirit our Sanctifier. Let us glorify the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit, by all due honours, unfeigned obedience, and everlasting praise. Amen.

DISSERTATION VII.

Of the distinction of persons in the divine nature; or, a humble essay to illustrate the doctrine of the trinity, viz. three persons and one God.

S E C T I O N I.

*The Introduction.**

WHILE I am discoursing on the sublime article of the sacred trinity, I would always endeavour to maintain the just distinction between the general doctrine itself, and the particular modes of explication; and therefore I would first mention what I call the scriptural doctrine.

By a careful perusal of the word of God, I hope I am arrived at a just and reasonable satisfaction in this general truth, that "there are three which are called the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit, who are represented in scripture as personal agents, sustaining different offices and characters in the transactions of God with his creatures; and that these three having divine titles, properties and attributions given to them, must have such communion in the one godhead, or divine nature, as to lay a just foundation for these ascriptions." This is the general doctrine of the trinity, which has been professed by the greatest part of the christian world, and this is what I mean when I say more briefly, "there are three persons who are one God."

Now, since this doctrine appears to carry in it a seeming inconsistency, it has been the labour of christians, in all ages, to find out some particular schemes of explication, whereby the difficulties may be removed, and the seeming oppositions reconciled, whereby we may attain some clear conceptions, how one God may be exhibited under three personal characters.

Among the several schemes which have been proposed in order to reconcile the seeming inconsistencies of this doctrine, there is not any one of them that has given fo

* By what I have delivered in the foregoing dissertations I have in some measure anticipated the design of this, though this was written before those. Yet since this dissertation exhibits the ideas of the sacred three, viz. the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, in a closer connexion and mutual respect to each other, and gives a more simultaneous view of my scheme of explication, I thought it not improper to place it here, that I might lay the better foundation for an answer to those objections which have been made against the doctrine of the trinity.

so plain, full, and satisfactory a solution to all the difficulties that arise, as to render all further attempts needless. There is yet room therefore for the employment of study and prayer, and humble endeavours to obtain clearer light.

Having surveyed the probabilities, and the inconveniencies which attend the several *hypotheses* which I have seen, I have ventured to indulge some degrees of assent to one particular sort of explication, which seems to me more correspondent to every part of scripture, and bids fairest for the reconciliation of some of those difficulties with which other schemes are encumbered. But I am far from having arrived at an assurance herein, nor dare I be peremptory, or positive, in the assertion of it; for even to this hour I look upon all these *hypotheses* but as particular human and fallible explications of that doctrine, which in general is divine and true.

Now, though the knowledge of any of these particular schemes is by no means necessary to our salvation, yet if divine grace will assist us to set these things in a reasonable light, it will add a sensible pleasure even to our inward devotions, when we behold the great God, the object of them, in a more distinct and conspicuous view. And if by this means we can better defend the true scriptural doctrine of the trinity from the objections of men, we shall do some honour to the truths of God and his gospel, and, perhaps, by this means we may have the happiness of establishing the faith of christians.

In order to explain in what sense three persons may be one God, we should first enquire, whether these personalities be intrinsic to the godhead or no. A late ingenious writer maintains, that though the scripture plainly reveals the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, to be three distinct persons, and to be one God, yet that the scripture does no where determine, that these three are distinct persons in the divine essence itself. He supposes also, that the Son and Spirit may have inferior natures, but being intimately united to the godhead of the Father, they may be said so far to participate of deity as to have all divine names, titles, and characters, ascribed to them, without the supposition of any manner of intrinsic distinctions in the godhead itself. See "the scripture trinity intelligibly explained by a divine of the church of England, doctor Thomas Burnet, prebendary of Salisbury," particularly pages 139—145.

Though the *hypothesis* of this author is formed with much ingenuity, and has some plausible appearances in it, yet I cannot give up my assent to it, for I freely declare it is my opinion, that the *Logos* and the *Pneuma*, that is, the Word and the Spirit in scripture are described as properly divine in their own natures, and yet in their divine characters are distinguished from God the Father.

There is another reason also, why I cannot give in to this *hypothesis*, and that is, we know from scripture that the Son has a nature inferior to godhead, but there is no sufficient evidence that the blessed Spirit has any such inferior nature, even while it is granted there are several oeconomical inferiorities ascribed to him. The Spirit never seems to be represented as a complex being, or person formed of God and a creature united, though the Son be thus exhibited to us.

Though there be not therefore any express assertion in scripture, that there are three distinct personalities in the godhead itself, yet I cannot hitherto find any method of explication sufficient to adjust all the parts of this sacred doctrine, according to scripture, without supposing some distinctions in the divine nature. Then the enquiry follows, what sort of distinction is sufficient to answer the scriptural account of the blessed three?

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The distinctions, or differences, which we can suppose in the godhead, are these which follow.

1. A distinction of names, and external relations derived from creatures; this is drawn from God's relation to the works of his hands, as when the same divine essence, or God, is called the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sanctifier, because of the different operations and relations of God to men. By this some have explained the holy trinity.

2. A distinction of names, and internal relations, which is drawn from different relative properties in the divine nature itself, as they are usually called; thus the Father, Son, and Spirit, are described by some as a threefold repetition of the self-same divine essence, with some unconceivable internal relations to each other which are called, paternity, filiation, and spiration.

3. A distinction of modes, or properties, as when the different attributes of the divine nature, viz. power, wisdom and goodness, are represented as a sacred trinity.

Note, Those who suppose the sacred doctrine of the trinity to be sufficiently explained by either of these three distinctions, are called modal trinitarians.

4. Another distinction is that of divine powers, as when the divine essence, with its two different powers of mind and will, or principles of knowledge and efficiency, are represented as the blessed three, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit. May I not call this real in some sense, since there is a plain reality in the distinction, though it arise not to distinct substances?

5. A real and substantial distinction; as when the Father, Son and Spirit, are supposed literally to be three proper, distinct, conscious agents, or three real, intelligent natures, which some have called three substances, three infinite minds, united to compose one godhead. And, indeed, if they are three distinct conscious principles, or have a different consciousness, I know not how to form any other idea of them than as of three conscious minds, though some writers are not so free in their expressions as to speak what the notion plainly intends. Those who explain the trinity in this manner are called real trinitarians.

If I might be permitted to speak with freedom my sentiments of these several opinions, I would say, that the three first of these distinctions do scarce seem to afford a sufficient difference for the various ascriptions which are given to the Father, the Word, and Spirit, in scripture; and as for the second distinction, it has this further inconvenience, that it seems to be made up of words rather than ideas.

The fifth distinction, so far as my ideas of it reach, represents the godhead as containing in it three real, proper, distinct, intelligent agents, three natures, or three conscious minds. The fear of approaching to the doctrine of tritheism, or three Gods, withholds my assent, at present, from that scheme.

Among all these distinctions, and differences, therefore, in my opinion, the fourth seems to come nearest to the scriptural representation of things, which describes God and his nature to us by an analogy to our own intellectual natures, or our own souls. This distinction of the divine essence, with its two eternal powers of mind and will, is the greatest real distinction, and the most solid difference that we can conceive in one Spirit: And therefore I rather incline to it, because the doctrine of the sacred three, as represented in scripture, seems to require the greatest distinction that

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can be conceived in a consistence with the unity of God, who is the infinite and eternal spirit.

If there be some distinctions, or differences, in the divine nature, greater than that of relations, modes, or attributes, and less than that of substances, I know not what name to give it better, than that of divine powers. Let us therefore suppose the great and blessed God to be one infinite spirit, one conscious being, who possesses real, distinct, or different powers, which in sacred language are called the Word and the Spirit: And though this difference, or distinction, be not so great as to allow of different consciousnesses, or to make distinct Spirits, yet these two powers may be represented in scripture in a figurative manner, under distinct personal characters, as hath been shewn in the foregoing dissertations.

S E C T I O N II.

A general proposal of the analogy between God and a human soul.

THAT we may go on step by step, and make regular advances towards the design in hand, let us consider, that whatsoever clear ideas we frame of God by the light of nature, we derive them from an inward reflexion on our own souls, and their various properties and powers of understanding and will, &c. supposing still the transcendent superiority of God above ourselves.

Let us consider also, that the clearest and noblest ideas by which God reveals himself to us in scripture, are derived from the same notions which we have of our souls as spiritual beings: It is by this way of analogy that we learn and understand what God is, when he tells us he is a Spirit, and when he speaks of his knowledge, his wisdom, his will, &c. Thus divine revelation happily agrees with human reason, in teaching us who, or what God is, by a resemblance of his incomprehensible nature and powers to the ideas we have of our own souls and their faculties.

I grant, that God has been pleased to condescend so far to the lowest capacities, as to describe his powers to us, sometimes by analogy to the powers and parts of our bodies, such as, eyes, ears, face, hands, breath, voice, word, &c. But these are not the clearest or nearest similitudes, nor the sublimest likenesses he has given us of himself: And therefore when we are endeavouring to form our highest and most spiritual conceptions of God, we look rather upon that analogy to our own souls in which he has been pleased to exhibit himself to us.

Since reason and scripture agree to teach us the nature of God, and inform us who, or what God is, by this analogy, I think in our enquiries on this sacred subject we ought to follow this analogy so far as reason and scripture allow us. Now it is evident, that a human soul, in it's nature, is one conscious mind; and it is utterly inconsistent with the nature of it to have two or three distinct conscious principles, or natures in it, that is, to include two or three different conscious beings; and since we are told, that God is one, and God is a spirit, it would be something strange if we must believe that God is two or three spirits.

And as the nature of our souls teaches us to conceive the nature of God, so the powers of our souls, by the same dictates of nature and scripture, teach us to conceive the powers of God. Since the human soul has two distinct powers, viz. the knowing power, called the mind, and the active power, called the will, why may we not suppose

suppose the blessed God to have two distinct powers, called the Word and the Spirit*, the one cognoscitive, and the other active?

Or, as the human soul has in it intelligence, volition, and a power of moving the body, so if there were any single term which signified both intelligence and volition together, I would chuse to apply that to the divine Word †: And if any single term signified the power of operation, or moving the body, I would apply that to the holy Spirit; because I think this analogy and resemblance would come something nearer to the scriptural ideas of the Word and Spirit; the one being represented rather as an intelligent, volitive power, the other as an intelligent effective power. But since we have no such terms ready made, and since my design here is not so presuming, as to express what the powers of deity are in themselves, but only to exhibit a sort of distant human resemblance of them, I shall content myself with the terms mind and will to express this analogy and resemblance, always supposing the term will to imply an active efficient faculty.

Here let it be observed, that in explaining these distinctions in the divine nature itself, I chuse to call the second person the Word, rather than the Son; for as some late writers suppose, that the sonship of *Christ* rather refers to his human nature, or to his mediatorial office, than to his godhead, so I must declare, I am much inclined to that sentiment.

Let it be also observed, that I use the name Word in this dissertation in it's divinest sense, viz. to signify a power in the divine nature as, I think, it is several times used in scripture, and not in that inferior sense, for the soul of the *Messiah*, as it seems to have been used by some *jewish* writers, and, perhaps, with some countenance from scripture also.

Though we must not imagine, that the Word and Spirit in the divine nature are exactly the same, as mind and will, or intelligence and power, in a created spirit, yet this is not a mere arbitrary illustration, or a similitude invented by fancy, for there seems to be a reasonable and sufficient foundation for it in the sacred writings; this will appear if we consider what follows.

The second person in the trinity is supposed by learned writers to be represented in several places in scripture under the name of divine wisdom, or understanding, and that not only in that glorious chapter, *Prov.* viii. where it is generally agreed to have this sense, but also in the ninth chapter, where, "Wisdom built her house, sends forth her maidens, and crieth to the simple, turn in hither." There are also other texts applied by some interpreters to *Christ*, or the divine Word, viz. *Jer.* x. 12. and li. 15. and *Prov.* iii. 19, 20. where God is said to form or establish the world by his understanding or wisdom, as in other places, "God created all things by his Word," *John.* i. 3. or by *Jesus Christ*, *Eph.* iii. 9. And our Saviour himself is supposed to call himself the wisdom of God, referring to his pre-existent state, *Luke.* xi. 49. "Therefore said the wisdom of God, I will send prophets, &c." And again, referring to

* Though the names Word and Spirit, or speech and breath, are borrowed originally, some from the body, and some from the soul of man, yet the divine ideas which are represented by these names in scripture, are entirely spiritual, and therefore we must derive our best conceptions of them by their analogy to our own souls.

† The Logos, or divine Word, in scripture, sometimes signifies a word of knowledge, or manifestation, and sometimes a word of command or volition, and therefore if we had one single term for the intellect and will in a human soul, perhaps it would more exactly represent the divine Logos. Let it be noted also, that some of the ancient fathers call the Logos, the *τὸ θελημα*, or will of God, as well as the *Σοφία*, or wisdom. And *Calvin*, in his commentary on the first verse of the gospel of *St. John*, says, "The Son of God is called the Logos, sermo, that is, word or speech, because he is first the eternal wisdom, and will of God, 'Dei sapientia et voluntas,' and then the express image of his counsel.

to his incarnate state, *Luke* vii. 34, 35. "The son of man came eating and drinking, and ye say, behold a glutton and a wine-bibber, &c. But wisdom is justified of all her children."

Let it be noted too, that the ancient *jews* represented the word of God, and the wisdom of God, in such a personal manner, as appears in the books of *Ecclesiasticus* and *Wisdom*, in the apocrypha, which some divines have applied to the *Messiah*. See more in the discourse on the Logos, page 553—582.

It is manifest also, that the Spirit of God is represented as a divine active power. *Luke* i. 35. "The Spirit of God shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee." And our Saviour is said to be anointed with the Spirit, which is explained, *Acts* x. 38. "Jesus was anointed with the holy Ghost and with power." And whereas in some texts it is said, *Christ* wrought his miracles by the Spirit of God; in other places it is called the finger of God. And *Luke* v. 17. when *Christ* wrought miraculous cures, it is said the power of the Lord was present to heal. So the apostle preached, *1 Cor.* ii. 4. "In the demonstration of the Spirit and of power;" and other texts might be cited to this purpose. See the discourse on the holy Spirit, page 594—618.

And as the ancient *jews*, in their writings concur with the scripture in representing the Logos, or Word of God, as the divine wisdom, so they describe the Spirit of God as another divine power; and some of them take the Spirit of God for his will, for which sense doctor *Allix*, in his "judgment of the *jewish* church," page 155. cites *Maimonides*, and others.

The wisdom, and the effective power of God, are joined in several places in scripture, as being employed in creating the world, *Jer.* li. 15. "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom," which is repeated *Jer.* x. 12. and seems akin to *Psal.* xxxiv. 6. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the, Spirit or, breath of his mouth." And there are several other scriptures where the Word of God, and his Spirit, as well as where wisdom and power are represented as agents, or mediums, by which God created all things.

I do not pretend to produce all these scriptures as divine arguments or proofs of my *hypotbesis*, but only to shew, that the similitude I make use of is not a mere invention of my own, but there is much colour for it in the sacred writings themselves, as well as in the sense of many christian interpreters.

May we not therefore conceive the Word and Spirit as two divine faculties, virtues or powers, in the essence of God? What if we should call the Word, for distinction sake, a divine power, or faculty of knowing and contriving all things? The Spirit an executive power, or faculty, which wills and effects all things? Or, as I noted before, what if the Word rather include knowledge and volition, and the Spirit the divine power of efficiency? Not that I would exclude all efficacy from the Word, or intelligence from the Spirit; for the holy penmen do not confine themselves to such a learned and philosophical accuracy. The ideas of these divine powers are oftentimes intermingled in scripture. Sometimes the properties of the Word may be attributed to the Spirit, and those of the Spirit to the Word; for they are both the inseparable powers of an intelligent almighty being, and have incomprehensible union and communion with each other*. But since God is pleased sometimes to represent

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* I might here cite some of the primitive christian fathers, as *Justin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Theophilus*, *Tatian*, *Tertullian*, *Irenæus*, and others, who speak of the word, wisdom, power, counsel, mind, reason, and

his own knowledge and his agency by his Wisdom or Word, and his Spirit, why may we not conceive two powers or faculties in the divine nature somewhat analogous to our mind and our will, though they are not the same, since the chief knowledge we can attain to of the blessed God is by analogy to our own souls.

Here let it be noted, that when I represent the Word and Spirit by divine wisdom and power, I do not conceive them merely as two attributes of the divine nature, as justice, goodness, eternity, infinity, &c. but as such distinct faculties, or, perhaps, more distinct than the understanding and will are in human spirits, which two are called powers, rather than properties of the soul.

I grant, that sometimes the terms attribute, property, power, may be used promiscuously for each other; but when there is a distinction made between them, the terms property or attribute, are applied to any sort of modes or qualities, especially the essential ones, that belong to a subject: So immateriality, immortality, finiteness, changeableness, &c. are natural attributes of the human soul: Kindness, justice, faithfulness, &c. are moral attributes of a good man. But the term power denotes a distinct principle of physical agency in the subject, whereby it is rendered capable of acting in this or that manner: So the understanding and the will, so the faculty of perceiving sensible objects, and the faculty of moving the body, are properly called the powers of the soul.

In the same manner, by way of analogy, we may suppose infinity, eternity, unchangeableness, &c. to be the natural attributes of God; goodness, justice, truth, are his moral attributes; for none of these are properly physical principles, or capacities of action. But his Word, and his Spirit, seem to be represented in scripture as the physical principles of knowing, willing, and efficiency, and therefore I call them powers, because this sort of ideas seems to admit of a greater distinction both in God and in creatures, than those qualities which we usually call attributes or properties.

The reader will pardon the necessary impropriety, or unsuitableness, of some of these terms, when applied to the great and blessed God, since we are forced to borrow all our representations of divine things from analogy to human ideas, and the terms of human language.

I proceed now to set this distinction of the divine persons in an easy light, and represent it in one contracted view, under the few following queries.

and will of God the Father, signifying by these various terms, his Word and his Spirit, which two *Irenæus* calls "semetipsum," or himself. The reader may find many such citations if he consult the learned doctor *Waterland* and his antagonists in the "defense and opposition of the queries; particularly query ii. and viii. &c. concerning the divinity of *Christ*, his eternity, his generation, &c." The author of the questions and answers, which are joined with the works of *Justin Martyr*, says, "God, or the Father, and the Word his Son, and the holy Spirit, ἐνόμενα μὲν κατὰ δύναμιν are united as far as possible, for the Son is the mind, word, wisdom of the Father, and the Spirit is an emanation, as light from fire." Question 139. The primitive fathers do not always confine their language to such a philosophical niceness, but sometimes use those terms promiscuously, whereby they explain the Word and the Spirit.

SECTION

S E C T I O N III.

Several queries to illustrate this doctrine.

Query I. **A**S the soul includes in it both the powers of understanding and acting, that is mind and will, may not the soul properly represent the complete divine nature, or God? And may not his Word and Spirit be represented by the human mind and will, that is, the power of knowing and contriving, and the power of effecting.

Some of the ancients have represented the Father as the whole of the godhead, and the Son and Spirit as his powers. *Hippolytus*, an anti-nicene father, expresses himself in this manner, “τὸ δὲ πᾶν πατήρ, ἐξ ἑ δύναιμι λόγος.” The Father is the whole, from whom is the power called the Logos or Word.” *Irenæus* calls the Word and Spirit of God God’s own self, “semetipsum,” for they are always present with him as his word and his wisdom, libro ii. capite 56. And *Tertullian* saith, “Pater tota substantia est: Filius vero derivatio et portio totius. The Father is the whole substance, but the Son is a derivation and portion of the whole.” *Contra Praxeam* capite 9.

In some of the foregoing dissertations I have shewn, that not only the primitive fathers, but modern writers of the greatest reputation, have represented God as one spiritual being, and the Word, or Son, and the Spirit, as the wisdom and power of God the Father. And it may be made to appear, that this is not only the sentiment of single divines, but multitudes of them met together in synods, to form confessions of faith, have used the same manner of speaking. I shall mention only these two.

The confession of the *French* churches, 1561, saith, “God is one only simple spiritual essence, and in that singular and divine essence there subsist three persons, Father, Son, and holy Spirit. The Father, the first in order, the cause and original of all things; the Son his wisdom and eternal Word; the holy Spirit his virtue, power and efficacy.”

The *Dutch* confession, composed 1561, and confirmed in a synod of the churches 1579, saith, “there is one only simple and spiritual essence, which we call God, and that in this one God are three persons, Father, Son, and holy Spirit. The Father is the cause, origin, and beginning of all things visible and invisible; the Son is the Word, wisdom, and image of the Father; the holy Spirit, the eternal virtue, and power, &c.”

Query II. May not the soul be described as employing it’s mind and will in different exercises or actions? May not a spirit properly say, “I employed my mind to search out such a truth, I engaged my will in such a pious resolution, or in the practice of such a duty?” And in the same manner, may not God be said to employ his divine powers in his work of creation, viz. his Word in contriving, and his Spirit in effecting all things? Or in his works of grace, viz. the Word in redemption, and the Spirit in sanctification? Thus God created all things by his Word and Spirit, and he saves mankind by the same Word and Spirit*. The great

* God is not only said to act by his Word and his Spirit, but he is sometimes said to send forth his Word, and sometimes his Spirit, yet all this may be very fairly expounded concerning two divine powers, since in other

great God, by his Word or wisdom, directs the agency of his Spirit or executive power.

Query III. May not the soul be sometimes considered as the prime agent, in distinction from the mind and will, while the soul is said to employ the mind and will in particular transactions? And thus, while the divine nature, or God, employs his two powers, the Word and Spirit, may he not sometimes in this view be esteemed, in an oeconomic sense, the chief agent, and thus sustain a distinct sort of personality, even what is usually called the personality of the Father, though it may not signify that he is the author, or producer of the Word, or of the Spirit?

Is it not generally given as one reason, why *Christ* is called the Son of God in his pre-existent nature, viz. that he is appointed to his royal offices by God himself, considered as the supreme rector of the world? Now, if *Christ* may be called a Son in scripture, *Psal.* ii. 7. and *Psal.* lxxxix. 27. as being deputed to the mediatorial government, why may not God, the supreme rector of the world, who deposes him to this government, be called the Father on this account? *Psal.* lxxxix. 26. Surely I should suppose, that those who grant a filiation to be derived from the oconomy, might allow the same concerning paternity.

Query IV. Is God ever called the Father in scripture, as giving birth or origin to the divine nature, either of the Word or Spirit? Are they ever plainly represented as depending upon him, or derived from him, as to their divine existence? Does not the word Father rather signify the godhead, considered as the supreme head, as the spring and origin of all creatures, or as being the God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ* as man? Or, at most, as only sustaining the character of the Father, or chief agent, in the oconomy of creation and redemption?

Query V. May not the human mind and the will be represented in a personal manner, or as distinct personal agents, at least by a figurative way of speaking, though they are but two powers of the same soul? May I not use such language as this, "My mind has laboured hard to find out such a difficulty; my will is resolutely bent to pursue such a course?" And many other common expressions there are of the same nature, wherein the mind and will are still more evidently and plainly represented as persons.

And since human powers are thus represented as persons, why may not the Word and the Spirit, which are divine powers, be thus represented also? and why may not God be represented as a person transacting his own divine affairs with his Word and his Spirit under personal characters, since a man is often represented as transacting human affairs with his understanding, mind, will, reason, fancy, or conscience, in a personal manner? See this treated of more at large in the considerations contained in the "dissertation on the use of the word person," See page 605—613.

Query VI. Have not the greatest part of the writers on this subject applied the word person to such sort of ideas, or distinctions in the divine nature, as would not bear the proper and literal application of that word, which properly and literally signifies a distinct conscious mind? And therefore they have been constrained to use the word

other places of scripture God is said to send several things which have no proper personality, *Psal.* lvii. 3. "God shall send forth his mercy and his truth," *Psal.* lxxviii. 49 where the original *hebrew* by the same word expresses "God sending forth the fierceness of his anger, wrath and indignation, as he does the sending forth of evil angels." *Psal.* cxi. 9. "He sent forth redemption to his people." *Psal.* xx. 2. "The Lord send thee help from the sanctuary."

word in an analogical and figurative sense. The reverend doctor *Wallis*, in his letters on the "doctrine of the trinity," illustrates this doctrine of the Father, Son, and Spirit, by the essence, the wisdom, and the force, or executive power of a human soul, letter I. page 16. and freely acknowledges, that the name of person, when it is applied to this divine subject, is metaphorical, or figurative. And, indeed, those who make the greatest distinction between the sacred three, viz. the true *athanasians*, do still suppose, that the word person is not taken in the most complete sense of three separate, or separable spirits, as three men, or three angels, when it is applied to the doctrine of the trinity.

Query VII. Since the mind and will make up the soul, and the soul acts by them in all things that it doth, may not each of these powers be called the soul? May we not say, the mind is the soul, or, the will is the soul? So if the Word and Spirit are those divine powers by which God doth every thing, may not each of them be called God? May we not say, the Word is God, and the Spirit is God? May not what each of them does be appropriated to God, since they are the powers by which God operates? And does not this bid fair for the true meaning of scripture, where such sort of language appears? And especially when we consider that this is the language of the ancient *jews* and the primitive christians, who called the Logos God, and attribute to God what is done by his divine Word or his Spirit.

Query VIII. Doth not this representation of things shew how the sacred three, that is, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, have sufficient unity, or oneness of nature, to be exhibited to us in scripture as one God, and yet how they may have a sufficient distinction between them, to be set forth, especially in the language of the eastern nations, where the scripture was written, as three personal agents? Thus there are three that dwell in heaven, and bear witness to the gospel, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one, 1 *John* v. 7. For the proof of the divine authority of this text, see the learned doctor *Calamy's* sermons at the end of his treatise of the trinity, which contain arguments in them that are hardly to be refuted.

S E C T I O N IV.

The Conclusion.

FA R be it from me to assert this explication of the sacred doctrine of the trinity with any positive airs, or in assured language: Much less would I demand the assent of others, and pretend to determine their opinion, or faith of this mystery, by my manner of comparing it with things human, even though the comparisons and resemblances are borrowed from divine revelation. All that I aim at here, is to gain, and give as clear and distinct ideas as I can of the words which the scripture uses, that, as far as possible, in explaining the word of God, I might secure myself and others from talking without ideas. And since I think it is evident, that the scripture represents each of the sacred three as true God, and yet represents them sometimes, under distinct personal characters, my only design and ambition is, to make out at least some possibility of this sacred doctrine to the understandings of men, to secure it from ridicule and contempt, and to wipe off that unreasonable reproach of nonsense and absurdity, which has been by too many writers so plentifully thrown upon the deep things of God.

God, merely because they seem too hard to be perfectly adjusted and explained by men.

Though I have used some human comparisons in this and the foregoing dissertations, and have formed some resemblances between the great God and the soul of man, yet let none imagine, that things divine can be exactly paralleled, or adjusted by any precise conformity to things human. I presume no farther, than to exhibit a sketch, or distant shadow of heavenly things. The name of God has something in it so superior to all our human ideas, that it may be doubted, whether his very essence may not be something almost as much superior to our ideas of a spirit, as a spirit is superior to a body.

When God is pleased to represent his powers and actions by corporeal images, such as hands, ears, eyes, seeing, hearing, &c. we are sure this is not proper, but analogical language. When God is described as a spirit as to his essence or substance; when scripture speaks of his understanding, his will, his Word, and his Spirit, it may bear an enquiry, whether this be a most exact, natural, and univocal description of him; or, whether it be not rather a sort of similar representation of God by way of condescension to our human ideas. It is hard, if not impossible, for us, in some cases, to say infallibly, that this or that is true concerning God the Father, his Word, or his Spirit, because it is true concerning creatures; that this or that cannot be true concerning God the Father, his Word, or his Spirit, because, perhaps, it cannot be true concerning creatures; for the most exalted ranks of creatures that we know, are very poor imperfect shadows of the Creator.

I cannot think it reasonable, indeed, to interpret the natural divine attributes, or perfections, such as knowledge, power, goodness, so intirely in an analogical sense, as that ingenious author, the arch-bishop of *Dublin** has done, because our common ideas of these words, knowledge, power, goodness, are more applicable to the divine nature in an univocal sense: Yet this sacred doctrine of three personalities relating to one divine essence, may with much better reason be explained or construed in this analogical manner, since our common ideas of Father, Word, Spirit, person, are not so applicable thereto in an univocal signification. I am well assured, that if such analogical explications be allowable in any part of theology, the doctrine of the trinity lays the best claim to it.

I add further also, that every scheme and explication of this sacred doctrine amongst the real or modal trinitarians, which hath had any manner of claim to orthodoxy, does suppose the divine essence to have something in it that is not univocal to our ideas of a spirit: The most orthodox explainers are all forced to represent the distinctions of persons in the godhead, as something for which there is no perfect parallel in created spirits, and are forced to recur to analogical ideas, and analogical language.

Now if it be so, then who shall determine what differences and distinctions may be found in a nature or essence so infinitely superior to all our thoughts, so much unknown, and so incomprehensible? And, why may not the blessed God represent these distinctions in his own nature, in a way of personality, or as three distinct persons, supposing that such a representation will easily lead the bulk of mankind into such conceptions of his oeconomic transactions with us, as are fit to engage them to adore, worship, trust in, and love their Creator, their Redemer, and their Sanctifier? All these duties we may practise by the influence of scriptural revelation, without a philosophical or univocal idea of what the great God is in his own sublime, abstruse,

* Doctor *William King*.

and unsearchable essence. "God is great, and we know him not." Thousands of faints and martyrs have gone to heaven with triumph by the practice of these duties, under the influence of a humble faith, without further philosophical enquiries.

It will be replied then, "What has made the christians of all ages so curious to penetrate further into these deep things of God, than was necessary for their own faith and practice in order to salvation?"

To answer this let it be observed, that there may be some advantages for the increase of christian knowledge, for personal piety, and for the instruction of others derived from our pursuit of clear ideas in the great doctrines of the gospel. But to lay that consideration aside at present, there is another answer very obvious and easy, and it is this. The primitive christians found perpetual objections against the doctrines of their faith raised by the heathen writers; this constrained them to enter into a deeper enquiry; and the violent opposition that was made to those doctrines by the patrons of several errors in the first and following ages, set the christians in every age at work to draw out the matters of their belief into various human forms; and they did this in order to defend them against those who attacked them in a variety of methods of human reasoning and artifice. And particularly in the present controversy, when the opposers in all ages have endeavoured to represent the doctrine of the trinity as utterly inconsistent both with reason and scripture, the believers of this doctrine have found it proper to search out some way and manner in which it is possible this doctrine may be conceived without such inconsistency.

For my part, I confess, that my faith, as a christian, had contented itself with more general ideas of this doctrine, without enquiring, so far at least, into the modus of it, had it not been for the various objections that are raised against the possibility of it in any form or modus whatsoever. And though I have now taken the freedom to declare, that I prefer the representation which I have given in these discourses above any other schemes of explication which I have seen, yet I am not so vain as to expect, that this hypothesis will immediately relieve every difficulty that attends the sacred doctrine of the trinity. I am well aware of various exceptions that will be made, and I have carefully considered some of the most important of them in papers that lie by me. I have also made experiment, how happily this scheme furnishes out an answer to the chief exceptions of a considerable, but unknown writer, who has attacked my little discourse of the "christian doctrine of the trinity," in a "sober appeal to a turk or an indian." Part of a reply to that book has been already made in the second and third dissertations printed last year. Several parts more are ready to follow this. But it was necessary to exhibit the scheme on which the solution of difficulties is founded, before I could pretend to solve the difficulties themselves: And the printed sheets have swelled to such a bulk already, as renders it very inconvenient to crowd all my design into this volume. According to the acceptance that these papers meet within the world, I may be encouraged shortly to publish the rest.

After all, I am free to declare, that I am not so fond of any particular hypothesis, but I shall be ready to relinquish it for another, that will afford a better interpretation of all the scriptures that relate to the blessed three, and a happier solution of all the objections that have been raised against this article. I should rejoice to see so clear

and bright an explication of it arise in the christian world, as shall overcome and scatter all the difficulties and darkneses that have hitherto hung about it, and shall set it in so divine and triumphant a light, as shall penetrate every soul, diffuse universal conviction, and demand a ready and unshaken assent. But, perhaps, it is above the privilege of a mortal state, to expect the accomplishment of such a wish. In the mean while, let us pay the homage of our understandings to the supreme incomprehensible, by firmly believing what God has plainly revealed, and wait for the favours of higher illumination in the regions of light and immortality. Amen.

USEFUL

USEFUL and IMPORTANT

QUESTIONS

CONCERNING

JESUS the Son of GOD

FREELY PROPOSED:

With a HUMBLE ATTEMPT to answer them
according to SCRIPTURE.

T H E
P R E F A C E.

IT cannot be of much importance for the reader to be informed who was the writer of these papers: Yet if it will be any satisfaction, the author himself presumes to say, it is one who has spent many years of his life in diligent inquiries into the sacred doctrines of the gospel, by a constant and laborious search of the holy scriptures, nor is he ashamed to add, with continual application to the God of all light and grace for the instruction of his holy Spirit that he might better understand the things discovered in his word. He also takes the freedom to say, these papers are the product of that part of life when his powers of mind and body were in full vigour.

The author has sometimes been ready to suppose, that several of the questions here proposed, may be very useful towards the further explaining some of those parts of scripture which have been less studied, especially concerning God the Father, and the divine and human natures of his Son *Jesus Christ*, whom to know, to trust in, and to love, is eternal life: and he thinks he can safely appeal to God concerning the honesty and sincerity of his own endeavours, to give a faithful answer to all these enquiries, according to the clearest light he could find in the holy scriptures.

He has one favour to beg of his readers, and that is, that they would not examine any of these papers by the mere dictates of their own reasoning powers, for the subject is a mere matter of divine revelation; nor that they would take the sentiments or schemes of elder or later writers, whether schoolmen or fathers, or divines of any party, for a perfect test of truth and orthodoxy in these sacred subjects.

Yet he freely and delightfully confesses these following articles borrowed from the *athanasian* creed, viz. "We believe and confess the Lord *Jesus Christ* the Son of God, is both God and man; God of the same substance with the Father, and man of the substance of his mother, born into the world; perfect God and perfect man; of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting together: Equal to the Father, as touching his godhead, and yet inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood: One, not by conversion of the godhead into the flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God, so as to become one personal agent, or one person: and as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man are one *Christ*, who suffered for our salvation; &c."

Though I freely and cheerfully acknowledge all this, yet I take no human writings for a test of the divinity or truth of my opinions: And I could wish all my readers would lay aside all other teachers, besides the mere writers of the holy scriptures, in such enquiries where the light of these divine truths will also shine brightest, which are not to be known by the mere light of nature, but are intirely to be learned by the revelation of God to his Son *Jesus Christ*, and to his holy apostles.

And

And if this practice be sincerely pursued, the author humbly hopes these papers may find acceptance among the diligent and honest enquirers after truth, so far at least as to have his unwilling mistakes pitied and forgiven, and his sincere endeavours accepted, to make known the scripture to his fellow-christians in those important articles that relate to God the Father, and his Son *Jesus Christ* our Lord, which are of so much importance toward our salvation.

Yet finally to avoid all objections and dangers of mistake, I think it may be proper here to take notice, that there have been generally two ways among our protestant divines allowed to explain the filiation or sonship of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, in his divine nature; the one is, the real and supernatural, which is granted to be utterly incomprehensible, relating chiefly to the nature of the Father and the Son; the other is scriptural and oeconomical, relating chiefly to their characters or offices in our salvation, which is more easy to be understood: I must acknowledge I incline most to the second, because this allows the most perfect equality, even oneness or sameness in the godhead, whether applied to the Father or the Son, and thus it maintains the true godhead itself to be underived and self-existent in both; and upon this supposition I believe the second of these writers have been always esteemed perfectly sound and orthodox, as well as the first.

USEFUL

USEFUL and IMPORTANT
Q U E S T I O N S
C O N C E R N I N G
J E S U S the Son of G O D
F R E E L Y P R O P O S E D, &c.

Q U E S T I O N I.

What is the meaning of the name Son of God, as given to Christ in the new testament, where the belief of it is necessary to salvation?

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

IT is of some importance in the doctrines of the gospel, and especially in the great article of the blessed trinity, to know the meaning of the name Son of God, which is so often given to our Lord *Jesus Christ* in the new testament: for hereby we shall be better able to understand the chief import and design of those places of scripture.

But here I desire my reader to observe, that I am not enquiring into the highest and most sublime sense of which it is possible that our Lord himself might have the idea when he used that word; but what is the sense that *Christ*, or the apostles and writers.

ters of the new testament more directly designed to convey to those who heard them, and in what sense the people generally could and did understand this name.

It is evident from several expressions of *Christ*, that he well knew that his own words sometimes carried in them a much nobler and sublimer signification, than barely that which he designed to convey to the *Jews*, or even to his own disciples at that time: As when he says to the *Jews*, "Before *Abraham* was, I am," *John* viii. 58. And so when he says to his disciples, *John* xiv. 10. "I am in the Father, and the Father in me," they could not know that glorious and sublime relation of *Christ* to the Father, and his intimate oneness with the Father, which he himself was perfectly acquainted with.

My chief business in this discourse therefore is only to show what is the true idea or meaning of the word Son of God, which our Saviour or the sacred writers designed to convey to their disciples through all ages and nations by this name; and in which it is possible their hearers could understand them, or we who read the same words.

And in order to find this sense of it, let us consider those texts of scripture wherein the belief of *Christ* to be the Son of God is made the great requisite in order to salvation, and a necessary ingredient of christianity. For in these places of scripture, these two considerations will offer themselves; first, that the sense of these words must be "plain, familiar, and easy to be understood;" otherwise it could not be made a necessary article, or a fundamental of the christian faith. It must have also, secondly, "some apparent connexion with and influence into our salvation," otherwise the belief of it would not have been made so grand a requisite in order to be saved; for it is scarce to be imagined that the blessed God would appoint any mere arbitrary and unoperative speculations to be the terms of our enjoying his favour. Now both these considerations will give us some assistance toward our finding out the true sense of this title.

The texts of scripture, wherein a belief of *Jesus* to be the Son of God seems to be made the great necessary term of our salvation, are such as these. *John* iii. 18. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." *John* xx. 21. "These things are written, that ye might believe that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." 1 *John* v. 13. "These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." 1 *John* iv. 15. "Whosoever shall confess that *Jesus* is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him." 1 *John* ii. 23. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." *Acts* viii. 37. "And *Philip* said to the eunuch, if thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest be baptized; and he answered and said, I believe that *Jesus Christ* is the Son of God: and he baptized him."

Now if believing or not believing *Christ* to be the Son of God has salvation and damnation annexed to it by the sacred writers, then surely it is of considerable importance to know what this name means, that we may not include too little in it, and by leaving out some important part, expose ourselves to that anathema; nor include too much in it, and so be tempted to lay our weaker neighbours under the like condemnation for want of sufficient knowledge.

But blessed be God, since it is a name of such importance, he has not confined this name precisely to one single, narrow, abstruse and difficult idea, but has affixed it to several ideas in scripture, that so if we receive it in the most important senses,

we

we may be secured from the scriptural condemnation, though we should not happen to understand and receive it in all the sublime senses which may be applied to it.

Let it be noted also, that perhaps the various imaginations and reasonings of men may have affixed more senses to this phrase than scripture has ever done: Yet, in order to give this enquiry a fuller consideration, we will survey the several senses which have been usually put upon it; and this shall be the first argument which I shall use toward the proof of the true signification of this name in the new testament; that is, by way of a disjunctive syllogism, proposing several and excluding some of them.

S E C T I O N I.

The first argument toward the proof of the sense of this name, Son of God.

THIS name, Son of God, hath been supposed to be given to our Lord *Jesus Christ* upon some or all of these five accounts. 1. Because of an eternal and unconceivable generation by the person of the Father in the sameness of the divine essence. 2. Because of the glorious derivation of his human soul from God before the creation of this world. 3. Because of his incarnation or coming into this world by an extraordinary conception, and birth of a virgin without an earthly father, by the immediate operation of God. 4. Because of his resurrection from the dead, and high exaltation. 5. In order to point out that glorious person who had in general some sublime and singular relation to God, and who also was to sustain the character and office of the *Messiah*, the Saviour of the world.

1. The first of these senses is patronized by many writers, viz. "That an eternal unconceivable generation of the person of the Son by the person of the Father in the sameness of the divine essence, consubstantial, coequal and coeternal with the Father," is included in the name SON OF GOD.

But I am persuaded this can never be the sense of this name in those several texts before cited: They can never signify, that it is necessary to salvation to believe *Christ* to be the "eternal Son of God as a distinct person in the same divine essence, proceeding from the Father by such an eternal and incomprehensible generation." For,

1. If this be ever so true, yet it is confessed to be unconceivable. Now, if it be so very unconceivable, so mysterious and sublime a doctrine, then I do not think the gracious God would put such a difficult test upon the faith of young disciples, poor illiterate men and women, in the very beginning of the gospel, and exclude them from heaven for not believing it.

2. Nor indeed is this eternal generation and consubstantial sonship clearly enough revealed in scripture for us to make it a fundamental article in any age, and to damn all who do not receive it. I cannot see evidence enough in the word of God to make the salvation of all mankind, the poor and the ignorant, the labouring men and the children, even in such a day of knowledge as this is, to depend on such a doctrine, which the most learned and pious christians in all ages have confessed to be attended with so many difficulties, which, after the labour and study of near 1400 years, is so unconceivable in itself, and was at first so obscurely revealed; much less can I suppose this notion of the Son of God could be made a necessary and fundamental article in those dawning of the gospel-day. Besides,

3. There have been some very pious and learned men in several ages, who have acknowledged *Christ's* true godhead, and yet have supposed that the sonship of *Christ* referred rather to his human nature, or to his office of *Messiah*, than to such an eternal generation and consubstantial sonship: And there are some in our age who have given sufficient proofs of their good learning and sincere piety, who heartily believe the eternal godhead of *Christ*, and yet doubt or disbelieve this eternal generation and derivation of his person, as God, and I will never pronounce an anathema upon them.

Objection I. But some will say, "If the name Son of God doth not signify eternal generation by the Father in the sameness of the divine essence or substance, yet surely it must at least import *Christ's* true and eternal godhead."

Answer I. This name son and sons of God is often used in the bible, and applied variously to men and to angels as well as to *Christ*: but it is never used in any one place to signify true and eternal godhead that I can find, unless it be in those very places which are at present under debate. And therefore when *Christ* is called eminently and absolutely the Son of God, the meaning of it does not necessarily rise higher than that he is the most eminent of all other beings, men or angels, that are called sons of God, without a certain determination whether he be true God, or no, by the mere use of that name.

Answer II. This name Son of God cannot necessarily signify his true godhead any otherwise, than by supposing it primarily to signify his consubstantial sonship, or that he is a Son of the same nature and essence with the Father, even as a Son among men has the same specific essence with his Father, and then consequentially that the Son of God is true God, because his Father is so. Now, we have before proved, that this name cannot necessarily signify his consubstantial or consubstantial sonship, and therefore it cannot necessarily signify his true godhead.

Answer III. It is evident from some parts of the conduct of *Peter* and other disciples during the life of *Christ* on earth, that they did not heartily believe they had the true and eternal God among them, and that their master was the true and eternal God, as when they rebuked him, when they questioned his knowledge in some things, when they wondered, and were so astonished at his working miracles, &c. as I shall shew hereafter: Yet it is plain that they then believed him to be the Son of God; for this was made necessary to their salvation in that day, and they professed this belief roundly, that he was the Son of God. Therefore this name does not certainly declare his divine nature.

Objection II. It will be said then, how comes it to pass, that when the high priest asked our Saviour, "Art thou the *Christ*, the Son of the blessed? And *Jesus* answered, I am," *Mark* xiv. 61, 62, in verse 64. he charges our Saviour with blasphemy, if his calling himself the Son of God did not imply his true godhead?

Answer. It is evident that the design of the wicked *Jews* was to fix the highest and most criminal charge they could against him: But there was no sufficient foundation for this charge, which our Saviour in another place fully proves, *John* x. 33, 34. as I have shewn elsewhere, in what follows. Thus it appears, that though it be fully agreed that *Jesus Christ*, the Son of God, has true godhead belonging to him, because divine names and titles are given him, yet this name Son of God does not necessarily and certainly discover or imply it. Thus much for the first supposed sense of this name.

II. Some may suppose the name Son of God relates to his human soul, and signifies the glorious peculiar derivation of it from God the Father before the creation

creation of the world, and that in this sense he is called the first-born of every creature, and the beginning of the creation of God, *Col. i. 15.* and *Rev. iii. 14.*

Answer. Though I am very much inclined to believe that *Christ* is in this sense the Son of God, and that his human soul had such a glorious derivation from the Father before the creation of the world, and that he is the first-born of every creature and the beginning of the creation of God, as in *Col. i. 15.* and that his human soul had as noble a pre-eminence above other souls in it's origin, as his human body had a pre-eminence above other bodies, that so in all things he might have the pre-eminence, *Col. i. 18.* Yet I cannot think this precise idea is the very thing designed in those texts of scripture, wherein our salvation is made to depend on the belief of *Christ* being the Son of God; for,

1. Though the apostles *Paul* and *John*, and perhaps the rest of them, arrived at this complete idea of his glorious pre-existent human soul in due time, yet it doth not appear evidently that the disciples had all attained such an idea so soon as they believed that he was the Son of God, in a sufficient manner for their attaining the favour of God and a state of salvation*.

2. There have been thousands of christians in several ages of the church who have been saved, and yet have not entertained this opinion concerning the soul of *Christ*, that it had a being before the world was created, and that it was the first-born of all the creatures of God; and therefore this cannot be the sense of that title in those texts.

III. I say therefore, in the third place, that this title, Son of God, is given to *Christ*, sometimes upon account of his incarnation and miraculous birth. *Luke i. 31, 32.* "Thou shalt bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name *Jesus*: he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the highest." Verse 35. "The holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called THE SON OF GOD."

Though God be the Father of all men by creation, and the Father of all the saints by a new creation or regeneration, yet in a more especial manner he is the Father of the blessed *Jesus*; because his body was so formed or begotten by him, in so peculiar a manner, as no other man ever was.

But this cannot be the chief meaning of the name Son of God in the texts before cited: For surely the belief that the man *Christ Jesus* was begotten of God and born of a virgin without an earthly father, was not made the term of salvation any where that we can find in the new testament. It is not this sort of sonship that *Christ* and the apostles lay so great a stress on, nor make the matter of their sermons, and the labour of their arguments, to convince the world of it in order to their salvation. This circumstance of his extraordinary birth, doth not seem to have any such special connexion with the redemption and salvation of men, as to have it made the peculiar matter of their faith and the very article on which their salvation was to depend.

* I will not deny but that one considerable ground on which *Christ* was called the Son of God, at first, and for which he eminently merited that name, was the dignity of his human soul both in the native excellencies of it, and in the original and early generation, or peculiar way of creation of it before all other creatures: But as the belief of his being the Son of God, is made a requisite to salvation, I suppose the idea of that title Son of God, arises no higher than to mean in general some glorious relation to God, partly natural, and partly oeconomical, without a precise determination how far this relation reached, as will appear more articulately afterward.

· Doubtless many a poor creature might become a true believer in *Christ* when he was upon earth, by the sight of his miracles, and hearing his doctrine, without the knowledge of this particular circumstance of his incarnation or birth; and doubtless many a one was converted by the apostles without any notice of this part of the history of *Christ*; for we scarce find so much as the mention of it in their preaching or writings. This therefore cannot be the meaning of this name, in those scriptures.

IV. In the fourth place, *Christ* may be sometimes called the Son of God, because of his resurrection from the dead, and his exaltation to universal dominion, by the peculiar favour and power of God. In this sense *Christ* is said to be begotten of God when he is raised from the dead, *Acts* xiii. 32, 33. "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto their children, in that he hath raised up *Jesus* again; as it is also written in the second *Psalms*, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." And it is upon this account that he is called the first-begotten of the dead, *Rev.* i. 5. and the first-born from the dead, *Col.* i. 18. though the *greek* word is in both places the same, viz. *πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν*, because he was raised immediately by God himself from the earth into eternal life.

· His exaltation to the kingdom as heir of all things, is supposed to be a farther ground of this title. *Heb.* i. 2. "His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." *Psal.* lxxxix. 27. "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." And some divines are ready to think, it is in this sense he is called the first-born of every creature, *Col.* i. 15. because he is heir and Lord of all the creation. And some join his exaltation together with his resurrection in that prophecy, *Psal.* ii. 7. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;" because it is the chief sense in which the words of the second or of the eighty ninth *Psalms*, now cited, could literally be applied to *David* in the day of his being raised from the earth and obscurity, unto a throne: Now *David* in this his exaltation to the kingdom of *Israel* was a type of *Christ*, and was said to be the Son of God begotten that day, as a proper type and figure of our blessed Saviour.

But whatever may be the prophetic sense of those words of the psalmist, it is certain that the name Son of God cannot directly and chiefly signify his resurrection and future exaltation in all those places of the gospels, where the belief of it is made the term of salvation.

1. Because he is very often called the Son of God, long before his death, resurrection, and exaltation, to describe the person who was to be thus raised and exalted. He is called by the apostle *John*, the only begotten of the Father, who lay in the bosom of the Father, *John* i. 14, 18. and *Paul* calls him God's own Son, who was delivered up to death for us, *Rom.* viii. 32. as a name that belonged to him long before his death, or indeed before his birth into this world: For when he was first sent into the world he was then the Son of God, *John* iii. 16, 17. and xi. 27. and as such he was appointed the heir of all things, *Heb.* i. 2.

2. This title the Son of God in those texts of the gospel does not depend upon his resurrection and exaltation, because the *jews* were required to believe him to be the Son of God long before his death and resurrection. Nor did *Christ* himself in plain language openly and publicly preach his own death and resurrection to the multitudes. Therefore the belief of *Christ* to be the Son of God in this sense of the words could not in his life-time be made necessary to salvation.

3. And

3. And let it be noted further, that at this time even the apostles themselves, who were true believers in the Son of God did not know that he was to die and to rise again, for *Peter* began to rebuke him, when he spoke of his own dying, *Mark* viii. 32. "And they knew not what rising from the dead should mean." *Mark* ix. 10. yet they all believed him to be the Son of God.

4. I might add, that it is abundantly evident from scripture that he was the Son of God, before he died or rose again, because he was only proclaimed or declared to be his Son by his resurrection and exaltation: The apostle *Paul* explains it thus, *Rom.* i. 4. "He was declared to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead."

Nor is it any wonder that *Christ* in some scriptures should be represented as born or begotten of God at his resurrection, since it is the way of the sacred writers sometimes to represent a thing to be transacted or done in that day when it is published or proclaimed; and upon this account *Christ* may be said to be born or to be begotten, or to be made the first-born of God, in the day of his resurrection and exaltation, because he was then proclaimed and published to be the Son of God; even as a king may be said to be made that day when he is proclaimed or crowned.

V. The last sense in which *Christ* is called the Son of God, is to signify that "glorious person who was appointed to be the *Messiah*, the anointed Saviour who was derived from God, and did bear some very near and extraordinary relation to God above all other persons; and therefore he is called his Son, his own Son, his only begotten Son, his beloved Son." And since the several other senses cannot be admitted to be the precise idea and common meaning of the name Son of God in the new testament, I take this to be the true idea of it, as it is generally used in the new testament, and especially in those scriptures where the belief or profession of it is made necessary in order to the salvation of men in the writings of the apostles.

It includes some special and glorious relation to God; but whether that relation belongs to his flesh, or his human soul, or his divine nature, or to all these, is not so directly determined in those texts, because the chief design of them is but to point out the person and character of the *Messiah*.

Now let us consider the reasons to prove this to be the true sense of the name.

That the name Son of God doth originally respect the glory and excellency of his person, and his near relation and resemblance to God, appears from the use of the word Son and Son of God in other places of scripture.

Son or daughter or child in the *hebrew* tongue implies eminently two things. 1. It notes some derivation of one thing from another. Men are frequently called sons of men. *Israelites* are called the sons or children of *Israel*. So sparks are called the sons of the burning coal, *Job* v. 7. to signify the derivation of one from the other.

2. It is also an idiom of the *hebrew* language, and a peculiar way of speaking much in use among the *jews*, to call one person the son of any other thing or person whose quality and likeness he bears. So wicked men are called the sons of *Belial*, or wickedness, *2 Sam.* xxiii. 6. So young men that were instructed and prepared for the gift of prophecy are called the sons of the prophets, *2 Kings* ii. 3, 5, 7. Proud men are named the children of pride, *Job* xli. 34. Child of the devil, signifies a very wicked man, one a-kin to the devil in malice and subtilty, &c. *Acts* xiii. 10. So the word
sons

sons of God signifies persons who in a peculiar manner were derived from God, and had some resemblance of him.

Adam was called the son of God, *Luke* iii. 38. because he was formed in the image of God, and in an immediate manner derived his being from God without human generation.

Angels are called sons of God, *Job* i. 6. and ii. 1. and xxxviii. 7. because they are glorious and excellent beings, with spiritual powers and perfections, in some measure like to God, and were the chief rank of his creatures, and not derived from each other by successive generations, but all created immediately by God himself.

Saints are called sons of God in *Job* i. 12. and many other places, both because they are like God, or created a-new after his image in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, *Col.* iii. 10. *Eph.* iv. 24. and because they are said to be new created, or begotten and born of God, *John* i. 13. and *1 John* v. 1.

Magistrates are called gods, and sons of the most high, *Psal.* lxxxiii. 6. partly to denote that they are raised by God to that dignity; so *David* in the letter and type was the son of God, *Psal.* ii. 7. and was made God's first-born, *Psal.* lxxxix. 26, 27. as a type of *Christ*; and partly also to denote that in their authority and majesty they resemble God the supreme magistrate and ruler.

The Son of God who was with the three children in the fiery furnace, *Dan.* iii. 25; is so called, to signify a glorious and excellent being, that had something divine or god-like in him; for this is the expression of *Nebuchadnezzar*, who is not supposed to know any thing of *Christ* or the *Messiah*.

Now it is evident that our Lord *Jesus Christ* is the Son of God, in a sense superior to men and angels, for he is called God's own Son, *Rom.* viii. 32. his only begotten Son, *John* i. 14, 18. and his first-born, the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, &c. *Col.* i. 15, 16. "The brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, made so much better than angels, and has obtained a more excellent name than they," *Heb.* i. 4. "For in all things he must have the pre-eminence," *Col.* i. 18. These scriptural expressions plainly imply both derivation and resemblance.

Yet here I ask leave to insert one caution, and that is, though it is sufficiently manifest from the new testament, and especially from *Heb.* i. that *Christ* is the Son of God in a sense far superior to angels, yet I am in doubt whether the disciples at first could have such an idea of his superiority to all angels: Perhaps their idea of the Son of God arose no higher at first than to suppose him superior to all their prophets and kings, who were called sons of God, though afterwards it grew up to an idea superior to all the angels of God.

But let us raise this idea of the name as high as we can suppose any of the disciples had attained before the death of *Christ*, or as high as could be requisite in order to salvation in that day, and I think it must be granted that this name Son of God, so far as it denotes the nature of *Christ* distinct from his offices, can necessarily be construed to rise no higher than to denote some peculiar and glorious likeness to God, some more near and excellent relation to God the Father, or some special derivation from him, some divine character more eminent than belongs to men or angels when they are called the sons of God, without any precise determination wherein this peculiar relation to God consisted.

Now

Now to proceed :

This glory and excellency of the person of *Christ*, which is originally denoted by the name Son of God, is part of his qualification for the office of the *Messiah*, part of the foundation of his office, and what made him a proper person to undertake, sustain and fulfil it.

Yet this excellency of his person, this likeness and nearness to God, is not the complete sense and meaning of the word Son of God in those forecited texts of the gospel; but it includes also a designation to his office, viz. that glorious person of extraordinary nearness and likeness to God, who was ordained to be the Saviour of men: And though the name Son of God signifies and includes both these, yet sometimes the scripture in using this name seems to have a more special regard to the excellency of his person, and sometimes to his office, and perhaps for this reason, that a belief of his sonship in one of those senses, but especially the latter, in that day might be a sufficient ground for the faith and hope of sinners.

1. It may seem to have some special regard to the excellency of his person, where it is joined by way of exposition to the word *Messiah* or *Christ*, as a further description of the person who sustained that office; as in these scriptures, viz. *Matt. xxvi. 63.* the high-priest adjured *Jesus* to a confession, and said, "Tell us whether thou be the *Christ*, the Son of God?" *Matth. xvi. 16.* "*Peter* answered and said, Thou art *Christ*, or *Messiah*, the Son of the living God." *John xi. 27.* "*Martha* confessed, Lord, I believe that thou art the *Christ*, the Son of God." Which expressions mean thus much, thou art the *Christ* or *Messiah*, that glorious person of peculiar relation to God who was ordained to this office.

It seems also to signify more specially the excellency of his person in those scriptures where he is called God's own Son, God's only son, God's only begotten Son, his beloved Son, his first-born, &c. because these are words of relation and peculiar indowment, and we cannot well say the only-begotten *Messiah*, the first-born *Messiah*.

2. Yet there are many other places wherein the name Son of God seems to have a more special regard to his office as the appointed Saviour, though it is inclusive also of the peculiar excellency of his person, which makes him fit for his office. *John x. 37.* "Do you say of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?" His being thus sanctified and sent by the Father is sufficient to give this name.

This is evident also where the word *Christ* or *Messiah* is not joined with it, and yet the design of the expression seems to be entirely the same as if the word *Christ* or *Messiah* had been used there; as *John i. 34.* "*John* the baptist saw and bare witness that this is the Son of God," that is, this is the great promised Saviour. So verse 49. "*Nathanael* said, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of *Israel*," that is, thou art the *Messiah*, the king. So *John ix. 35.* *Jesus* asked the blind man who was healed, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" that is, dost thou believe on the *Messiah*, the appointed Saviour? For as such he was the proper object of belief. So *1 John iv. 15.* "Whoso shall confess that *Jesus* is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God," that is, he that confesses him to be the glorious appointed *Messiah*, and receives him as such, he dwelleth in or with God. The same is the sense of that word, *1 John v. 5.* "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that *Jesus* is the Son of God," that is, the *Messiah*. And verse 20. "We know the Son of God is come;" that is, the glorious person who was ordained to be the *Messiah* is come into the world.

As in these places where the word *Christ* or *Messiah* is not mentioned, Son of God signifies more directly the *Messiah* or appointed Saviour, so there are other places wherein the word *Christ* is joined with it, where Son of God hath the same signification, and intends chiefly the office of the *Messiah* or Saviour; because in those texts the word *Christ* doth not properly signify a character or office, but the proper name or surname of the man *Jesus*, who was generally so called after his resurrection*. The eunuch's confession must have this sense, *Acts* viii. 37. "I believe that *Jesus Christ* is the Son of God." that is, this man named *Jesus Christ* is the promised and appointed Saviour.

And in this same sense did St. *Paul* "preach *Christ* in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God," *Acts* ix. 20. that is, that the man *Jesus Christ* is the promised Saviour. For the grand question of that day was not whether *Jesus* were eternally begotten of the Father, nor whether he was the true and eternal God himself, nor whether he were formed in an extraordinary and miraculous manner as to his soul or his body, but whether he was the promised *Messiah* and Saviour of the world?

And if we consult the writings of the new testament, especially the gospel and epistles of St. *John*, we shall find the name Son of God, and the name *Christ*, which in *hebrew* is *Messiah*, used very promiscuously for one another, and sometimes with a design to explain each other, and both to denote the great promised redeemer, the Saviour of the world. This will appear, if we read the following verses, *John* xi. 27. *Martba* confesses, "I believe that thou art the *Christ*, the Son of God, which should come into the world." 1 *John* iv. 14, 15. "And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that *Jesus* is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." 1 *John* v. 1. "Whosoever believeth that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, is born of God." And a little after, "He that is born of God overcometh the world." And then, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that *Jesus* is the Son of God?" 1 *John* ii. 22. "Who is a liar but he that denieth that *Jesus* is the *Christ*? He is anti-christ that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." And that awful text, *John* viii. 24. is certainly to be interpreted the same way, "If ye believe not that I AM HE, ye shall die in your sins;" that is, as *Christ* himself explains it in the next verse, that I am "the same that I said unto you from the beginning;" that is, the *Christ*, the *Messiah*, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. Nor is the absence of the word HE in the *greek* any bar to this interpretation, for the expression is the same, *John* iv. 29. ἐγὼ εἶμι, and *John* ix. 37. ἐγὼ εἶμι, where we are sure that *Christ* means that he is the *Messiah*.

It is well known that the *jews* generally, and very justly, believed the person who was to be their *Messiah* and Saviour was to bear some very extraordinary relation to God, and to be his Son in a sublime and uncommon way and manner, though what particular sort of sonship it was, they could have but very dark and confused ideas; yet they used the word Son of God emphatically to denote this glorious person: And the common purpose for which they used it, was to signify this great promised deliverer.

Now

* This is a common thing in our nation and language, where the surname of a man and of his family is *Smith*, *Taylor*, *Clark*, *Dyer*, *Steward*, &c. being drawn originally from the trade, office or employment which perhappes the first of the family enjoyed or practised.

Now it is very easy to account for this, viz. that the Son of God, which originally signifies a glorious person near akin to God, might in common use come to signify his office, or the appointed king and Saviour of his people, just as the name *Cæsar* was originally the surname of a family, but afterwards came to signify an office, and to denote the emperor: and perhaps the same might be said of the name *Abimelech* king of *Philistia*, or *Pbaraoh* king of *Egypt*. So the word *Israel* at first was a name given to *Jacob*, thence it was derived to signify all the *Jewish* family or nation, and afterwards it came to signify the character of that family, viz. the church of God; and so it is used in *Gal. vi. 16.* "Peace be on the *Israel* of God."

Thus I have gone over the several senses of the name Son of God, and there is the greatest reason to believe that it most usually and directly signifies that person who has in general some peculiar and sublime relation and likeness to God, and is appointed to be the *Messiah* or Saviour of men.

S E C T I O N II.

Other arguments to confirm this sense of the name SON OF GOD.

THE next argument I shall produce for this sense of the name, is this: It is most reasonable to suppose that Son of God signifies the office of the *Messiah*, together with a connotation of his peculiar relation to God, or his being born of God in some eminent and transcendent manner, because the other name of *Christ* son of man signifies the same office of the *Messiah*, together with a connotation of his being born of mankind, or his relation to man in some way of eminence.

That the name son of man may properly denote the *Messiah*, there are some hints given in the old testament. I will mention four places.

I. The very first promise of the *Messiah* calls him the "seed of the woman, who was appointed to break the head of the serpent," *Gen. iii. 15.* that is, one derived from mankind, or a son of man; which is interpreted, *1 John iii. 8.* "The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil." The *Messiah* to be the Son of God and the son of man, to undertake this glorious service.

II. See *Psalms viii. 4.* "What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, &c." which is interpreted concerning *Jesus* the promised *Messiah*, *Heb. ii. 9.* and to the literal and typical sense of the psalmist is this: What is the first *Adam*, with all his seed, that thou art mindful of him? Or what is the second *Adam* that thou visitest him? &c. since he is made a little lower than the angels by his coming into the flesh, and becoming a second *Adam*.

III. Read *Psalms lxxx. 17.* "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself." Whether this refers to the hard work of atonement, which the hand of God would lay upon him, or whether it means the hand of God shall be with him, to support and establish him in his kingdom, may be doubted: Yet it is generally agreed, that the person here designed, is the promised *Messiah*, that holy, that mighty one, upon whom God devolved the care of our salvation, *Psalms lxxxix. 19.* when he says, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty, I have exalted one chosen out of the people;" that is, one who is to be eminently the son of man, chosen out of mankind.

IV. Look into *Dan. vii. 13.* "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days,—

and there was given to him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, &c." which represents in prophecy, *Christ's* ascension to heaven in the clouds, and his receiving the kingdom from the hands of the Father.

I grant that in some of these ancient texts, the design of scripture is to represent this, that the promised *Messiah* was to have the nature, form and fashion of a man, but still his character as *Messiah* is also included or declared in the same text. And this is particularly remarkable in this verse of *Daniel*, which, as doctor *Sykes* has abundantly shewn in his "Essay on the truth of the christian religion," is always supposed to be in view wherefoever this title is given to *Christ* in the new testament.

This is the name indeed, whereby *Christ* most frequently speaks of himself in the new testament, and, as some have remarked, that as the sacred writers generally call him the Son of God to express his sublime relation to the Father, so he generally calls himself the son of man, to signify his condescending relation to mankind.

It may be said concerning this name son of man as is said before concerning the name Son of God, viz. As there are some few places where the Son of God, chiefly denotes his sublime relation to God distinct from his office; so there may be a place or two where the son of man chiefly signifies *Christ's* relation to human nature, and his derivation from mankind, distinct from his office. Yet as the most general sense of the word Son of God is to denote that eminent that peculiar Son of God who was to be the *Messiah*, or Saviour; so the most general sense of the word son of man is to denote that eminent and peculiar son of man who was the seed of the woman, and was appointed to that office of a Saviour.

First, I shall mention one text, for I can think of but one in the new testament, where the son of man may be supposed chiefly or only to signify *Christ's* relation to mankind, without including his office or referring to it.

Matth. xvi. 13. "Whom do men say that I, the son of man, am?" that is, Whom do men say that I *Jesus* am, who appear in the common form of mankind? and verse 16. *Peter* gave his opinion, "Thou art *Christ* the Son of the living God;" that is, Thou art the *Messiah*, who hast a sublime and glorious relation to God, who art by way of eminence God's own Son.

Yet even this text may be also explained so as to include the *Messiahship*, or the office of *Christ* thus, "Whom do men say that I am? What do men think concerning me, who am indeed the great son of man, the *Messiah* who was to come?" What do they think of my person, who am the *Messiah* by office?

But in the next place let it be observed, that there are a multitude of scriptures wherein this word is plainly and certainly used to signify that eminent son of man, who is the promised *Messiah*. I shall mention only these four, wherein it is evident that the scripture hath chief respect to his office; and where the mere signification of his human nature cannot answer the end and design of the text.

I. *Mark* ix. 12. "Elias verily cometh first and restoreth all things, &c. And it is written of the son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought;" which refers to the prophecies of *Isaiab*, *David* and *Daniel* concerning the *Messiah*, *Isa.* liii. *Dan.* ix. and *Psal.* xxii.

II. *Luke* xvii. 22. "The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the son of man, and ye shall not see it; and they shall say to you, See here, or see there; Go not after them, nor follow them." Which is parallel to *Matth.* xxiv. 23. "If any man shall say to you, Lo here is *Christ*, or there, believe it not;

for

for there shall arise false *Christs*, &c." Then it follows both in *Luke* and *Matthew*, "As the lightening cometh, &c. so shall the coming of the son of man be; and as it was in the days of *Noah*, and, *Luke* adds also, in the days of *Lot*, thus shall it be in the day when the son of man is revealed:" that is, when *Jesus* shall appear as the *Messiah* for the conversion of the gentiles, or for the destruction of the *Jews*, or for the final judgment of the world.

III. *John* v. 26, 27. "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:" that is, because he is the *Messiah*; therefore, in order to sustain and fulfil the character of *Messiah*, it was necessary that he should have power to give life to the dead, and to execute judgment on the world.

IV. *John* xii. 34. "The people answered him, We have heard out of the law, that *Christ*, or the *Messiah*, abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The son of man must be lifted up? Who is this son of man?" It is as much as if the people had said, "We know of no son of man besides that *Messiah* or the *Christ*, who is to have a glorious kingdom, and abide for ever: What other son of man is there, or can there be, that must be lifted up or put to death? Is there any other *Christ* or *Messiah* besides him who is to abide for ever?"

I might cite several scriptures more to this purpose, but these are sufficient to shew, that as the *Messiah* is sometimes called the SON OF MAN, to signify his office with a connotation of his relation to mankind, and being in an eminent sense the seed of the woman, or the son of man, the chief of all the sons of men; so it is exceeding probable that he is also called the SON OF GOD, to signify the same office, and withal to shew his sublime relation to God, or his being in a peculiar and transcendent manner THE SON, by way of absolute eminence, above all men or angels who are sons of God; even his first-born, his only begotten Son.

Objection. But if it be allowed, that there are any places of scripture where the name son of man denotes the human nature of *Christ*, or that he was really and truly man, why may not the name Son of God as well signify his divine nature, and denote that he is true and real God?

To which I answer, that the case is widely different; for the name son of man is never applied to any person who is not true and real man; and the scripture applying it absolutely and eminently to *Christ*, shews him to be the chief of the sons of men: But the name Son of God is applied often in the old testament, and in the new, both to angels and to men, who are called the sons of God, and yet they are not true and real God; and therefore when this name is given absolutely and eminently to *Christ*, it can necessarily be construed to signify no more, than the most eminent and chief of all who are called the sons of God, or one who is above them all, in character and office.

It may be observed also, that the name son of man or sons of men is given sometimes to any of the children of *Adam* or the race of mankind, and at other times to some eminent person among men, as *Ezekiel* the prophet is often spoken to, "Thou son of man;" but the name is much more abundantly attributed to our blessed Saviour, as he is the most eminent of all that ever had that appellation given them.

I acknowledge it is a great truth, that this glorious person the *Messiah* hath two distinct natures united in him, even the nature of God and the nature of man: and that *Christ* is true God and true man. But when he calls himself Son of God and son of man, surely an eternal and consubstantial sonship of *Christ*, or even his

eternal deity united to man, seems more than could be certainly collected from these names in that day, and more than *Christ* himself directly designed by the use of those words.

The last argment that I shall mention to prove that the name Son of God denotes the character of the *Messiah*, including also his divine original and sublime relation to God which renders him an all-sufficient Saviour, is this, that salvation is annexed to the belief of *Jesus* being the Son of God, in several texts which I have cited at the beginning of this discourse: This sonship therefore must necessarily signify and carry with it some ideas, or characters that are directly suited to the sinful and miserable state of mankind, and that render him a proper object for their desire, dependence and hope.

Now it is not the mere belief of his having a divine nature, nor of an eternal generation by God the Father, nor of his having a most glorious human soul, nor a miraculous birth, nor a resurrection from the dead, that renders him so directly suitable to the state and case of convinced sinners, and fit for the proper exercises of their hope and dependence, as the various offices and characters which he sustains as the *Messiah*, the Saviour of mankind, together with his all-sufficient capacity to fulfil those offices.

A poor convinced perishing sinner beholds him as a glorious person near to God, appointed to be a prophet to enlighten his darkness, a priest to atone for his sins and intercede for him, a king to rule and influence and defend him against all the powers of sin and hell, and all-sufficient for these sacred purposes: And thence I infer, that a divine person who is the promised *Messiah*, the all-sufficient Saviour, is the most natural and probable sense of this title, the SON OF GOD, in all those places of scripture where *Christ* is proposed to our faith under this name; however some of the other senses may be more remotely and indeterminately included therein. And though the deity of *Christ* is not directly signified by this name, yet by a comparison of it with other places of scripture, I think it may certainly be deduced by just consequences; for it is sufficiently manifest to us, who have the whole new testament to compare with the old, that the *Messiah* must be the true God, or that godhead must be united to human nature, to make up the complete person and character of the *Messiah*.

S E C T I O N III.

Objections against this sense of the name answered.

Objection I. **T**HE word son among men properly signifies one of the same nature with the father; and therefore Son of God, when it is applied to *Christ*, must signify one of the same nature with God the Father, that is, one who is true and eternal God; and it has been generally so taken in this controversy by our divines. Now this sense implies much more than a mere likeness to God, or a derivation from him, or deputation to an office.

Answer I. The word son taken in it's common senses and uses among men may be applied to several ideas, viz. a derivation from the father, a likeness to, or imitation of the father, a subordination, or some sort of inferior relation to the father, or a being of the same species, kind or nature with the father, and an individual being distinct from the father.

Now

Now it is plain that when human words and similes are used to represent divine things, there is no necessity that those words should include all their original ideas, nor indeed is it possible: It is enough to support the analogy, if but one or two of the same ideas are denoted by the use of the same word. Why may we not then suppose that the name Son of God, when applied to *Christ*, may signify his peculiar derivation from the Father as to his soul, or as to his body, or his subordinate character in his mission by the Father, or his being appointed by the Father to be his vicegerent in the kingdom, or his likeness to the Father in his natural qualifications and powers, or in his kingly office, together with his being another individual distinct from the Father? Why may not one or two of these ideas, and much more all of them, be sufficient to account for the use of this name Son of God, without making it necessary that the word sonship in this place must include a sameness of nature?

Besides, it is evident that the word son of God is applied to angels, *Job* i. 6. and to men, *Phil.* ii. 15. 1 *John* iii. 1, 2. and even the term of begotten son is applied to men, 1 *John* v. 1. Yet neither men nor angels are of the same kind or nature with God their Father, and in these instances it is impossible that the idea of sameness of kind or nature should be included.

Answer II. The word son in the language of men, wheresoever it means a sameness of nature, it always means the same specific nature, or a nature of the same kind and species; but it never means the same individual nature, for it always denotes a distinct individual being. Therefore, in order to keep this part of the idea of sonship, and to maintain the parallel in this point, if we will have the Son of God to signify one of the same nature with the Father, it must mean one of the same specific nature, that is, a distinct individual being of the same kind with the Father; and thus we shall be in danger of making two Gods*. But it is plain, that in order to support the analogy of the name Son, we can never make the word Son of God to signify one of the same individual nature or essence, because it never signifies so in the language of men; and therefore there is no necessity that it should signify one of the same nature in any sense when applied to *Christ*.

Answer III. There are many places of scripture wherein *Christ* is called the Son of God, and the Son absolutely, and where God is said to be his Father, wherein we cannot suppose the godhead of *Christ* is or can be designed in the most just and natural interpretation of the text; such as are most of these which follow, viz.

John v. 18, 19. When the *jews* had made a strange inference, and charged *Christ* with making "himself equal to God, because he called God his Father, he answered, verily, verily I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do, &c." This is not an expression which represents the Son as the true and eternal God, or that grants their inference; for it is plain that this expression represents him under a degree of impotence and dependence, that he could do nothing of him-

* That it cannot mean one of the same specific nature, and that *Christ* is not another individual spirit specifically the same with the Father, I have proved at large in other places: For it belongs to the very nature of the Father to be self-existent and undervived, and it belongs as much to the nature of a Son not to be self-existent, but to be derived: therefore their natures cannot be specifically the same. A nature which is not self-existent and self-sufficient, nor could exist but by derivation, is not the same specific nature with that which is self-sufficient and self-existent, and which cannot be derived.

himself. Nay this contradicts their inference, and denies his equality with God, rather than confirms or allows it.

The sense of this expression may be learned from *John* viii. 38. "I speak that which I have seen with my Father, and you do that which you have seen with your father." Verse 44. "Ye are of your father the devil, &c."—Now it is plain that the *Jews* had never seen the devil do those things which they did, but it signifies only that by the devil's influence and direction they practised evil actions: And so also, that *Christ* doth all by God's influence and direction, is the plain meaning of *Christ's* speaking or doing what he has seen with his Father.

Nor will the following words destroy this interpretation, "Whatsoever things the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise;" that is, whatsoever things the Father contrives and appoints, the Son executes and performs as commissioned by the Father, or the Son performs them by the Father's influence.

Then it proceeds, verse 20. "The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth, and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel." Hence it follows that the Father had not then shewn to the Son these greater works, or given him commission and power for the performance of them. But this can never be said concerning the divine nature of *Christ*, which can receive and learn nothing new.

And though there are some expressions in that paragraph of scripture down to the 30th verse, which seem superior to the character of any mere creature, and which would have been hardly applied to *Christ* the man, if not united to godhead; yet *Christ* considered as the Son of God throughout that paragraph, is represented as dependent on the Father for all, and receiving all from the Father, which is hardly consistent with the idea of supreme godhead, if that were included in sonship.

Wheresoever *Christ* calls God his Father, he himself stands under the special character of a Son. Now *John* v. 30. when he says, "I can of myself do nothing, I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." And *John* vi. 38. "I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me;" that is, the Father, as verse 39. This does not sound like the language of godhead, which is supreme and independent, and can do all things of itself, and by it's own will.

John xiv. 28. "My Father is greater than I." It is hardly to be supposed that *Christ* here intends to speak of his divine nature. The expression itself, as well as the context, would lead one to think that *Christ* considered as a Son is not here spoken of as the true and eternal God, who is the greatest of beings, and can acknowledge no greater than himself.

John xiv. 31. "As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do." This does not seem to be the language of supreme godhead, which receives no commandments from another.

John xvii. 5. "Father, glorify me with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Surely *Christ* as God does not offer up prayers to the Father, and much less could he pray for the restoration of a glory which his divine nature once had, of which he seems divested at present. All this is hardly consistent with supreme deity belonging to his sonship, that is, either to be divested of glory, or to pray for the restoration of it.

John xx. 17. *Christ* says, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." So 2 *Cor.* xi. 31. and 1 *Pet.* i. 3. "the Father is called the God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*." Now the Father cannot properly be the God

of

of the deity of *Christ*, that is, his Creator, his absolute governor, and his object of worship, which is the proper sense of my God in all other scriptures. Nor is there any sufficient reason then why we should construe the words my Father, as relating to the deity of *Christ*, since the words my God cannot be so construed, and since both these titles seem so intimately connected and referring to one and the same subject.

Mark xiii. 32. "Of that day and hour knoweth not the Son, but the Father." I confess it may be said in that paragraph he is called the Son of man, verse 26. yet it must be granted that the more natural sense of the words is, "Of that hour knoweth not the Son of God, but only God the Father." This text does so plainly shew *Christ's* ignorance of the day of judgment as he is the Son, that though it be granted the divine nature of *Christ* knows the day of judgment, yet as a Son he does not: therefore as a Son he hath not a divine nature, or true godhead.

John iii. 35. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands." Verse 34. "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." All this implies an inferiority and dependency. As a Son he receives all from another, which godhead cannot do.

Luke xxiii. 47. When the centurion or captain saw the miracles at the death of *Christ*, he cried out, "Verily this man was the Son of God." He cannot be supposed to mean that this man was the true and eternal God, but only that he was a great and glorious person, like God, or some way related to God: or he was the person whom the *jews* expected for their *Messiah*. This *roman* captain could not imagine *Christ* to be God himself.

1 Cor. xv. 28. "Then shall the Son also himself be subject to him that has put all things under him, that God may be all in all." This is a character of too much inferiority for true godhead, The argument stands thus: If the Son of God be true God considered as a Son, then he is originally and necessarily Lord of all, and then it must be said it is by his own voluntary condescension that he is so far depressed and humbled by the oeconomy, as to become the Father's deputy and vicegerent; and when that oeconomy ceases, he is of course exalted to his equality with the Father, and to his essential and natural lordship over all. But the representation of *St. Paul* is just the contrary: In many parts of his writings, particularly *Phil.* ii. he shews us, that the Son of God is not depressed but exalted by the oeconomy to the kingdom. And he tell us in this text, that when the Son gives up this oeconomical kingdom, he comes again into subjection; then shall the Son himself be subject to the Father, which plainly shews, that considered as a Son, he is naturally subject to the Father, and that at the end of this oeconomical exaltation he shall return to his natural subjection, and shall be so for ever when God appears all in all. This is most evidently the meaning of the great apostle.

This text will not prove that *Christ* is not God, for he is so by personal union to the divine nature, he is God manifest in the flesh, he is God and man in one complex person. But this text, I think, does prove that his sonship doth not include godhead. And not only in this text, but in most or all these scriptures it is manifest, that the character of *Christ* as a Son is set far below the Father, not only in order or in office, but in knowledge, power, sovereignty, self-sufficiency and authority, which would naturally lead one to believe that his sonship in scripture cannot refer to his godhead or divine nature, wherein he is by our greatest divines acknowledged to be equal to the Father in power and glory.

Now

Now while we maintain the true deity of *Christ*, and that his complete person is God and man united; I see no necessity of applying all these texts to his godhead where his sonship is spoken of, since his sonship may be better referred to his inferior nature, or to his offices. And this will free us from those embarrassments and hardships to which we have been driven to keep up the sublime idea of godhead in these scriptures which call him a Son, and which at the same time carry so much of dependence and inferiority in them.

Objection II. Though it should be granted that there are several texts wherein *Christ* is called the Son of God, which cannot so well be referred to his divine nature, yet there are several other texts wherein *Christ* is represented as the Son of God, begotten and born of God, which seem much more naturally to refer to his godhead, and can hardly be construed into a lower sense, viz.

Text I. *Prov.* viii. 24, 25. where wisdom says, "Before the hills was I brought forth, &c." which whole chapter is generally interpreted concerning the divine nature of *Christ*.

Answer I. It is not the design of my present discourse to prove that the divine nature of *Christ* has no sort or manner of derivation from the Father, real or relative; I neither affirm it nor deny it here. But that the name Son of God, in the new testament, does not generally, if ever, signify his divine nature; this is my present theme: And therefore the allegation of this text out of *Proverbs* is not to our present purpose, nor is the name Son of God there used, nor is God called his Father.

Answer II. I dare not deny this chapter to relate to *Christ*; yet it does not follow, that it refers only to his divine nature, as I shall shew immediately. And it must be acknowledged that it is very hard to prove, that this eighth of *Proverbs* does certainly denote the person of *Christ*. *Athanasius* himself sometimes explains it another way. Bishop *Patrick*, that noble commentator, will scarce allow it; and many others have been of the opinion, that *Solomon* means only wisdom as a principle of contrivance and counsel, whether human or divine; or at most, the ideal world in the mind of God, though he uses such sort of personal characters in his description of this wisdom, in the *hebrew* idiom.

It is granted that many of the ancients explained it of *Christ*, but some of the fathers supposed it to mean the holy Spirit; and all men know they were but very poor expositors, who dealt much in allegory, and in straining of plain texts to their purposes: and since they cannot tell whether the Son or the Spirit be meant here, it is possible it may mean neither of them, by all the arguments which they have produced; for none of them are very conclusive.

Answer III. Supposing the divine wisdom in *Prov.* viii. primarily to signify the idea of the divine counsels and decrees about creation and redemption, it may be properly said, this wisdom was begotten or brought forth before the creation, and all this system of divine counsels being deposited with the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, this human soul of *Christ*, thus vested with divine ideas, it may be included in *Solomon's* idea of wisdom.

And those who believe the doctrine of the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, have made it appear that if it refer to *Christ*, it is very probable this pre-existent soul considered as having the divine nature united to it, is here represented as commencing it's existence, it's union with godhead, receiving it's commission, and beginning it's office. And the learned

learned doctor *Thomas Goodwin*, though he firmly believed the eternal generation of *Christ*, as the Son of God, yet he supposes this chapter to relate to *Christ*, as God-man and not merely to his godhead.

Text II. Is that remarkable one, *Psal.* ii. 7. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;" which has been usually interpreted by our divines, to signify the eternal sonship of *Christ* as God.

Answer I. It is evident that in *Acts* xiii. 33. St. *Paul* applies this to the resurrection of *Christ*, and the beginning of his exaltation, and not to any eternal generation; so that we have a divine interpreter giving quite a different sense of it.

Answer II. Besides, *Christ* is here said to become a Son by a decree which cannot signify eternal generation, but must relate to his office.

Answer III. Again, it is spoken literally concerning the exaltation of *David* as the type of *Christ* to his kingdom, and not concerning the natural production or generation of *David*; and therefore in the antitype it must signify mystically the exaltation of *Christ* to his kingdom, and not his natural eternal generation.

Answer IV. Let it be farther remembered that the word, this day, never signifies eternity in scripture in any other place, and why then must it do so here?

Answer V. I add also, that this text is cited in *Heb.* i. 5. where it is joined with God's promise in future times to be a Father to *Christ*; "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son;" which does not signify eternal generation. But of this verse I have spoken more largely in other places; and shewn that bishop *Pearson*, doctor *Owen*, and other zealous trinitarians do not construe this text to mean the eternal generation of *Christ*.

Text III. *Matth.* xxviii. 19. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the holy Ghost." Why is the Son joined with the Father and the holy Ghost, who are confessedly divine, if the name Son does not include the godhead of *Christ*.

Answer. If *Christ*, considered as the Son of God, be personally united to the divine nature, or the eternal Word, he has godhead belonging to his complex person; and therefore the name Son, which signifies his personal character and office, may be well joined with the Father in this initiating ordinance, the whole complex person of *Christ*, who is the Son of God, including true godhead.

Text IV. *Rom.* i. 3, 4. "His Son *Jesus Christ* our Lord, which was made of the seed of *David*, according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." Now some say, here is a plain antithesis between the human nature and divine nature of *Christ*: the human nature, which is called the flesh, and the divine nature, which is called the spirit of holiness, and according to this divine nature he is declared to be the Son of God.

Answer I. There are several critics who believe the eternal generation of *Christ*, who yet do not suppose there is such an exact antithesis here; but they construe the spirit of holiness, to signify the holy Ghost who raised *Christ* from the dead, and who manifested, testified and declared him to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection.

Answer II. There are others who chuse to support the antithesis, and make the spirit of holiness to signify the glorious human spirit of *Christ* replenished with all holiness; and suppose that the name spirit of holiness is here given to this human soul of *Christ*, not only to aggrandize it's character above all other holy creatures, but also to inti-

mate that this spirit governed the animal nature, and kept it pure, as well as to distinguish it from the holy Spirit, which is the third of the sacred three. But I am not so well satisfied in this exposition, and therefore I dare not venture to maintain it. But there is a third answer, which I prefer to both these.

Answer III. This text may be thus paraphrased: “*Jesus Christ* our Lord, who was derived from the seed of *David*, according to, his fleshly original, or, the influence of the flesh into his birth, but was declared powerfully, by his resurrection from the dead, to be the Son of God, according to, his supernatural and holy original, or, the influence of the holy Spirit.” So that the flesh here, does not mean any constituent part of *Christ*, or his very flesh or body, but the operation or influence of the flesh, or share that the flesh of the blessed virgin had in the conception of *Christ*: And so the spirit does not mean any constituent part of *Christ*, but the influence or operation of the holy Spirit in his first conception, or in his resurrection, on both which accounts he is called in scripture the Son of God. See *Luke* i. 35. and *Acts* xiii. 33. and both are ascribed to the holy Spirit. There is a large confirmation of this exposition, in some notes on *Rom.* i. 3, 4. wherein it is shewn how the antithesis of the apostle is preserved, and that the apostle always uses *κατὰ σάρκα* and *κατὰ πνεῦμα* in an antithesis, to signify the influence of each principle, rather than for two constituent parts of a person.

Text V. *Heb.* vii. 3. “*Melchisedec* was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.” Now this historical eternity of *Melchisedec*, whose father and mother, life and death are not recorded, is made a type of the real eternity of *Christ*, considered as he is the Son of God.

Answer I. Since *Melchisedec* is represented here without a father, and yet as a type of the Son of God, it would destroy the doctrine of *Christ*’s eternal generation from God the Father, rather than support it, since the very type here has no father.

Answer II. This place refers more naturally to the priesthood of *Christ* than to his nature or existence. His priesthood was not derived by genealogical succession as *Aaron*’s was: He had no father, no mother of the *levitical* tribe, or of the family of *Aaron*, from whom his priesthood could descend; nor did he die and leave it to others by way of descent; but was constituted a single priest himself, without a predecessor, without a successor: and herein the priesthood of *Melchisedec* and the priesthood of *Christ* run very parallel, and greatly answer the apostle’s design. And I think this sense is patronized by some expressions in doctor *Owen*’s comment.

Text VI. *Heb.* i. 6. “When he bringeth in his first-begotten into the world, he saith, let all the angels of God worship him;” that is, let all the angels of God worship the first-begotten; now this first-begotten is *Jehovah*, *Psal.* xcvi. 7. for thence the apostle cites it.

Answer. This first-begotten Son of God has true and eternal godhead personally dwelling in him, and united personally to him, and one with him; and therefore the whole complex person is called *Jehovah*, and is entitled to divine worship from angels and men. God united to the man *Christ*: “God manifest in the flesh was seen of angels,” *1 Tim.* iii. 16. and worshipped by them. This text does not prove that the first-begotten is God, any otherwise than by personal union with that *Jehovah* who is spoken of in the xcvi. *Psal.* The first-begotten Son of God is to be

be worshipped by angels, because of the indwelling godhead, the great *Jehovah*, with whom the man *Christ* is one.

The last text, and which affords perhaps the most important objection against my sense of the name, is *John* v. 18. compared with *John* x. 23, &c. If the title Son of God did not signify true godhead, why did the *jews* charge *Christ* with blasphemy, and say, that he "made himself equal with God," and seek to kill him, because he had said, "God was his Father, his own Father, and as they construe it, making himself equal with God?" *John* v. 18. And why do they charge him again with blasphemy, when he said, "I am the Son of God?" *John* x. 33. because that thou being a man, makest thyself God." How could this be, if the name Son of God did not signify godhead?

I have given some answer to that text in the fifth of *John*, in some of the foregoing pages. But to make it yet clearer, I proceed :

Answer I. It is possible that some learned men among them might have a confused notion from the prophecies of the old testament, that the *Messiah* or the Son of God was to have true and real godhead in him, which godhead of the *Messiah* is a certain truth, and hath been sufficiently proved. Now, because he called himself the Son of God, and represented himself as the *Messiah*, therefore they might infer that he assumed that godhead to himself which belonged to the complete character of the *Messiah*, and upon this account might charge him with blasphemy, by way of consequence.

Yet I have much reason to doubt, whether the scribes and pharisees did certainly know that the *Messiah* was to be the true God; for the whole nation of the *jews*, with their priests and doctors, were most stupidly and shamefully ignorant of the true character and glory of the *Messiah* and his kingdom. Had the pharisees themselves any notion that *Christ* was to be the true God, they would never have been puzzled and silenced at that question of our Saviour, *Matth.* xxii. 43, 44, &c. "If the *Messiah* be the son of *David*, how could *David* call him Lord? Or, If *David* calls him Lord, how is he his son?" Their supposition of the godhead of the *Messiah* would have easily answered this difficulty, if they had had any such opinion.

Besides, we have little reason to suppose that the pharisees knew more of the divinity of the *Messiah* than the disciples themselves did during the life of *Christ*. Now it appears from many parts of the history of the gospel, that they did hardly believe at all that he was the true God; or if they did, yet their faith of it was very low, wavering and doubtful; and yet doubtless they firmly believed *Jesus* to be the *Messiah* and the Son of God, in a sense sufficient for salvation.

When *Peter* in the name of the rest had made so glorious a confession, *Matth.* xvi. 16. "Thou art *Christ* the Son of the living God," he could not mean that *Christ* was the great and glorious God; for in verse 22. he "took up his master very short, and began to rebuke him." Surely he would not have rebuked the great God his maker, at least not immediately after such a confession of his godhead.

Now, if the apostles themselves were in a state of grace and salvation, when they can hardly be supposed to believe *Christ* to be the true and the eternal God, and yet they believed and professed him to be the Son of God, then that name Son of God doth not necessarily imply and include his divinity.

But to return to the objection.

That which I take to be the plainest, the clearest, and the most scriptural solution of this difficulty is this which follows,

Answer II. It is evident that the design of the wicked *jews* in these places of the history was to bring the highest accusation against our Saviour, and to load him with the grossest calumnies that all their wit or malice could draw from his words or actions, *Luke xi. 54.* "laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him."

If ever he spake of his kingdom, though he owned his "kingdom was not of this world," *John xviii. 36.* yet they in their malice would construe it into sedition and rebellion, and make him an enemy to *Cæsar*. And so when he called God his own Father, and declared himself to be the Son of God, they in the fury of their false zeal construe it into blasphemy; as though to own himself to be the Son of God, were to assume equality with God: whereas *Christ* shews them plainly, that these words did not necessarily imply such a sense; and this is sufficiently manifest by the defence which *Christ* made for himself in both those places of the history. Give me leave to repeat briefly what I said before.

If we look into *John v. 18.* when the *jews* accused him that by calling "God his Father he made himself equal with God," he doth by no means vindicate that sense of his name Son of God, but rather denies his equality with God considered as a Son, *verse 19, &c.* "Verily, verily I say — the Son can do nothing of himself: The Father sheweth the Son all things that he doth, and he will shew him greater works than these." Thence I infer, that he hath not shewn him all yet; and *verse 30.* "I can of myself do nothing. — I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father who hath sent me, &c." All which expressions sufficiently evince, that he did not intend to signify his own godhead, or equality with God, when he called himself the Son of God; for in his very answer to their accusation he represents himself inferior to and dependent on God the Father.

Now let us look into the other text where our Saviour is thus accused, and defends himself, *viz. John x. 30—39.* He saith, "I and my Father are one. 31. Then the *jews* took up stones again to stone him. 32. *Jesus* answered them, many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? 33. The *jews* answered him, saying, for a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy, and because that thou being a man, makest thyself God. 34. *Jesus* answered them, is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods? 35. If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken: 36. 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?"

In which portion of scripture we may observe these three things.

1. That *Christ* doth neither plainly and expressly own nor deny himself here to be the true God, for this was not a proper time to satisfy the curiosity of the malicious *jews* in such a sublime doctrine, in which he had not as yet clearly and fully instructed his own disciples. Yet,

2. He gives several hints of his godhead, or his being one with the Father, when he says, "I and my Father are one;" and when he says, *verse 38.* "I do the works of my Father, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him;" by which he secretly intimated that the man *Jesus* had also a divine nature in him, and was personally united to God, though he did not think fit to preach his own godhead plainly at that time.

And indeed if he had not been the true God, and in that sense one with the Father, we may justly suppose, that he would upon this occasion have denied himself to be true God, and thus roundly renounced the conclusion itself which they pretended

pretended to draw from his words, as well as he did deny the justness of their consequence, from his calling himself the Son of God. And therefore since he did not renounce the conclusion, we may reasonably infer that he was the true God: But since he does deny the justness of their consequence, we may as reasonably infer that his mere calling himself the Son of God does not prove nor include his godhead: which appears plainer under the next particular. I say therefore,

3. The chief design of his answer, was to refute the calumny of the *jews*, and the weakness of their inference, by shewing that the name Son of God, doth not necessarily signify one equal to God; but that the necessary sense of it here can rise no higher than to denote one who was nearer to the Father, and was sanctified, sealed, and sent by the Father in a way superior to all former prophets, kings and magistrates, to whom the word of God came, and who, partly on this account, might be called gods.

Prophets or kings, judges or doctors of the law were called gods, and children or sons of the most high, in *Psal.* lxxxii. 6. and in other places of scripture, because they came from God, they were commissioned by God, and carried with them some representation of the wisdom, power, authority, and dominion of God in the sight of men. Now our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the *Messiah*, the great prophet, judge, doctor or teacher, and king of his church, came forth from God in heaven, in a literal and more eminent manner, was sent by him into this world with a higher commission, and represented more of the wisdom, power, and dominion of God than any former kings or prophets ever did; and if they upon this account were dignified with the name or title of gods, or sons of God, much more right has the *Messiah*, to this name or title.

The argument which our Lord uses is “a minori ad majus;” he puts the reason of his more unquestionable and superior right to this title, upon the superiority of his character and mission, or his more immediate commission from the Father. His words might be paraphrased thus: They who were originally in and of this world were made prophets, teachers or kings, merely by the word of God coming to them, and giving them commission, either by the ordinary directions of the written word, or, at best, they received their authority from the word of God coming to them * by some voice or vision, some divine message or inspiration, and yet they had the title of gods given them. Therefore the *Messiah* who was not originally of this world, but was with the Father, who was sanctified, that is, anointed with the Spirit, or set apart by God himself, who came forth from the Father in heaven, and was sent immediately by the Father into this world, may surely be called the Son of God without danger of blasphemy. If they are called gods, the *Messiah* may well be called the Son of God.

And he confirms the argument thus: “The scripture cannot be broken,” *ἡ σκρῖτουρα οὐ δύναται ῥηθῆναι*, cannot be contradicted. As he who acts contrary to a precept is said to break it, *λύει*, see *Matth.* v. 19. *John* v. 18. and vii. 23. So he who contradicts an assertion of scripture is properly said *λύει*, to break it. Therefore, since the scripture which cannot be contradicted, calls those ancient rulers, teachers or prophets gods, as well as sons of God, he who is appointed the most glorious prophet and ruler,

* Our Lord knew that he himself was the divine Logos or Word of God, and it is likely that he used these words, “To whom the word of God came,” with this view and meaning in his own mind: “Surely if those are called gods, to whom the divine Logos or Word made a visit from the Father, the divine Logos himself who came from the Father may be well called the Son of God without blasphemy.” But he did not think fit to express himself so plainly to the *jews* at that time, though he has left it upon record in his gospel for our observation and instruction.

ruler, might have been justified by the language of scripture, if he had assumed the name God to himself, in direct and express language, and much more abundantly is he justified when he has only called himself the Son of God.

And indeed it is worth our observation here, that though the *jews* built part of their accusation upon his saying, "I and my Father are one," *Jesus* does not directly answer to those words, nor undertake to vindicate or explain them; because he might design in those words to intimate his godhead or his oneness with God the Father: Therefore he neglects and drops this part of the ground of their charge, and applies himself intirely to answer their accusation, as it was built upon his calling God his own Father, and himself the Son of God: And this he did because he knew that this name did not necessarily imply equality with God, and so he could boldly refute their inference and renounce the charge.

Yet it should be observed also, that before *Christ* leaves them he leads them to his godhead, that is, to his most intimate union with the godhead of the Father, verse 38. "That ye may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in him; that he and his Father are one," as he before expressed his godhead.

Thus I have explained myself at large in what I think to be the very scope and force of our Saviour's argument; and indeed if we take the word Son of God to signify necessarily in that place an equality with the Father; we plainly take away the force of our Saviour's argument and defence, and we leave the accusation of the malicious *jews* in it's full force against him*.

In short, our Saviour's answer must necessarily mean one of these two things, viz.

Either when he called himself the Son of God, he did design to let them know that he was equal to God, but that he was no blasphemer, because it was a great truth:

Or he designed to tell them, that his words did not necessarily signify that he was equal to God, and therefore he was no blasphemer; that their inference was not just, and that they carried the charge further than his words would bear. One of these two must, I think, be our Saviour's design.

Now that he did not design the first of these, that is, to shew that he was equal to God, seems evident to me, because his answer cannot reach this sense; and if strained to this sense, it is very obscure and far-fetched: It might also have been spoken in much plainer language twenty ways, if it had been his design to tell the *jews*, that he was equal with God; and he would doubtless have proved it by plainer citations out of the old testament, which assert the divinity of the *Messiah*, had it been his design to declare and maintain his godhead at that time.

But if we suppose his design was only to shew the falsehood of their inference, and that they had strained his words too far, then the whole paragraph is natural, and easy to be understood, in the manner I have explained it.

From all this it will follow, that the belief of *Christ* to be the Son of God in some more eminent sense than all the ancient prophets and kings were, that is, to be the glorious *Messiah*, is all that *Christ* directly and plainly designed in calling himself the Son of God; and this must be all that was made necessary to salvation in those scriptures which required their belief in him as the Son of God.

Thus I have made it appear that the name Son of God cannot necessarily imply his divine nature, much less the incomprehensible eternal generation of the Son in one
essence

* The learned doctor *Waterland*, whose zeal for the deity of *Christ*, and whose skill in the defence of it, are sufficiently known, himself confesses that the *jews* could not from *Christ*'s own expression clearly convict him of meaning more than that he was God, in the improper sense of the word, as it had been used, *Psal.* lxxxii. 6. See his "Vindication of *Christ*'s divinity, page 55.

essence with the Father. For though I firmly believe him to be true God, and in that sense one with the Father, yet I would not place the chief weight of this doctrine on such arguments as will not support it, nor build so important a truth on an insufficient foundation.

But this thought leads me to the next section.

S E C T I O N IV.

What advantage is there in not applying the name Son of God to the divine nature of Christ?

AFTER all, many a pious christian will be ready to enquire and say, Since you acknowledge *Jesus Christ* to have a divine nature, and to be truly and properly God, why have you taken so much pains to shew that his name the Son of God in scripture does not necessarily signify either his godhead or his coeternal generation and sonship?

To this enquiry I hope I can give some satisfactory answers, and offer such reasons as may justify and support this attempt, and guard it from the just censures of every reasonable and intelligent reader.

I. I was willing to search the true sense of scripture in this point, and to understand the meaning of God in his word.

Where any expression is used so very frequently in the bible as this name the Son of God is, and that in texts of awful and solemn importance, which determine the things necessary to our salvation, it is of great moment to know the meaning of that expression, that we may not include too little or too much in it: and this in order to understand the scripture aright in things necessary to salvation, and to have a true idea of what the Spirit of God means and intends; that we may not flatter careless hypocrites with vain hopes of salvation, by setting the mark too low, nor discourage humble believers by setting it too high: and that we may not abuse ourselves by false and mistaken notions, and imagine that we derive them all from the word of God.

II. I was afraid to build my belief of the deity of *Christ* upon feeble and insufficient foundations, and therefore I thought it necessary to examine this argument which is drawn from his sonship.

The great doctrine of the godhead of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and faith in him as the true God, has been by many persons built chiefly on this name which is given him, viz. the Son of God; and that upon this bare presumption, that as a son amongst men has the same specific nature with his father, so the Son of God must have the same individual nature with his Father; but how weak this argument is to support such a doctrine, appears in the foregoing discourse. Now I would not have the faith of christians in any important doctrine, that is divinely true, built upon a supposition that is feeble or false, lest the adversaries take occasion to insult the faith of christians, and to decry the doctrine itself, as though it had no better arguments or foundations to support it.

Besides, when christians have built their own faith and hopes upon a foundation so feeble and uncertain, they are more liable to have their creed shaken, and to part with the glorious doctrine itself; and therefore I would persuade them rather to build their faith on such arguments as will stand the test against all opposers: And

I think

I think most of those which I have made use of in the eighth and ninth propositions of the treatise of the "christian doctrine of the trinity," see pages 420—452. may lay a claim to this character, and will better support this faith than any argument derived from his mere generation or sonship.

III. It is necessary as far as possible to remove all cavils from every important doctrine of christianity, and such is that of the deity of *Christ*.

Now if the doctrine of his deity be built on his sonship, then he must be true God considered as he is a son; but the notion of a Son in all languages of mankind importing some sort of derivation and dependence, and the notion of godhead importing independence and self-existence, seem to carry a sort of contradiction in them. And this becomes a mighty prejudice to the minds of men against their belief of the deity of *Christ*, when they are told, that he is God as he is a Son, or that his deity depends on his sonship, that is, his deity is included in his derived and dependent character.

Though I will not here assert that absolute self-existence and independence belong to every thing in and of God, for I know not what powers or properties of godhead depend on each other, yet I would not willingly prove the godhead of *Christ* from the very name which seems to exclude self-existence and independence, since there are many other and better proofs of it.

And though I dare not utterly renounce all those schemes of explaining the trinity, which make the divine nature of *Christ* to be in any way or manner whatsoever derived or communicated from the Father, for I must own myself lost in these unsearchables, yet I would not make the necessary proof of the divinity of *Christ* to depend on such a notion as in the common language of mankind implies derivation and dependence: and by this means, I think, I better guard this sacred truth from some of the cavils that have attended it.

Now if by this exposition of the name Son of God I remove any of the great impediments out of the way of the *Arians* or *Socinians* from believing the true deity of *Christ*, then I shall account myself to have done service and honour to that glorious article of our faith.

IV. I would do something to take away that anathema and damning sentence which some parties of christians who believe the divinity of *Christ* have thrown on others, who also believe his divinity, merely for not explaining some particular scriptures in the same way and manner that they do, or for not using the same arguments to prove his divinity.

Since it is made a test for our eternal salvation in some places of scripture, whether we believe *Jesus* to be the Son of God, or no; and since there are now, and have been in former ages, many christians of great piety and worth who doubt of the consubstantial sonship of *Christ*, and the eternal generation of his person, even though they believe his true and proper godhead, I would not willingly encourage the scripture to be interpreted in such a mistaken sense, as should exclude all these pious and excellent persons from salvation, and forbid them the kingdom of heaven. For they may believe him to be true God, and to be also the Son of God, though they do not believe his godhead to be owing to his sonship.

There are some persons who have been so severe as to pass a condemning sentence on all those who deny *Christ* the Son, considered as the Son, to be the true God. I hope they have done it merely through inadvertence, or because they thought it to be utterly impossible to maintain the godhead of *Christ* upon any other foot but that of his co-eternal and consubstantial sonship. But whatsoever be their reason for

for such unjust censure, yet I must confess I do not love to see condemnation and everlasting death thrown upon persons who believe the same scriptural doctrine of the deity of *Christ* that we do, but chuse to explain it another way.

Thus some of my motives to this enquiry are to do justice to the truths of God, and some arise from charity to the souls of men. Nor is my zeal for the honour of my Lord *Jesus Christ* in the least abated; for while I believe him in his complex person to be both the true and eternal God, and also the only begotten Son of the Father, and while I profess him to be withal the great prophet and teacher, as well as the Saviour of his church; I conceive that more honour is done him by searching out that true and exact meaning of his own words which this heavenly teacher designed to convey to us, than by persuading the world to read his eternal godhead in those places where he did not design to reveal and express it to men.

Q U E S T I O N II.

Did the disciples of Christ fully believe that he was the true God during his life-time, or not till after his death and resurrection?

IN order to solve this question, let us make these following enquiries, viz.

- I. What notion the *jews* had of their *Messiah* in general.
 - II. What ideas or notions *Christ* taught his disciples concerning himself.
 - III. What apprehensions or notions the disciples received and embraced concerning *Christ*.
 - IV. What indications they may be supposed to give tending toward the belief of his godhead.
 - V. What indications they give of their ignorance or doubt of it, or at least what evidences there are of the fluctuation and uncertainty of their faith in that matter.
- Now, by balancing these things one with another, we may at last come to form some true judgment about the present question.

S E C T I O N I.

The jews old opinion concerning the Messiah.

I. WHAT notion had the *jews* in general concerning their *Messiah*?

Answer. Though the old testament furnished them with sufficient prophecies concerning his divine and human nature, his spiritual kingdom, his sufferings, his death and resurrection from the dead, yet so wretchedly blinded were they with the corrupt glosses of their teachers, and with their own foolish prejudices, that they did agree in no notion concerning the *Messiah* more univerfally than in these false and mistaken ones, viz. that he was to be a glorious temporal prince, that he was never to suffer, nor to die, and consequently not to rise again; and that he was

to exalt their nation equal to or beyond it's ancient grandeur, and to raise them to a temporal sovereignty over all the nations of the earth.

And the disciples themselves were so rooted in these mistaken notions, that nothing could quite cure them but the actual death and resurrection of *Christ*, his ascent to heaven, and his pouring down the enlightening Spirit at the days of *Pentecost*. For we find it evident enough, that the two sons of *Zebedee*, *James* and *John*, hoped to be made great ministers of state, and "sit at his right-hand and at his left in a temporal kingdom," *Matth.* xx. 21. We read that when our Lord spoke of his own death and sufferings, "*Peter* rebuked him for it," *Matth.* xvi. 22. And none of them "knew what his rising from the dead should mean," *Mark* ix. 10. for they thought, together with the rest of the people, that *Christ* or the *Messiah* "abideth for ever," that is, must never die, *Job* xii. 34. And even after the resurrection of *Christ* they expected with some impatience the same temporal glory and grandeur when they said, *Acts* i. 16. "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom unto *Israel*?"

But to descend to particulars, and enquire what opinion the *jews* had of the nature of their *Messiah*, who or what he was to be.

1. They generally believed he should be a man of their own nation, of the tribe of *Judab*, of the seed of *David*, born at *Bethlehem*, who was to be the king of the *jews*, and their Saviour. When *Herod* demanded where the *Messiah* "the king of the *jews* should be born, the chief-priests and scribes told him, at *Bethlehem*, *Matth.* ii. 5. "And they said to him, in *Bethlehem* of *Judab*, for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou *Bethlehem* in the land of *Judab* art not the least among the princes of *Judab*, for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people *Israel*." And when *Jesus* asked the pharisees, *Matth.* xxii. 42, "Whose son is *Christ*, or the *Messiah*?" they roundly answered, the son of *David*."

Yet others of the *jews* were so very ignorant and doubtful in this matter, that they refused *Jesus*, and denied him to be the *Messiah*, for this very reason, because they knew his birth and parentage. *John* vii. 27. "We know this man whence he is, but when *Christ* cometh, no man knoweth whence he is."

2. They believed that he had an existence before he came into the world; for we can hardly suppose that the scribes and priests should be so ready in citing one part of this verse, *Micah* v. 2. which shews him to be "born at *Bethlehem*, and take no notice of the other part of it, a ruler in *Israel*, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Yet it may perhaps be doubted whether this opinion was universal, because in some instances they were stupid enough to believe one part of a chapter or period concerning the *Messiah*'s glory, and neglect another part which related to his sufferings.

3. They believed that he had some glorious and eminent relation to God. This appears from the name of honour that the *Messiah* was universally known by amongst them, viz. the Son of God. The scribes, the pharisees, the priests, and all the *jews*, talked with our Lord *Jesus* freely about the *Messiah* under this name and title, as being the common name of the *Messiah*, and perfectly well known amongst them, viz. that the *Messiah* was the Son of God in some superior and more excellent way. When *Philip* told *Nathanael*, *John* i. 46. "We have found him of whom *Moses* and the prophets did write," that is, the *Messiah*; *Nathanael* being convinced that *Jesus* was he, presently saluted him by this name, "thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of *Israel*."

4. The prophets in the old testament frequently intimate the divinity of *Christ*; and some few of the ancient *jews* might probably believe that he was the *memra*, or word of the Lord, the *shekinah* or glorious habitation of God, of which the *chaldee* paraphrast sometimes speaks. Doctor *Allix* in his "judgment of the ancient *jewish* church" against the unitarians, seems to be too positive and triumphant in this point, that this *memra* or *Logos* to which the *chaldee* paraphrast ascribes the creation of the world, and the government of it, and particularly of the *jewish* nation, is the *Messiah* in their sense. Mr. *Nye* and others utterly deny it. But the excellent Mr. *Robert Fleming*, in his discourse of "christology, volume I. pages 136—144." very judiciously follows a middle path, and tells us, "That he did not find one of the many citations used by doctor *Allix* that seemed to necessitate our judgment this way. Therefore he run through the targums himself in those places where he thought it most probable to find what he sought, and yet could find but few passages that seemed very plainly to relate to the *Messiah*." Upon which he concludes, "That though the word *memra* is sometimes used for the *Messiah*, yet it is much more frequently used in other senses, and that the *jewish* *memra* and *Messiah* are spoken of sometimes as two distinct beings or persons*."

But what doubtful hints or plain evidences soever there might be from the books of the prophets or these paraphrastical authors, that *Christ* was to be the true God, yet the *jews* in *Christ*'s time did not generally believe it: And though some learned authors have asserted it, yet I never saw it proved.

Surely if the *pharisees* had but embraced this opinion, they could never have been at a loss to have answered our Lord *Jesus*, when he asked them, *Matth.* xxii. 45, 46. "If *Christ* be *David*'s Son, how doth he in Spirit call him Lord?" It was plain by their silence and confusion, that they did not believe his godhead. Bishop *Bull* is of this mind as well as doctor *Whitby*. See *Bull*'s "judicium ecclesiæ catholicæ, &c." capite i. sectione 13. and *Whitby*'s commentary.

In short, their notions of this matter were so very confused, so uncertain, so inconsistent, and so various, that they cannot be reduced to any certain or settled scheme of sentiments.

S E C T I O N II.

What ideas did Christ give his disciples of himself.

II. **I** Proceed now in the second place to inquire, what ideas or notions our Lord *Jesus Christ* taught his disciples concerning himself.

1. He takes particular pains upon many occasions to shew that he was sent from God, or received commission from heaven to teach the doctrines which he taught, and to perform those glorious and surprizing miracles which he wrought, to confirm

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both

* Mr. *Fleming* in that place tells us, that though he could not find the word *memra* and *Messiah* used as explicatory of one another in those places which are plainly prophetic of *Christ*, yet he supposes the reason might be this, that *memra* denotes *Christ* with relation only to his divine nature before his assuming human nature, and *Messiah* denotes him only as he was to appear visibly and become man; therefore it was hardly possible that both these words should be used of him at once. See "christology, volume I. page 143." Thus it is evident that Mr. *Fleming* searched after this notion with a seeming inclination to find it true, yet he could not find so great and uncontested evidence of it, as to suppose that the ancient *jews* generally embraced this opinion, that the *memra* or Word of God was the same with the *Messiah*.

both his doctrine and his commission. This is so largely insisted on in the fifth, sixth, and following chapters of the gospel by St. *John*, that I need not cite particular instances.

2. He proves by most infallible evidences, that he was the *Messiah*, the Saviour of mankind: and he endeavoured to lead his disciples out of their own national prejudices, and to give them a juster notion of the office of the *Messiah*, and his spiritual kingdom. This he did in several of his discourses.

But as to the proof that he himself was the *Messiah*, he did not labour this point so much by any long or direct discourses on this subject, as by his preaching grace and duty, so as never man spake before; by his miracles and his appearance upon all occasions, with the marks and characters of the *Messiah* upon him. To prove this, I shall give but one instance instead of many: When *John* the baptist sent his disciples to ask him whether he was the *Messiah* or no, *Matth.* xi. 3. "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Our Lord answered them only, by bidding them tell *John* their master, that "the blind received sight, the lame walk, the dead are raised, and to the poor the gospel is preached, and let *John* and his followers judge by these characters whether I am the *Messiah* or no." Though I confess there are two or three occasions also which he took to profess himself the *Messiah* in direct and plain words, *John* iv. 29. and ix. 37.

He often takes occasion to declare, that he had a being before he came into this world. *John* iii. 13. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, &c." *John* v. 38. "I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." Verse 51. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven." *John* viii. 14. "I know whence I came, and whither I go." *John* xvi. 28. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." And his disciples understood him in the plain literal sense, verse 29. for immediately his disciples said unto him, "Lo, now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no parable." *John* viii. 58. "Verily I say unto you, before *Abraham* was, I am." And in his prayer to his Father, *John* xvii. 5. "Now, O Father, glorify me with thy ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Verse 24. "—My glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

4. He assumes to himself the character of the Son of God, and that in a more eminent and superior way than men or angels are the sons of God; for he calls himself "the only begotten Son of God," *John* xiii. 16, 18. "The beloved Son of God," *John* v. 20. which he also took care that his disciples should know, twice by a voice from heaven; *Luke* iii. 22. at his baptism, and *Luke* ix. 35. at his transfiguration. He told them also that he was such a Son of God as knew the Father so as none besides knew him, *Luke* x. 22. such a Son as that "the Father shewed him all things that himself did," *John* v. 20. and that "whatsoever things the Father doth, these doth the Son likewise," verse 19. that the "Father has committed all judgment to him, that all men should honour the Son as they honour the Father," verses 22, 23. and that the "dead should hear the voice of the Son of God and live; and as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself:" which things cannot be supposed to be spoken of any mere creature, and therefore by this sort of language, he gave some intimations of his union with godhead, or his divinity, though the mere name Son of God be not construed to so divine a sense.

5. He

5. He sometimes takes opportunity to acquaint them with his most intimate union or oneness with the Father, and his peculiar communion with him. For when he says, *John* x. 29. "My Father, who gave me my sheep, is greater than all;" yet he adds in the next verse, "I and my Father are one:" which I think are intimations of a superior and inferior nature, and that the divine nature of the Father was in him. This also he discovers in some other places. *John* x. 38. "Believe the works that I do, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in him." *John* xiv. 7—11. "If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. *Philip* saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. *Jesus* saith unto him, have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, *Philip*? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayst thou, shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works sake."

6. There are also several other intimations that our Lord gave of his divinity, though it was not the doctrine that he thought fit at that time to teach in plain and express language.

When he tells them, that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." *Matth.* xviii. 20. the *greek* words are *ἐν ἐμοὶ ἴμυ*, which seem to denote a divine omnipresence. When he says to *Peter*, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," *Matth.* xvi. 14. it sounds god-like. When he promises the disciples, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gain-say," *Luke* xxi. 15. When *John* ii. 19. "Destroy this temple and I will raise it up in three days;" he imitates divine language so much, that it might have led the disciples onward to the belief of his deity.

His active behaviour and conduct in several instances was such, as there is some reason to think he would scarce have practised, had he not been true God; such as his taking frequent occasion to shew that he knew their hearts and their secret thoughts; his godlike way in working some of his miracles, which seems to be the very same which a god incarnate would have used: his sovereign and godlike manner in casting out devils, and his conveying miraculous gifts, in the same way that God himself would probably have done; and his giving the holy Spirit to his disciples, in such a manner, *John* xx. 21, 22. "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you; and when he had thus said, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, receive ye the holy Ghost," which seems to be an imitation of God creating the human soul of *Adam*, *Gen.* ii. 7. "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Though it must be noted indeed that this was after his resurrection, and so comes not within the reach of my present enquiry.

His passive behaviour also was such as we can hardly suppose he would have practised, had he not been God; for he admitted persons on several occasions to worship him, which we find both angels and apostles always forbid, lest they should seem to assume the divine prerogative and honour: He did not deny his godhead when the *jews* charged him with assuming equality with God, &c. several of which circumstances, both of the active and passive conduct of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, are set in the fairest

fairest and strongest light towards the proof of his divinity, by Mr. *Hughes* in his "two essays" on that subject. And some parts of the argument seem to carry great weight and force with them; but I would not venture to lay the whole stress of the cause there.

Thus though our blessed Saviour did not plainly and expressly declare that he was the true and eternal God; for his divine prudence did not think it proper to express his godhead in such direct and glorious language at that season*; yet by all these methods of speech, and by this divine conduct of his, which I have described in the three last particulars, he seems to have given abundant intimations that his "human nature had a peculiar union to, and communion with godhead:" But since the new testament is complete, we can understand those hints better than his disciples could in that day.

And though he did not use these words, that *Jesus* the Son of man is personally united to the divine nature, yet he said so much as in our apprehension now amounts to this sense, when he said, "I and my Father are one," *John* x. 30. "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." "The Father who is in me doth the works. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father," &c. *John* xiv. 9—11. that is, he hath seen the glory and power, and grace of the Father, whose divine nature or godhead is also in the Son, and dwells in me bodily. And though we can never tell exactly what makes the personal union between the divine and human natures in *Christ*; yet perhaps this may be a just evidence of a personal union with the godhead, viz. when the actions and characters and sufferings which *Christ* performed and sustained, might be properly said to be performed and sustained immediately by God himself. But I much question whether his disciples in that day did certainly infer so much from these words.

S E C T I O N III.

What idea the disciples had of Christ.

III. **I** Come now to consider "what apprehensions or notions the disciples did receive concerning our Lord *Jesus Christ* in his own life-time."

It is not enough for me here to repeat the foregoing heads, and shew what *Christ* told them; for we cannot say the disciples understood and effectually learned all that our Lord *Jesus Christ* taught them. It is evident in many other places of the history of the gospel, that he spoke several things to them which were above their present apprehension; the Spirit of God which was promised to descend upon them, was not only to bring to remembrance the things that *Christ* had spoken; but to give them a fuller understanding in the meaning of them. And as there were many things which *Christ* had to say to them, but forbore in his life-time, because they could not bear them

* It is no wonder that our Saviour did not freely and publicly declare his own godhead in plain and express language, when he did not chuse to declare himself the *Messiah* in such an evident manner of speech, but very seldom, and that privately too; though the doctrine of his messiahship was then of so much more importance.

But there are many special reasons also which might be given, why our Lord *Jesus* did not proclaim his own godhead during the time of his ministry on earth. I shall mention but one that is evident and sufficient, viz. that he must have done it either with plain and convincing proofs of it, or without them. If he had only

them yet, *John* xvi. 12. So there were some things which he did speak to them in a more obscure manner, by hints and intimations, which they could not at that time bear in the full light and glory of a divine explication.

But if we search the evangelical history, I think we shall find that they received and entertained the following sentiments concerning him.

1. They firmly believed that he was sent of God. Our Lord *Jesus Christ* himself was witness to this their faith, *John* xvii. 8. "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and they have believed that thou didst send me."

2. They were convinced that he was the true *Messiah*: *John* vi. 69. "We believe and are sure that thou art that *Christ*."

3. That he had a peculiar and glorious relation to God, that he was the Son of the living God, which primarily referred to the dignity of his person, and oftentimes included in it also his character, or office as the appointed Saviour. This was the substance of *Nathanael's* confession, *John* i. 49. "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of *Israel*." This was also *Peter's* confession, *Matth.* xvi. 16. "Thou art *Christ* the Son of the living God," which he spake in the name of the rest, as well as *John* vi. 69. where the same words are repeated.

4. They believed also that he had an existence before he came into this world. When the disciples told him, *John* xvi. 30. "We believe that thou camest forth from God;" it is evident from the context that they did not only mean that he received his commission from heaven, and was sent by God to preach to the world; but that he had a being with the Father before he came into this world, as he himself expresses it, verse 28. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father:" which they understood in the literal sense, without metaphors, as they themselves express it; "Now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no parable or metaphor," verse 29. And our Lord *Jesus Christ* in his testimony concerning them, seems to make these two distinct articles of their belief, viz. his pre-existence and his mission, *John* xvii. 8. "They have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me."

5. They believed also that God was in a most eminent and peculiar manner present with him, according to the multitude of expressions he had used to that purpose, of his Father's being with him, and of the Father's dwelling in him: And this was the language of their sermons at first, *Acts* x. 38. *Jesus of Nazareth* did great things, for God was with him. But they did not seem to have any fixed and certain belief of such a peculiar and personal union of the man *Christ Jesus* with the true God during his life-time, as to give him the name and title of God. They had heard him say, that he and his Father were one; but they did scarce understand his oneness with the Father, and communion in the godhead in so sublime a sense, as was afterwards revealed to them, for they never called him God before his resurrection. Which brings me to the next general head.

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only asserted it plainly, without convincing proof, he had hastened the malice of the *jews* to put him to death for blasphemy, before he had fulfilled all his designed ministry upon earth. On the other hand, if he had given most convincing proofs of it while he asserted it, the *jews* and gentiles had been restrained from putting him to death at all; for *St. Paul* tells us expressly, *1 Cor.* ii. 8. "Had the princes of this world known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

S E C T I O N IV.

What evidence they gave of believing his true deity.

IV. **T**HE fourth thing I proposed was to shew what indications the disciples may be supposed to give tending towards a belief of his godhead.

1. Upon some special occasions they worshipped him. The leper that was cleansed worshipped *Christ*, *Matth.* viii. 2. "The ruler that sought the life of his daughter, worshipped him," *Matth.* ix. 18. "The woman of *Canaan* worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me," *Matth.* xv. 25. But all this was before he wrought the miracle in their favour; and probably it signifies no more than a great degree of humility in the manner of their petition, perhaps a bowing the knee, or falling on the face at his feet.

The blind man, who was healed, worshipped him also, when he professed himself to be the Son of God, *John* ix. 38. and his disciples that were in the ship worshipped him, when he walked on the water and suppressed the storm, *Matth.* xiv. 32, 33.

But it may be doubted whether all this arises to the notion of religious and divine worship, since this word is sometimes used in scripture, referring to moral or civil honours paid to our fellow-creatures, *1 Chron.* xxix. 20. "They bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord and the king." *Matth.* xviii. 26. "The servant fell down and worshipped his Lord." *Rev.* iii. 9. where *Christ* himself says to the church at *Sardis*, "I will make them to come and worship before thy feet." And perhaps some that knew not that *Christ* was God, might pay this sort of worship to him here on earth, that is, a mere high degree of reverence and obeisance under the surprising influence of the miracles which they heard of, or which they saw.

When one of the ten lepers which were healed, came back, *Luke* xvii. 15. it is said, "with a loud voice he glorified God, and fell down on his face at the feet of *Christ*, giving him thanks, and he was a *Samaritan*. Now it may be observed here, that the cleansed leper first glorified God, as the great author and first cause of his healing, and then fell down on his face in a worshipping posture at the feet of *Christ* to give him thanks, as the glorious means and miraculous instrument of his deliverance, not knowing that *Christ* who healed him, was himself the true God.

Thus these persons did not seem to worship our Lord as the true and eternal God with proper divine worship. Yet it seems probable that he would have scarce accepted of any such imitation of divine worship, or indulged any thing that had the appearance of it, if he had not been true God. Many persons might pay *Christ* this high degree of honour and prostration without belief of his deity, though perhaps he would have refused it, had he been a mere creature; even as *Cornelius* worshipped *Peter*, *Acts* x. 25. when we have no reason to believe that he thought *Peter* was the true God: Yet *Peter* forbid it, lest it should have any appearance of assuming divine dignity to himself.

2. *Simon Peter* was greatly surprized at the multitude of fishes taken at once, when he let down his net at the direction of *Christ*, *Luke* v. 4, &c. When he saw it, "He fell down at *Jesus* knees, saying, depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Which expression may seem to import, "Thou art so holy and pure, O Lord, and
hast

hast something so divine in thee, and so much like God, who hates all sin, that such a poor sinful wretch as I am, have too much defilement in me to come so near thee, and may have just reason to dread thy presence." Whether he might at this season have an overwhelming glimpse of his divinity, it is not easy to say: But it may be easily said, that this miracle alone was not sufficient to give a just convincing proof of his godhead.

3. The apostles seem to make a petition to *Christ* for spiritual mercies in a way of divine worship, *Luke xvii. 5.* "and the apostles said to the Lord, increase our faith," which address seems to have more of the appearance of religious worship paid to him by them, than any other expression I know of before the resurrection of *Christ*.

Yet some would question whether this petition did evidence their firm belief of his godhead: For when they had seen him put forth his miraculous power on the bodies of men in such a glorious manner, when they found that he knew the thoughts of their hearts*, and had an inward acquaintance with their souls, which appeared in several instances, and when they had seen and heard him forgive sins, *Matth. ix. 2.* and *Luke v. 20.* perhaps they might imagine that God had given him this spiritual power over their souls, and that he was commissioned to exercise this power, even as he commissioned his disciples to "heal the sick, to raise the dead, &c." *Matth. x. 18.* and to forgive sins, *John xx. 23.* though he were not in his own nature the true and eternal God. For it is remarkable, that when he forgave the sins of the man whom he healed of the palsy, though the scribes and pharisees said "Who can forgive sins but God?" and so charged him with blasphemy; yet the multitude only marvelled and glorified God who had given such power unto men, *Matth. ix. 8.* Now the multitude spoke honestly the sense of their hearts, but the scribes stretched his conduct to an accusation of blasphemy.

There is a parallel case in *Mark ix. 22.* where the man brought his son who was possessed with the devil, to our blessed Lord; "Master, says he, if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us and help us." Here it is evident that the man had not so much as a firm belief whether *Christ* could work this miracle or no, much less can he be supposed to believe that *Christ* was the true and eternal God: then presently afterwards he cried out, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief." Now the utmost that we can reasonably imagine his sudden faith arrived at, was a belief that *Christ* was able to cast out the devil and cure his son; yet he desires *Christ* to help his unbelief. Now the mere sudden expression of this request will hardly prove the poor man was convinced of the godhead of *Christ*; for it is possible he might mean only, shew thy power, and give some further testimony to assist my faith. But if he did believe *Christ's* deity, then we must suppose him transported by a sudden divine impulse beyond the general faith of the apostles themselves, and carried above the dispensation of that day.

* The mere knowledge of their thoughts was not sufficient to prove the divinity of *Christ*, since God has been pleased in former times to communicate this knowledge to his prophets; so *Abijah* knew the thoughts of *Jeroboam's* wife, for God had told him. *1 Kings xiv. 5, 6.* "The Lord said to *Abijah*, behold the wife of *Jeroboam* cometh to ask a thing of thee, &c." And much less can we suppose the disciples in that day of darkness and ignorance did from thence infer his deity. Yet I think that expression of *Christ*, *Rev. ii. 23.* "Ye shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and the hearts," compared with *Jer. xi. 20.* and *xvii. 10.* gives us a good argument for his deity, or that he is one with that God who searches the heart as his peculiar prerogative; but this was long after his ascent to heaven.

4. The disciples may seem to own his omniscience *John* xvi. 30. "Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, &c." but probably at that time they understood this "all things" in a limited sense, as *2 Sam.* xiv. 20. where the woman said the same thing to *David*; so *1 John* ii. 20. "Ye have an unction and know all things," and verse 27. For the utmost inference the disciples make from it was, that "*Jesus* came forth from God," verse 30. not that he was God himself. It may be another reason also to think the disciples understood this word "all things" in a limited sense, because *Christ* himself had told them but a very little before this time, that he himself did not know the day of judgment. *Mattb.* xxiv. 36. and *Mark* xiii. 32.

Though I think it reasonable for us to go farther than they did, and to apply several of the things I have mentioned to his godhead, viz. his knowing their thoughts, his forgiveness of sins, &c. because we have a full account of these and many other transactions of *Christ*, and we know so much of his divinity and glory from other parts of the bible; yet whether the disciples in that day did infer his divinity from any of these foregoing occurrences, and applied them to him as to the true God, may bear a just doubt and enquiry.

5. They believed that he was the *Messiah*; and the *Messiah* is spoken of in several places of the old testament under the character and titles of the true God. But as we cannot find that the learned doctors of that age did generally understand those prophecies, or believe the true deity of the *Messiah*, so neither do we find any hint in the history of the gospel that the apostles themselves before the death of *Christ* understood these prophecies, so far as to apply them to the *Messiah* in that sense; but only thought him to be the greatest of prophets, and to be the appointed king of *Israel* and their Saviour.

6. They believed and confessed him to be the Son of God: but this title does not necessarily amount to any more than a glorious likeness to God, a nearer and more peculiar relation to God, a special office of messiahship, and a more eminent derivation of his human nature from God than any other creatures, either angels or men, who are called the sons of God, could ever pretend: This I think is made pretty evident in another dissertation.

Thus I have mentioned the fairest and strongest evidences that I can find of any degree of faith or belief that the disciples had of the deity of *Christ* during his life, and it is possible they might sometimes have a glimpse of that glorious doctrine.

S E C T I O N V.

What evidence they gave of disbelieving his true deity.

V. **T**HE last thing I proposed, was to shew, "what indications the disciples gave during the life-time of *Christ* of their disbelief of his godhead, or at least of the uncertainty of their faith in that matter."

1. If they had a firm and steady belief that he was the true God, surely we should have found them upon some occasion or another evidently expressing their faith in this matter, both for their own and their master's interest and honour; since we never find that he forbid them to publish this to the world, though he did forbid them to publish some of his miracles, his transfiguration, his own prophecies of his death, resurrection, and ascension, &c.

And

And if they had not thought proper to publish to the world, that their master was the true God, yet we have much reason to suppose that, if they had believed it, they would upon some occasion or other before his death, have addressed him as *Thomas* did after his resurrection, "My Lord and my God." *John xx. 28.*

We cannot but suppose also, that amongst their many doubts and queries, they would have asked him this obvious and important one, how could he be God, and his Father be God also, and yet not two Gods? But we find nothing of this kind, though they put many a question to him both of less difficulty and less importance.

Nor do we find that they talked of him to the world under any character of god-head; but on the contrary, we always find them speaking of him as a man, and that not only in his life-time, but just after his death too, as a great prophet that was risen up amongst them, *Luke xxiv. 19.* "*Jesus of Nazareth* a prophet mighty in word and deed before God and all the people."

2. If they had believed him to be the true God that made the heavens, and the earth, the winds and the seas, they would never have expressed so much surprize and wonder at his rebuking the wind and bidding the sea be calm. *Luke viii. 24, 25.* "They being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, what manner of man is this? for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him." I confess the word man is not in the original; but still their wonder at the obedience that was paid him by the elements seems an argument that they did not believe him to be the almighty God that made them.

Now this is not the first time they were thus astonished and surprized; for when *Simon Peter*, a good while before this let down his net, at the command of *Christ*, and inclosed a great multitude of fishes, he was astonished and all that were with him, *Luke v. 9.* And if any of them may seem to have a glimpse of his divinity on this occasion, yet they had forgot or lost it again, when in chapter viii. they were as much surprized at his rebuking the winds and the waves.

You have another instance of this kind, *Matth. xxi. 19, 20.* "And when the disciples saw that the fig-tree which our Lord cursed, presently withered, they marvelled, saying, how soon is the fig-tree withered away!" And this was not long before his death neither, when we may suppose their knowledge was most advanced; whereas the disciples would never have marvelled that he could destroy a fig-tree by a word, if they had believed him to be that God who made all things by his word.

3. If they had believed *Christ* to be the great and glorious God, they would not have treated him with such an indecent roughness, as they did upon some particular occasions; as *Matth. xv. 33.* when *Christ* said, he would not send away the people fasting, lest they faint in the way, the disciples made him a very rude reply, to say no worse of it, when they answered, "Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness to fill so great a multitude?"

Another instance of this kind appears in their free and unbecoming address to *Jesus*, *Matth. xv. 12.* "Then came his disciples and said to him, knowest thou that the pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?" without so much as sir, or master to preface it. Whereby it is plain, they either at that time doubted whether he knew what offence the pharisees took, or else they gave him a reproof for speaking such things as should offend the pharisees, and a caution lest he did it again.

But either of these suppositions sufficiently manifest they did not believe him to be the true God.

So when he spake of his death and resurrection, *Matth.* xvi. 22. it is said, "Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying, This shall not be unto thee, Lord." Now we can hardly suppose that *Peter* would have been so free as to take up such language to his great creator, and to give such a rebuke to his God.

I might add also, that though the virgin *Mary* under the influence of rapture and inspiration expresses herself thus, *Luke* i. 47. "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," yet if she had firmly believed her son to be her God, she would not have chid him so severely when he was twelve years old, *Luke* ii. 48. "Son, why hast thou dealt thus with us?" because he stayed in the temple, and was left behind, when they travelled homeward.

4. If they had thought *Jesus Christ* was the "true God, they would never have tried to entertain the curiosity of their master, by shewing him how magnificent the buildings of the temple were," *Matth.* xxiv. 1. "His disciples came unto him for to shew him the buildings of the temple; and one of them said to him, Master, see what manner of stones and buildings are here," *Mark* xiii. 1. and as St. *Luke* expresses it, "how it was adorned with goodly stones," *Luke* xxi. 5. They must needs know this was but a poor entertainment to please that glorious being, who had formed and built this earth, and had spread abroad the starry canopy of the heavens.

5. They had frequent opportunity of observing that *Christ* knew their thoughts, and on this occasion they once took notice, *John* xvi. 30. and said, "Now we are sure that thou knowest all things." Now if they had been convinced that he was the true God, they would certainly have declared their sense and faith of his godhead, and not have contented themselves with this poor inference; "by this we believe that thou camest forth from God," that is, thou hadst a being, or didst dwell with the Father, and art come from him. And even when they arose to this degree of belief, our Lord takes notice, that their faith had not been very long advanced so far as this, or at least, it had not been long established and firmly rooted in this point: For verse 31. "*Jesus* answered them, Do ye now believe?"

After all, I might observe this also concerning *Martina* and *Mary*, who were well acquainted with *Jesus*, and for whom he had a peculiar and special affection, as well as for *Lazarus* their brother, *John* xi. 6. and he had so far acquainted them with his person and office, that they "believed him to be the *Christ*, or *Messiah*, the Son of God which should come into the world," verse 27. Yet neither of them speak of any faith they had, that he had power in himself to raise the dead, though *Jesus* seems to have urged them to it, verse 25. The utmost faith which they express is this, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died," verses 21, and 32. and verse 22. "I know that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee."

Upon the whole survey of things it appears that the disciples during the life of *Christ* had not arrived to any firm belief of his godhead: And if at any time they had a glimpse of his deity, it seems rather to be under the influence of a surprize and rapture, beyond the level of that imperfect dispensation, and beyond the common exercise of their faith in that day.

And indeed *Thomas* seems to be under the power of such a divine rapture, when even after the resurrection of *Christ* he was favoured with so sensible a conviction, and he cried out, *John* xx. 28. "My Lord and my God;" which is the first plain and certain indication of any of the apostles believing the deity of *Christ*.

These

These things will give occasion to three or four more questions, viz.

Question I. "Did the disciples believe him then to be a mere common man?"

Answer No, I think not: For it is very probable that they were informed of his extraordinary conception, and his birth of the virgin *Mary* his mother, so that he came into the world in a diviner way, and superior to other men, having God himself for the Father even of his flesh: And thus "the holy thing that was born of the virgin was called the Son of God," *Luke i. 35.*

It is probable also that they believed that sublime and near relation in which his soul stood to God, being the Son of God in a superior sense to all other men, even before his incarnation; and that he had a pre-existent state, where he dwelt with God, and whence he "came forth from God when he came into this world," *John xvi. 27, 28.* Thus he was eminently the Son of God, as to his body and his soul.

They also believed him to be the *Messiah*, their anointed king, and the highest and greatest of all the prophets, the redeemer of *Israel*, and their Saviour, and that in this sense also he was the Son of God.

They knew him also to be indued with the Spirit of God in a most glorious and eminent degree; or as *John* the baptist expresses it, to have the "Spirit given him without measure," *John iii. 34.*

And they knew the peculiar and intimate presence of the Father was with him, which he so often taught them in express words, *John xiv. 10, 11. x. 30.* that "the Father was in him and he in the Father; and that he and the Father were one:" yet they did scarce arrive at the belief of a personal union of the human nature with the divine.

All these things joined together exalted his character in their esteem, far above the common level of mankind.

Question II. If they did not believe the godhead of *Christ* who had such special advantages above other men, "may it not well be doubted whether there were sufficient proofs of his divinity ever given to mankind before his death?"

Answer I. By several scriptures of the old testament, I think the godhead of the *Messiah* might have been proved, and when they had compared these prophecies with the actions and life of *Christ*, they had plain evidences that he was this *Messiah*: The disciples therefore might have had reasonable ground to have inferred this doctrine of his deity. But so ignorant was that generation, so overrun with national mistakes, so unacquainted with scripture, and the true meaning of it, that the apostles in that day did not believe many other things concerning *Christ*, which were written in the old testament in as plain and express language as his godhead. Such were the predictions of his sorrows and sufferings, his death and his rising again, and his final exaltation: But we have *Christ's* own words for it, even after he rose again, that they were "fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken," *Luke xxiv. 25.*

Answer II. Some of the speeches which *Christ* made concerning himself do certainly represent him in too sublime a character for any mere creature; which I have mentioned before: and by some circumstances of his conduct, they might have found out his godhead, especially if they had compared them with his character as *Messiah*. But they laboured under the power of many prejudices, and as our Lord often charges them, that they were dull of apprehension, hard to be instructed, and slow to believe.

Answer

Answer III. Though there might be a bare external sufficiency in the notices that *Christ* gave of his own godhead for their conviction, yet these were made more abundantly clear and evident to them, when according to the promise of *Christ*, "his Spirit brought to remembrance," and explained the things that he had before said to them: then he "took of the things of *Christ*," and revealed them to his apostles as he promised, *John* xiv. 26. and xvi. 14.

I might add also, that all these notices and evidences of the divinity of *Christ*, stand in a much fairer light before us who have the whole history of the life, death, and resurrection of *Christ*; and the writings and sermons of the apostles, to compare with the writings of the prophets; which it was not possible the disciples should do in so complete a manner, and to so great satisfaction during the life of *Christ*, had they been ever so sagacious, and ever so well prepared.

Question III. "How could the disciples trust in him as their Saviour, and commit their souls to him for salvation in his life-time, if they had not a firm faith in his godhead?"

Answer. The way whereby the fathers before *Christ* were saved, was not so much by a direct act of faith on the person of the *Messiah*, who was to come, as by the direct and immediate exercise of faith or trust on the mercy of God, as it was to be revealed in and through the *Messiah* in due time, Now the dispensation of those three or four years which past during the life of *Christ*, was a sort of medium between the law and gospel: and the acts and exercises of the apostles faith or trust and dependence, like that of the patriarchs, might be more directly placed on the mercy of God himself for salvation, as it had begun to manifest itself in and by *Jesus* the *Messiah*, now come into the world. So *St. Peter* expresses it, *1 Pet.* i. 21. "You who by him do believe in God."

Though they were frequently called to believe in *Christ*, yet you find they were so unskilled in a direct act of divine faith on him, that our Lord was fain to repeat the command with great solemnity but just before his death. *John* xiv. 1. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me:" as if he should have said, "Ye have a long time trusted and professed your faith in God and his mercy, make me now also the direct object of your faith or trust, as ye have made God the Father."

Answer II. Under the great darkness and confusion of their notions in that season of twilight, they sometimes paid too little honour to *Christ*, because they had too low an esteem of him; and sometimes the honour they paid him through the influence of rapture and surprize, though not too high in itself, yet it might be above and beyond the clear discernment of their understandings and their own settled judgment concerning him. Thus they might now and then exert some faint acts of divine faith on him, while in the main they were doubtful of his godhead. But a gracious God makes great allowances for such weaknesses in faith and practice, where the divine discoveries which he makes to men, have but imperfect degrees of light and evidence.

Question IV. "Does it not follow then, if the disciples were in a state of grace, and yet doubted of the deity of *Christ*; surely the deity of *Christ* was not a fundamental article in that day?"

Answer I. Fundamentals are different in different seasons and times, nations and ages; for as God makes more or less discoveries of divine truth to men, so more or less is necessary to be believed in order to salvation.

Surely it was not a fundamental article for *Peter* to know, and believe the sufferings and death of *Christ* as a sacrifice for sin, and his resurrection from the dead, that

that time when he rebuked our Saviour himself, because he spake of his dying, *Matth.* xvi. 22. And when none of the apostles knew what rising from the dead should mean, as *Mark* ix. 10. yet the belief of the death and resurrection of *Christ* was certainly a fundamental article, and necessary to salvation in a little time afterward; and is become necessary to christianity itself, *1 Cor.* xv. 14, 17. "If *Christ* be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain, ye are yet in your sins."

The doctrine of the divinity of *Christ* therefore may not be supposed to be a fundamental article in the time of *Christ*'s life, because we have reason to believe the apostles were in a state of grace and salvation, before there is any sufficient evidence of their faith therein: But it will not follow thence, that the same doctrine either is or is not a fundamental, after it has been more fully and clearly revealed by the complete writings of the new testament: And indeed a truth ought to be revealed very plainly and with convincing evidence, before it can be ever called a fundamental.

It has been the constant method of divine wisdom in all ages, to communicate to man the glorious discoveries of the grace of God by slow and gentle degrees, and not to overwhelm our faculties at once with a flood of divine light. He knows the weakness of our frame, he knows how dark are our understandings, how feeble our judgments, how many and great our natural prejudices, and how hard it is to surmount them; and he demands our belief in measures answerable to his discoveries. It is according to the growing evidence of any divine revelation, and the gradual advantages that any man has to know and understand that revelation, that God justly expects the growing exercises of our faith.

Thus that faith which is necessary to salvation, consists of more or fewer articles, according to the different ages of the church, and different degrees of revelation and divine light.

Thus though our Lord *Jesus Christ* was true God when he came first to be manifest in the flesh, yet the complete glory of his person and the beams of his godhead did not discover themselves in a triumphant and convincing light during the days of his humiliation: and though it was necessary then, to all those who had clear knowledge of his doctrine and miracles, to believe that he was the *Messiah*, "Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins," *John* viii. 24. yet it doth not seem at that time to have been made necessary to believe his deity, since the discoveries of it were but imperfect, and it is plain that his own apostles hardly believed it.

It is certain, that after the resurrection of *Christ*, and the days of *Pentecost*, the apostles by degrees had more divine light let into their souls by the holy Spirit, whereby they arrived at a fuller knowledge of the glory of his person and his godhead; yet it is very probable that the idea which I have before described, is the highest they attained in his life-time; and that not only on the account of the arguments I have used already, but because this notion was so fixed and rooted in their minds, that they generally described our Lord *Jesus Christ* in this manner, in all their first ministrations of the gospel, and they thought it proper to teach others in the same manner as they had learned. So *St. Peter*, *Acts* ii. 22. tells the men of *Israel*, "*Jesus of Nazareth* was a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves know, *verse* 24. whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of death."

Again,

Again, *Acts* iii. 13. "The God of our fathers hath glorified his son *Jesus*, whom ye delivered up, &c." And he cites *Moses* to shew what he was, verse 22. "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me." So when he preached to *Cornelius* a roman, *Acts* x. 38. "God hath anointed *Jesus* of *Nazareth* with the holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the devil, for God was him, &c."

And *St. Paul* himself preached *Christ* under this inferior character at first, though he came not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles in knowledge, *2 Cor.* xii. 11. and *Gal.* ii. 6. In his sermon at *Athens*, he says, "God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead," *Acts* xvii. 31. Thus they begun with the human nature and the offices of *Christ*, and the peculiar assisting presence of God with him, before they taught any thing of the mystery of his own godhead or personal union with the divine nature.

And indeed there is a good deal of reason, why they should not at first reveal and display the glorious doctrine of the trinity and the godhead of *Jesus*, though they had known it ever so well. It was not fit they should break in all at once upon the blind *jewish* nation, nor upon the blinder gentiles, with the blaze of *Christ's* divinity. For, to speak humanly, it would have filled the minds of strangers with surprizing doubts and scruples, and raised in them an utter prejudice against all further attention to the gospel, if they had been told at first of three persons who were each of them the true God, and yet all three but one God*. This was not proper to be the very first lesson in christianity. The great work of the conversion of the world was done by degrees as human nature could bear. Thus God hath treated men in all ages, and led them on "from faith to faith," *Rom.* i. 17. Thus our Lord *Jesus Christ* treated his disciples, *John* xvi. 12. "I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now." And thus the apostles treated the *jews* and gentiles, to whom they preached, *1 Cor.* iii. 2. and "fed them

* There is a remarkable instance to this purpose in the "Conferences of the *danish* missionaries with the heathens of *Malabar*." The missionary speaking of the Son of God, the *malabarian* replied, Who is his Son? and is he also God? *Missionary.* He is God blessed for ever. *Malabarian.* But pray Sir, recollect yourself, have not you been just now inveighing against plurality of Gods? And now I find, you have yourselves more than one; the Father is God, and the Son is God, then you have two gods. *Missionary.* We do not believe two gods, but one only God; though at the same time, we firmly believe, that there are three persons in one divine essence; and yet these three persons are not three, but one God: And this we believe as a great mystery, &c. And then he goes on to explain it by the understanding and the will proceeding from the soul, which are yet really one and the same thing with the soul. Upon which the *malabarian* makes this reply; I find, said he, that you, with your subtil ways of arguing, can make a trinity consistent with unity; and if your explication is absolutely necessary to make others understand what you mean, pray, allow us the same advantage of explaining the doctrine of our religion, and putting it in the most favourable light we can, for the excluding the absurdities imputed to us? And this once granted us, it will follow, that our plurality does not destroy the unity of God, no more than your trinity does. We worship the gods upon no other account, than because they are the viceregens of the almighty, whose administration he employs in governing the world, as he did employ them at the beginning, in creating and forming the same. And our God appearing among men at sundry times under different shapes, had at every apparition a different name given him, which contributed very much to the multiplying of the number of our images; whereas in truth, they are but different representations of the same God, under different aspects and appearances. See "Conference number xi." Now if the apostles had dealt so imprudently with the heathens or with the *jews*, by preaching the doctrine of the trinity at first in the fullest expressions, they had embarrassed the minds of their hearers, and exposed themselves and their doctrine of salvation by *Jesus the Messiah* to such difficulties and wrangling disputations. But you find no controversies of this kind raised in their first preaching.

them with milk and not with meat, for they were not able to bear it." Thus the flow degrees they led them from the knowledge of *Jesus*, the son of man, to the knowledge of *Jesus* the Son of God; from the discovery of *Jesus* the prophet, to the discovery of *Jesus* the *Messiah*, the priest and the king; from the revelation of *Christ* the Saviour of men to the revelation of *Christ* the eternal life and the true God from the doctrine of the presence of God with him, to the doctrine of his personal union with godhead, "in whom dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily," *Col. ii. 9.* and who is "God over all blessed for ever," *Rom. ix. 5.* by virtue of this glorious and personal union with the eternal God.

Q U E S T I O N III.

Could the Son of God properly enter into a covenant with his Father to do and suffer what was necessary to our redemption, without a human soul?

S E C T I O N I.

IT is granted that the generality of our christian writers believe that it was only the divine nature or godhead of *Christ* had an existence before he was conceived by the virgin *Mary*, and became incarnate; yet whensoever they would represent the exceeding great love of the Father in sending his Son into our world, that he might suffer and die for us, and when they would describe the transcendent love of *Christ*, in his coming into our world, and his submitting to death for our sakes, they usually represent it in such language as can never agree to his divine nature in any propriety of speech, but only to the pre-existent human soul of *Christ*, with it's descent into flesh and blood, and the sufferings of this human soul for us. And it is evident that the scripture itself leads them plainly to such a representation of things: so that while they are explaining the transcendent degree of the love of God and *Christ* to sinners, according to scripture, they are led by the force of truth into such expressions as are indeed hardly consistent with their own professed opinions, but perfectly consistent with the revelation of scripture, and the doctrine of the pre-existent soul of *Christ*.

I was lately looking into the sermons of that most excellent practical and evangelical writer, the late Mr. *John Flavel*, in his treatise called "the fountain of life opened, or a display of *Christ*;" where I found the following expressions.

Sermon II. page 13. in quarto, where the excellent author is describing the glorious condition of the non-incarnate Son of God, he says, "*Christ* was not then abased to the condition of a creature, but it was an unconceivable abasement to the absolute independent being to come under the law; yea, not only under the obedience, but also under the malediction and curse of the law, *Gal. iv. 4.* "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

Page 14. "He was never pinched with poverty and wants while he continued in that bosom, as he was afterwards. Ah blessed *Jesus*! Thou needest not to have wanted a place to have lain thy head, hadst thou not left that bosom for my sake." And here the author quotes Mr. *Anthony Burges*, in his lectures on *John*. "He that was in the bosom of the Father and had the most intimate, close, and secret delight and love from the Father, how unspeakable is it that he should deprive himself of the sense of it, to put himself, as it were out of heaven into hell!" Mr. *Flavel* then proceeds, "He never underwent reproach and shame in that bosom: There was nothing but glory and honour reflected upon him by his Father, though afterward he was despised and rejected of men. All the while he lay in that bosom of peace and love, he never knew what it was to be assaulted with temptations, to be besieged and battered upon by unclean spirits as he did afterwards: The Lord embraced him from eternity, but never wounded him till he stood in our place and room. There were no hidings or withdrawments of his Father from him; there was not a cloud from eternity upon the face of God till *Jesus Christ* had left that bosom. It was a new thing to *Christ* to see frowns in the face of his Father. There were never any impressions of his Father's wrath upon him, as there were afterward. There was no death to which he was subject in that bosom. All these things were new things to *Christ*; he was above them all, 'till for our sakes he voluntarily subjected himself unto them."

Then, after the author has shewn how great was the intimacy, the dearness, the delight, which was between the Father and the Son, considered in their divine nature, he draws some inferences, page 17.

"Inference I. What an astonishing act of love was this, for the Father to give the delight, the darling of his soul out of his very bosom for poor sinners? Never did any child lie so close to a parent's heart as *Christ* did to his Father's; and yet he willingly parts with him, though his only one, the Son of his delight; and that to death, a cursed death for the worst of sinners. O matchless love! a love past finding out! if the Father had not loved thee, he had never parted with such a Son for thee."

"Inference II. Adore, and be for ever astonished at the love of *Jesus Christ* to poor sinners, that ever he should consent to leave such a bosom, and the ineffable delights that were there, for such poor worms as we are. O the heights, depths, lengths, and breadths of unmeasurable love!" "It is admirable, says Mr. *Burges* on *John* xvii. that *Christ* should not only put himself out of comfort, but out of that manifested honour and glory he might have retained to himself." "If ever you found by experience what it is to be in the bosom of God by divine communion, would you be persuaded to leave such a bosom for all the good that is in the world? And yet *Jesus Christ*, who was embraced in that bosom after another manner than ever you were acquainted with, freely left it, and laid down the glory and riches he enjoyed there for your sakes. What manner of love is this? Who ever loved as *Christ* loves? Who ever denied himself for *Christ*, as *Christ* denied himself for us?" Then after the third inference, he adds:

"Inference IV. How worthy is *Jesus Christ* of all our love and delight! he that left God's bosom for you, deserves a place in your bosoms."

"Exhortation. If *Christ* lay eternally in this bosom of love, and yet was content to forsake and leave it for your sakes, then be you ready to forsake and leave all the comforts you have on earth for *Christ*."

Again,

Again, Sermon IV, page 35. "Consider how near and dear *Jesus Christ* was to the Father: He was his Son, his only Son, saith the text: The Son of his love: The darling of his soul: His other self; yea, one with himself: The express image of his person: The brightness of his Father's glory: In parting with him, he parted with his own heart, with his very bowels, as I may say. Yet to us a Son is given, *Isai. ix. 6.* And such a Son as he calls his dear Son."

Now if we suppose the human soul of our Lord *Jesus Christ* to have had a pre-existent state of joy and glory in the bosom of the Father through all former ages of the world, and even before the world was created, then these expressions are great and noble, are just and true, and have a happy aptness and propriety in them to set forth the transcendent love of God the Father in sending his Son, and the transcendent love of *Christ*, the Son of God, in coming from heaven, and leaving the joys and glories of his Father's immediate presence in heaven, to take on him such flesh and blood as our's is, and in that flesh and blood to sustain shame, sorrow, pain, anguish of flesh and spirit, sharp agonies, and the pangs of death.

And this love is exceedingly enhanced, while we consider that this human soul of *Christ* was personally united to this divine nature; so that hereby God himself is joined to flesh and blood, "God becomes manifest in the flesh." *1 Tim. iii. 16.*

But on the other hand, if we suppose nothing but the pure divine nature of *Christ* to exist before his incarnation, then all these expressions seem to have very little justness or propriety in them: for the divine nature of *Christ*, how distinct soever it is supposed to be from God the Father, yet can never leave the Father's bosom, can never divest itself of any one joy or felicity that it was ever possessed of, nor lose even the least degree of it: nor could God the Father ever dismiss the divine nature of his Son from his own bosom. Godhead must have eternal and complete beatitude, joy and glory, and can never be dispossessed of it. Godhead can sustain no real sorrow, suffering or pain. The utmost that can be said concerning the deity of *Christ* is, that there is a relative imputation of the sorrows, sufferings and pains of the human nature, to the divine, because of the union between them; so that the sufferings acquire a sort of divine dignity and merit hereby: It is granted indeed that this relative and imputative suffering may be sufficient in a legal sense to advance the dignity of the sacrifice of *Christ*, to a complete and equivalent satisfaction for sin; yet the exceeding greatness of the love of the Father and the Son does not seem to be so sensibly manifested to us hereby, for all this abasement of the godhead of *Christ* is merely relative and not real.

And as it is plain that the divine nature of *Christ* could not be separated from the bosom of his Father, when he came into this world and took flesh upon him, so neither could the human nature leave this bosom of the Father, if it had no prior existence, and was never there. Therefore in the common scheme all this glorious and pathetic representation of the love of *Christ* in leaving the joys and glories of heaven when he came to dwell upon earth, has no ideas belonging to it, and it can be true in no sense, since it can neither be attributed to the human nor to the divine nature of *Christ*, nor to his whole person. I grant that by the figure of communication of properties, what is true of one nature may be attributed to the whole person, or sometimes to the other nature; yet that which is not true concerning either nature of *Christ* separated, nor concerning the two natures united, cannot be attributed to him at all: So that parting with the bosom of his Father, and forsaking the joys and glories he possessed there, are, according to the common scheme, words of which we have no ideas.

But now if we conceive the soul of *Christ* in it's pre-existent state, as the first-born of every creature, the darling of the soul of God, who, as it were, lay in the bosom of the Father, to come forth from the Father and come into this world, *John* xvi. 28. to part with the joys and glories it was possessed of there before the foundation of the world, *John* xvii. 5. to dwell in a feeble mansion of flesh and blood, pain and sorrow, to be cramped and confined in human limbs, and to sustain the pangs and punishment of a cursed death on the cross for the sake of rebellious creatures. This is amazing love indeed; this has a surprizing and sensible reality in it, and should awaken all the powers of our souls to admire and adore both God the Father for sending his Son *Jesus Christ*, and *Christ* himself for consenting to such an abasement.

S E C T I O N II.

IT has been made evident in the foregoing section that our best divines following the track of scripture light and the sacred dictates of the word of God, have set the transcendent love of God the Father in sending his Son, and the love of *Christ* in his incarnation and death, in a most beautiful and affecting light, if we suppose the soul of *Christ* to have had a pre-existent state of joy and glory with the Father before the world was. But I fear their expressions are scarce consistent with any clear or just ideas or conceptions, while they deny each part of the human nature of *Christ*, that is, his soul as well as his body, to exist before his incarnation.

There is yet another and a very remarkable instance wherein our protestant divines in a very just and affecting manner represent the covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son according to scripture, upon the supposition of the pre-existence of *Christ's* human soul: But according to the common or scholastic explication of the distinction of persons in the trinity, and the denial of this pre-existent soul of *Christ*, we can have no ideas under all their glorious and affectionate representations of this transaction between the Father and the Son. Let us enquire a little into this matter.

The common or scholastic explication of the trinity, which has been long universally received by our protestant writers, and has been called orthodox for these several hundred years, is this, viz. That God is but one simple, infinite and eternal spirit: Thence it follows, that the divine essence, powers, and essential properties of the Father, the Son and the Spirit in the godhead are numerically the very same essence, powers, and essential properties: That it is the same numerical consciousness, understanding, will and power which belongs to the Father that belongs also to the Son and to the holy Spirit: and that the sacred three are distinguished only by the super-added relative properties of paternity, filiation and procession; but their thoughts, ideas, volitions and agencies, according to this hypothesis, must be the very same numerical thoughts, ideas, actions, and volitions, in all the sacred three.

Now having these excellent sermons of Mr. *Flavel* before me, who has well represented this doctrine of the covenant of redemption, and the transactions between God the Father and his Son before the world was, I would cite some part of that discourse, in order to shew how well his representation of this matter agrees with the doctrine of the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, though it can never agree to the common explication of the trinity without it. See sermon III. page 23, &c.

“ 1. Consider the persons transacting and dealing with each other in this covenant: These are God the Father, and God the Son: the former as a creditor, the latter as a surety: the Father stands upon satisfaction, the Son engages to give it.”

“ 2. Consider the business transacted between them, and that was the redemption and recovery of all God’s elect.”

“ 3. The manner or quality of this transaction: It was federal, or in the nature of a covenant: It was by mutual engagements and stipulations, each person undertaking to perform his part in order to our recovery. The Father promiseth that he “will hold his hand and keep him,” *Isai. xlii. 6.* The Son promiseth he will obey his Father’s call to suffering, and not be rebellious, *Isai. 1. 5.* and having promised, each holds the other to his engagement.”

“ 4. Consider the articles to which they both agree: God the Father promises to invest him with a threefold office, viz. to make him a priest, *Psal. cx. 4.* “The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever after the order of *Melchisedec.*” *Heb. v. 5.* “*Christ* glorified not himself to be made a high priest, but he that said unto him thou art my Son.” God the Father promises to make him a prophet, *Isa. xlii. 6.* “I will give thee for a light to the gentiles, to open blind eyes.” And to make him a king, *Psal. ii. 6, 7.* “Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance.” Further the Father promiseth to stand by him, assist him, and strengthen him for his work: *Isa. xlii. 5, 6, 7.* “I will hold thy hand,” that is, I will underprop and support thy humanity when it is ready to sink under the burden. He professeth to crown his work with success, to accept him in his work, and to reward him for it with great exaltation: *Psal. ii. 7.* “I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” It is spoken of the day of his resurrection when he had just finished his suffering, and so the apostle expounds and applies it, *Acts xiii. 33.* and in *Heb. xii. 2.* This was “the oy that was set before him, which encouraged him to endure the cross and despise the shame.”

“ In like manner *Jesus Christ* restipulates and gives his engagement to the Father, that upon these terms he is content to be made flesh, to divest himself as it were of his glory, to come under the obedience and malediction of the law, and not to refuse any the hardest sufferings it should please the Father to inflict on him. *Psal. xl. 6, 7.* “Then said I, lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O God.”

“ 5. These articles were by both parties performed precisely and punctually.”

“ 6. This compact between the Father and the Son bears date from eternity, before this world was made: while as yet we had no existence, but only in the infinite mind and purpose of God. *2 Tim. i. 9.* “The grace which was given us in *Christ* before the world began” was this grace of redemption, which from everlasting was thus contrived and designed for us. Then was the council or consultation of peace between them both, as some take that scripture, *Zeck. vi. 13.*

“ Page 28. God the Father and God the Son do mutually rely and trust to one another in the business of our redemption. The Father relies upon the Son for the performance of his part. The Father so far trusted *Christ*, that upon the credit of his promise to come into the world and in the fulness of time to become a sacrifice for the elect, he saved all the old testament saints. And so doth *Christ* in like manner depend upon and trust his Father for the accomplishment of all this promise, that he shall see his seed; and that all the elect that are yet behind, yet unregenera-
ted,

ted; as well as those already called, shall be preserved to the heavenly kingdom."

Page 29. This excellent author, represents this transaction between the Father and the Son before the world was in a way of dialogue: He supposes the Father to say, "My Son, here be a company of poor miserable souls that have utterly undone themselves, and now lie open to my justice; justice demands satisfaction for them, or will satisfy itself in the eternal ruin of them. What shall be done for these souls? And thus *Christ* replies: O my Father! Such is my love to, and pity for them, that rather than they shall perish eternally, I will be responsible for them as their surety; I will rather chuse to suffer thy wrath than they should suffer it; charge their debt all upon me, I am able to discharge it: And though it impoverish all my riches, and empty all my treasures, for so it did indeed, 2 *Cor.* viii. 9. "Though he were rich, yet for our sakes he became poor," I am content to undertake it."

Here I again desire my reader to observe, I cite not the words of that great and excellent man to refute them, for I greatly approve of almost every expression; much less would I expose that venerable author, whose memory and writings I sincerely reverence and honour: but my design is to shew what is the usual language of our best divines on this subject, for I might cite passages of the like nature out of a multitude of excellent writers: This is only a specimen of one for the rest.

Now in reading over such accounts of stipulations and contract between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the world, what proper conceptions can we frame, or what clear ideas can we possibly have, while we suppose nothing but *Christ's* divine nature transacting this affair with the Father; and while at the same time we believe the divine essence, perfections and powers, the understanding, will, thought and consciousness of the Father and of the Son to be numerically one and the same, since in the godhead or divine nature, they are but one and the same infinite spirit? The mere personalities, viz. paternity and filiation, cannot consult and transact these affairs in a way of contract, proposal and consent: It is nothing but two distinct consciousnesses and two distinct wills can enter into such a covenant; but in the common explication of the trinity, the distinct personalities of the Father and the Son do not make any real distinct consciousnesses or distinct wills in the one infinite spirit.

And let it be further noted also, that according to several of the articles of this covenant, one of these beings or persons covenanting, seems to be inferior to the other, and to be capable of receiving orders, commission, support and recompense from the other: But if only the deity of *Christ* existed at that time, and the deity of *Christ* and of the Father have but one and the same numerical consciousness and volition, one and the same numerical power and glory, what need of orders and commissions, what need of promises of support and recompense? How can the pure godhead of *Christ* be supported, or be recompensed by the Father, who has eternally the same numerical glory and power?

In short, all these sacred and pathetic representations of stipulation and articles in the common scheme, can amount to no more in our clear ideas, and in a proper conception of things, than the simple decree or volition of the one eternal, infinite spirit.

I grant we may suppose the great God in a figurative manner of speech consulting thus with his own wisdom, with the divine powers or principles of agency in his own nature, as a man may be figuratively said to consult with his own understanding, or
reason,

reason, or conscience: But in literal and proper language, it seems to be nothing else but an absolute decree of the great God, that the man *Christ Jesus*, when formed and united to godhead, should undertake and fulfil this work, four thousand years after this world was made. And thus, according to the common hypothesis, that very intelligent being which was to come into flesh, and to sustain all the real sufferings, gave no such early antecedent consent to this covenant. It was only the godhead of *Christ*, which is impassible and could really suffer nothing, did decree that the human nature should exist hereafter, that it should be united to the godhead, and should sustain agonies and death for the sins of men.

I would enquire farther also, according to this explication of things, what possible difference can we conceive between the love of the Father in sending his Son, and the love of the Son in consenting to be sent on this compassionate errand, if there were not two distinct consciousnesses, and two distinct wills, if it was only one simple numerical volition of the great God? And how doth this abate our grand ideas of the distinct and condescending love of our blessed Saviour, in his consent to this covenant, since that part of him which really suffered, that is, his inferior nature, had then no existence, and therefore could give no consent to this early covenant of redemption.

If some of these difficulties may possibly obtain any tolerable solution, by introducing many figures of speech, and be thus explained, according to the common explication of the trinity, without supposing the pre-existence of the human soul of *Christ*, yet I am much inclined to think they can never be all solved or explained upon that hypothesis.

But on the other hand, if we give ourselves leave to conceive of the human soul of our Lord *Jesus Christ* in it's pre-existent state as the *πρωτότοκος*, the first-born of every creature, *Col. i. 15.* as the *ἀρχή*, that is, the beginning or the chief of the creation of God, *Rev. iii. 14.* lying in the bosom of the Father, *John i. 18.* and intimately united to the eternal God, then here are proper subjects for these federal transactions in the covenant of redemption before the foundation of the world. And a most glorious and divine covenant it was, between the Father and the Son in this view of things for the salvation of poor ruined man.

Though this blessed soul of *Christ* were united immediately to the divine nature, yet God the Father might part with it, as it were, out of his own bosom, that is, divest it of heavenly joys and glories * by it's own consent, without dissolving the union: God the Father might prepare a body for it, and send it to dwell in flesh and blood: God might inflict the punishment of our sins upon this blessed soul of *Christ* incarnate, and afterwards give it a high exaltation, not only to the glory which it had with the Father before the world was, but to superior joys and glories as the reward of it's sufferings, according to scripture, *John xvii. 5.* and *Phil. ii. 9.*

And this blessed soul of *Christ* united to godhead, is a proper subject to enter into these articles, to accept of the terms of this covenant of redemption, to consent to part with the bosom of the Father, &c. And thus *Christ*, when he came forth from the

* Note, this divesting of the soul of *Christ* of it's primitive joys and glories does not require a dissolution of it's union to the divine nature; for the godhead may be still united, and yet may influence the human soul in greater or less degrees, and in various manners, as to light, support, joy, glory, &c. according to different occasions and circumstances, which must be exceeding different in a state of humiliation and of exaltation; and the manner and the degree of influence must always be determined only by the divine wisdom.

the Father, and came into this world," *John* xvi. 28. laid aside "that glory which he had with the Father before the world was," *John* xvii. 5. and "though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor," *2 Cor.* viii. 9. And thus the Father and the Son manifest their transcendent love to poor rebel sinners in this federal transaction, this covenant of redemption before time began, which is the foundation of all that was ever done in time toward the restitution of the posterity of *Adam*, to the favour and the image of God, and to everlasting happiness. Every thing coincides admirably well in this scheme, and answers the various expressions of scripture on this subject, without straining the words by needless tropes and figures: It becomes so plain that he that runs may read it, and every private christian may understand these early grounds and foundations of his hope.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

NOTE, in a few months will be published a large and more complete treatise on this subject, viz. "the pre-existent soul of our Lord *Jesus Christ*." *

Q U E S T I O N. IV.

Is the godhead of Christ and the godhead of the Father one and the same godhead?

TH E R E are several considerations which lead me to agree with this general opinion of almost all our divines in the two last centuries, viz. that the godhead of *Christ* is the same individual godhead with that of the Father; and that his divine nature is not another infinite spirit distinct from the Father, whatsoever sublime distinctions there may be in that one infinite spirit, one of which, viz. the Word or wisdom, may perhaps have a more peculiar respect to the second person in the trinity, viz. the Son; and the other, viz. the power of God; to the holy Ghost.

1. If the divine nature of *Christ* be another distinct principle of self-consciousness and volition, another distinct spiritual being, or another spirit, this approaches so near to the doctrine of another God, that it is very hard to distinguish it. For so far as our ideas of arithmetic and reason can reach, this seems to be a plain truth, "If one infinite spirit be one God, two or three infinite spirits must be two or three Gods."

And though the patrons of this opinion suppose these three spirits to be so nearly united as to be called one God merely to avoid the charge of polytheism, yet it must be granted, that this one God must then be one complex infinite being, or spirit, made up of three single infinite beings or spirits; which is such a notion of the one true

* This hath been published, and is entitled "the glory of *Christ* as God-man displayed."

true God, as I think neither reason nor revelation will admit. And yet if this were the true notion of the one God, it is very strange that scripture should not clearly and expressly reveal it.

2. The God of *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, the God of *Israel*, the almighty, and *Jehovah*, is the proper style and title by which God the Father was known under the old testament: and it is under these titles and characters that he often appeared to the patriarchs: yet it is agreed by all trinitarians that it was *Jesus Christ* appeared to the patriarchs, and assumed this style and these titles of godhead; which we justly suppose he could not have assumed if he had not had true godhead belonging to his complex person. And not only so, but this true godhead must also be the godhead of the Father, otherwise he could not have assumed those very titles by which God the Father was always known to the church, and by which they worshipped him as the God and Father of all. If the deity of *Christ* were another distinct essence or spirit, his assuming those names whereby God the Father only was known to the *Israelites*, would lead them into mistake and confusion.

Objection. I know it may be objected here, that *Christ's* assuming the names and titles of God the Father would lead them into as much confusion and mistake, by leading them to believe that *Christ* was God the Father; and it may be urged yet further, that these titles thus assumed, would prove that *Christ* was God, no more than that it does prove that *Christ* was the Father.

Answer. If *Christ* has the same godhead as the Father, and if in these ancient appearances *Christ* came in the name of the Father, as his representative, there is no great inconvenience nor confusion if he were taken for God the Father, speaking and acting in and by the angel of the covenant, or *Jesus Christ* in his pre-existent state: But there would be great confusion and inconvenience in *Christ's* assuming these divine names, if he had not godhead belonging to him, for then we should take a creature for God.

3. Several scriptures of the old testament, which are cited by the writers of the new testament and applied to *Christ*, do most evidently refer to the great one God, the God of *Israel*, the almighty, the *Jehovah* in the old testament, whom all that read the old testament before the days of *Christ* must suppose to mean God the Father of all, such as *Psal.* lxxviii. 18. "Thou hast ascended on high," cited *Ephes.* iv. 8. And *Psal.* xcvi. 7. "Worship him all ye gods," cited *Heb.* i. 6. And *Psal.* cii. 24, 25. "O my God, of old thou hast laid the foundations of the earth," cited *Heb.* i. 10. And *Isa.* xl. 3, 4, 5. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," cited *Matth.* iii. 3. And *Joel* ii. 32. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered," cited *Heb.* xii. 26. And *Isa.* viii. 13, 14. "Sanctify the Lord of hosts, and he shall be for a stone of stumbling," cited *1 Pet.* ii. 6, 8. and several other places.

Now we cannot suppose, that all the holy men before *Christ* were utterly mistaken in their application of these texts to God the Father, since there is a plain and proper sense wherein this application is true. And yet these texts are properly applied to *Christ*, if we suppose the godhead of the Father and of *Christ* to be the same, and that the man *Christ Jesus* was the *shekinah* or habitation of the great God intimately and personally united to him, and so made one person with him, but still under the character of filiation or mediation. And in this sense *Christ* was *Emmanuel*, or God with us, *Matth.* i. 23.

Besides, let it be further considered, that the design of the apostles in the citation of these texts, and the application of them to *Christ*, was to prove the glory, dignity and divine grandeur of the complex person of *Christ*: But this citation of these

texts, and the application of them to *Christ*, will scarce prove the godhead of *Christ*, unless he has the same godhead with that of the Father: nor indeed will they prove the dignity or glory of the person of *Christ* any other way; but as they shew that what was spoken of old concerning the godhead of the Father must necessarily belong also to *Christ*.

If *Christ* considered as God were another distinct spirit from the godhead of the Father, I think these citations of the apostle out of the prophets would hardly prove his godhead; nor do I see how they could prove the grandeur and dignity of his person, unless it were granted that the godhead of the Father was his godhead, that *Christ* and the Father are one in this respect.

4. When *Christ* expresses his own godhead in the new testament, it is by declaring his oneness with the Father, that is, the union of the man *Christ Jesus* with the same godhead that is in the Father. "I and the Father are one, *John* x. 30. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. I am in the Father, and the Father in me. The Father in me doth the works," *John* xiv. 9, 10. And it must be observed that there is not any place in the new testament where the miraculous works of *Christ* are ascribed to any distinct godhead of his own different from the godhead of the Father, or the godhead of the Spirit of God that dwelt in him: And it is not reasonable to suppose that *Christ* would have always used these modes of speaking, and attributed his own works to the Father and his Spirit, if he himself had another godhead or divine nature different from that of the Father and the Spirit: For why should his miraculous works be attributed to the aids of another infinite spirit which was not united to the man *Jesus*, and never be ascribed at all to that distinct spirit which is supposed to be united to him? I am sure this sort of representations lead our thoughts away from supposing *Christ* to have any godhead at all, if it be not the same as the Father's.

5. If the godhead of *Christ* be another distinct spiritual being different from the godhead of the Father, I do not see any fair and reasonable manner, how the trinitarians can solve the difficulties which arise from those scriptures, where God the Father is represented as the only true God, and under that idea distinguished from *Jesus Christ*; as *John* xvii. 3. "To know thee the only true God, and *Jesus Christ* whom thou hast sent. *1 Cor.* viii. 6. To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things; and one Lord *Jesus Christ*, by whom are all things. *Ephes.* iv. 5, 6. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." Now we can scarce suppose the highest nature of *Jesus Christ* to be another infinite spirit distinct from God the Father, without excluding it from godhead by these express scriptures: but they may easily be explained to admit *Christ*'s godhead, if we suppose *Christ* to be spoken of in these places chiefly in his inferior characters as man and mediator; and yet he may be united to, and inhabited by the one true and eternal God, who is at other times called the Father, as being vested with different relative properties, and first in the great oecconomy, as I have sufficiently shewn in other papers.

I add also, those texts in the prophets, where it is said, "I am God, and there is none else, there is none besides me, I know not any," *Isai.* xlv. 6, 8. and xlv. 21, 22. give a further confirmation to this sentiment. For,

Whether we suppose the Father or the Son to be the speaker here, it is still with an exclusion of any other being, any other spirit from the claim of godhead besides the one infinite spirit, the one true and eternal God, the God of *Israel*; and if our Saviour *Jesus Christ* be not that one true eternal God, that one and the same infinite spirit

spirit with the Father, these exclusive sentences would hardly admit *Christ* and the Father too, to be the one true eternal God.

It is granted indeed that *Christ* is another spirit as he is man, and that other, viz. the human spirit, is not in himself properly God; but only by being united to true godhead, even the man *Jesus* may be so called by the communication of properties. But since the godhead of *Christ* is still the very same godhead with that of the Father, *Christ* is not excluded from godhead by these strong exclusive expressions.

6. When our Saviour foretold that his disciples should leave him alone, he adds, *John xvi. 32.* "And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." Now if his godhead had been distinct or different from the godhead of the Father, he needed not the presence of the Father with him for his support; his own godhead would have been all-sufficient: But if his own godhead be the same with that of the Father, then there is no difficulty in the expression.

7. There are several places in the new testament, where the words God, *Christ*, and the Lord in the same paragraph are used very promiscuously, so that one can hardly tell where *Christ* is spoken of, and where God the Father; particularly, *Rom. xiv. 6—12.* Other places where God the Father and *Christ* are called our Saviour promiscuously, and perhaps God our Saviour, &c. *Tit. i. 3. ii. 13. Jude verses 4, 25.* at least there is some difficulty in such places to determine which is meant; which would hardly have been left liable to so promiscuous a construction, if *Christ* had not been true God, and if his godhead had not been the same with that of the Father.

8. That the primitive christians worshipped *Christ*, is sufficiently evident from the sacred history: Yet we never find that the *jews* of that day, who were implacably set against them, ever accused them of idolatry, or creature-worship, though that charge would have best served their purpose to blast and destroy this new religion.

Nor can we reasonably suppose, that if the *jews* had made this objection, the sacred writers would have omitted to tell us so, because this would have been so important and forcible an objection against christianity, that it would have required a very particular answer, that so christians in all ages might have been taught to defend their practice.

Thence we must infer, that when the primitive christians worshipped *Christ*, they cannot be supposed to worship a mere creature, or any other but the true God of *Israel*; for the *jews* would then certainly have charged them with creature-worship or idolatry. Now this true God of *Israel* was God represented as the creator, the author, and the Father of all; it was that God who sustains the supreme character of dominion and majesty, and maintains the dignity and the rights of godhead; it was that God who so often foretold the sending of his Son *Jesus Christ*, and this is God the Father. It is therefore this one godhead, which is in the Father, which is the same with the godhead of his Son *Jesus Christ*, but under a distinct personality: It is the same one God whom the christians worshipped, when they worshipped *Christ* as God manifest in the flesh. It was the same divine nature or godhead which the ancient *jews* had been used to worship, as dwelling in the cloud of glory upon the mercy-seat, and was now come to dwell in flesh and blood, to become *Emmanuel*, "God with us, to become God manifest in the flesh." Now there is such a mutual inhabitation and personal union between the one eternal God, and a creature in the person of *Christ*, as renders this complex person a proper object of worship, and this

stands clear of idolatry, even in the sense of the *jews* themselves, who were wont to worship God as dwelling in the cloud.

And indeed this is the only notion of the worship of *Christ* that could possibly agree with their own law, and with their first commandment given in *Sinai*, and with all their own former ideas of worship, as due only to the one God: and it is the only notion that could have been received by them without difficulty and opposition. If therefore the Son or Word be truly God, this godhead must be the same in substance with the godhead of the Father whom the *jews* worshipped, otherwise he would be another God, and the *jews* could not have failed to charge the christians with gross idolatry.

Upon the whole therefore there seems just reason to conclude, that whatever sacred and unknown distinctions may be in the divine nature itself, and however these distinctions may lay a foundation for God's discovery of himself under three personal characters, as the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost, yet the godhead of the Father seems to be the same one infinite and eternal spirit which in some particular principle or power of it's own nature, or under some peculiar distinction or relation, is united to the man *Christ Jesus*; and hereby *Jesus* becomes one with God, one complex intelligent agent or person, and hereby *Christ* comes to have a right to those divine titles, the Lord God, the almighty, *Jehovah*, the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, &c.

And by this means the great and fundamental article of all religion, the unity of the true God, is maintained inviolable: And thus we most effectually preclude all the objections and cavils of the *arian* and *socinian* writers against the doctrine of the blessed trinity, and the deity of *Christ*, as though this doctrine introduced more gods than one. For if we suppose the man *Jesus Christ* in his soul and body to be both an intellectual and corporeal *shekinah* or habitation of the one God, the God of *Israel*, we may justly call *Jesus Christ*, "God manifest in the flesh, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. a man in whom dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily, *Col.* ii. 9. a man of the seed of *David*, and yet God over all blessed for ever," *Rom.* i. 3. ix. 5. Nor is there so much as the appearance or shadow of our owning two or three gods, which has been too often, and with some appearance of reason charged upon some other modes of explaining this sacred doctrine.

Q U E S T I O N V.

Is there an intimate union between the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father?

THOUGH I do not remember that the words, unite, or union*, are any where found expressly in the writings of the new testament, yet the idea which is designed by these words is often found in scripture: and it is the usual custom of the sacred writers to express this idea of the union of several things together by being

* It is granted that *ἐνότης*, or unity is twice found in the new testament, viz. *Eph.* iv. 3, 13. but *ἑνωσις* or *ἑνωσις* is not used by the sacred writers: Nor is *ἐνότης* used to signify the union of two things together into one.

being one with another; or by one being in another, and sometimes by each being in the other mutually.

The union between the body and the soul is represented by the soul's being in the body, *2 Cor. v. 6.* at home in the body; and *xii. 3.* "whether in the body, or out of the body, &c." The union of saints to God is expressed by mutual inbeing: *1 John iv. 16.* "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him." Our union to *Christ* is often expressed by "*Christ* being in us and our being in *Christ*," *John xv. 4, 5. Rom. xvi. 7.* and being "in the Lord," *verse 11.* and in many other places.

Sometimes union is expressed by both being one: so the saints who are all united in one common head are called "one body and one bread," *1 Cor. x. 17.* And as the union between man and wife is expressed by their "being one flesh," *1 Cor. vi. 16.* "so he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit," *verse 17.*

The union between *Jesus Christ* and God the Father is expressed by all these ways, viz. by an inbeing of *Christ* in the Father, and the Father in him; and by oneness with the Father, in the writings of the apostle *John.* See *John x. 38.* "I and my Father are one." *John v. 38.* and *xiv. 11.* "I am in the Father, and the Father in me."

But let it be always remembered that our union to God or *Christ* is but a mere faint shadow or resemblance of the union of *Christ* to God the Father; which vastly surpasses our's, and is of a superior kind. This union between *Christ* and God the Father is so near, so intimate, so peculiar, as gives occasion for the new testament to cite and apply to *Christ* many passages out of the old testament: which relate to the God and Father of all. The names, the characters, the properties, and the actions of the Father are given to *Christ* in several instances and forms of expression, which are not true, nor can be admitted concerning our union to God:

Though there be but one godhead, and "one God, even the Father," *1 Cor. viii. 6.* yet by the intimate union of the man *Christ, Jesus* with this one godhead or divine nature which is in the Father, *Christ* is the Lord *Jehovah,* he is "God manifest in the flesh," *1 Tim. iii. 16.* he is "God over all blessed for ever," *Rom. ix. 5.* which would be blasphemy to say concerning christians. So *Christ* is "he that searches the hearts and the reins," *Rev. ii. 23,* *Christ* is the "alpha and omega, the first and the last," *Rev. i. 11.* What the Father doth, the Son doth also in many respects: The Father created all things, so did the Son: and what the Son doth, the Father is said to do, *John. xiv. 10.* "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works."

It may not be amiss here to transcribe a few verses from this chapter, *John. xiv. iii.* in order to give us a clearer idea of this union and communion between the Father and *Christ*; since it is the design of our Lord in this place to instruct *Thomas* and *Philip* in the knowledge of God the Father and of himself. *John. xiv. 7—11.* "If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: And from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8. *Philip* saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9. *Jesus* saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, *Philip*? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? 10. Believest thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: But the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works. 11. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works sake." Upon this scripture I beg leave to make these three remarks.

Remark.

Remark I. This is not spoken concerning the union, the inbeing, or indwelling of any distinct divine nature of *Christ*, in the divine nature of the Father, but rather concerning the union of his human nature to the same godhead that is in the Father; and that for these three reasons.

1. Because the disciples at this time were not particularly acquainted with any distinct divinity of *Christ*, and therefore he cannot be supposed to speak to them of this his divinity, and tell them where it was, viz. in the Father. It was as man that he conversed with them; but as a man who had God ever with him, and he is now further explaining the intimacy of this union between God and man in his own person.

2. Though the deity of *Christ* considered as the eternal word or wisdom of the Father may be said to be or dwell in the Father, yet God the Father is not said to be in his wisdom, or to dwell in his wisdom; whereas this inbeing and indwelling of *Christ* and the Father are mutual in the text, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me:" it denotes the union of two really distinct beings in one.

3. Because *Christ* makes this his union with the Father an exemplar or similitude of the union of the saints with God, *John xvii. 21.* "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." The union and communion between the man *Jesus* and God the Father, though it is vastly superior to that of the saints, yet it is still voluntary and of mere grace, and in this respect it may be properly made use of as a very glorious exemplar of our union to God and *Christ*: But the inbeing of the eternal word or wisdom in the Father is so essential to godhead, it so infinitely transcends all his voluntary and condescending union to us, and is so infinitely different from it, that it does not seem to be a proper exemplar or pattern thereof. I much rather conclude therefore, that the union here described is the union between God the Father and the man *Christ Jesus*, or between the same divine nature which is in the Father and the human nature of *Christ*.

Remark II. *Jesus Christ* neither in this place nor in any other doth ever ascribe his divine works to any other divine power of his own, or to any other godhead of his own, distinct and different from the godhead of the Father. "I live by the Father, *John xiv. 19.* The Father is in me, and it is the Father in me that doth the works," *John xiv. 10.* It is but one godhead of the Father and the Son; not two divine natures or two godheads, for this would seem to make two gods. Nor has the holy Spirit to whom sometimes *Christ* ascribes his works, any godhead different from that of the Father.

Remark III. Let it be observed further, that when our Saviour tells his disciples, and particularly informs *Thomas* and *Philip*, that by "seeing and knowing the Son, they see and know the Father also," he does not give this reason for it, viz. that he is the very image of the Father, or the representative or the vicegerent of the Father, though those are great truths: but he gives this reason, that there is a most intimate union or oneness between the Father and him. "I am in the Father and the Father in me:" and so near and so intimate is this union, that he attributes the words which he speaks and the works which he does to the Father, verse 10. that is, to the godhead of the Father dwelling in him. Thus "*Christ* and his Father are one," *John x. 30.* One godhead belongs to both.

From all this we may reasonably infer, that when the names, titles and works of the true and eternal God are prophetically attributed to *Jesus Christ* under the old testament, or historically in the new, it is not so much because his human soul

is the image, representative or deputy of the Father, as the *Arians* say; but because the very godhead of the Father dwells personally in the man *Jesus*: "the fulness of the godhead dwells in him bodily," *Col. ii. 9.* so as on some occasions to give a sufficient ground for the representation of *Christ* as god-man, or one complex person including a divine and human nature; though on other occasions *Christ* is represented as a man, and is called "the man *Christ Jesus* the mediator," as in *1 Tim. ii. 5.*

And as we find divine names and characters are given to *Christ* at and after his incarnation, because "the fulness of the godhead dwelt bodily in the man *Jesus*," *Col. ii. 9.* and thereby he became "God manifest in the flesh," *1 Tim. iii. 16.* so before his incarnation, when the angel of the Lord who appeared to the patriarchs calls himself the Lord, God, *Jehovah*, God almighty, and the God of *Abraham*, we very reasonably account for it in the same manner, viz. That the fulness of the godhead dwelt in him spiritually, that is, that there was the human spirit of our blessed Saviour in his pre-existent or angelic state, inhabited by the great and almighty God, and composing as it were one complex person, one complex intelligent agent in those appearances.

Objection. But does not this represent *Christ* as being the Father? Doth not this suppose God the Father to be incarnate, which is contrary to the common expressions of scripture, and sense of the primitive church?

Answer I. Almost all the protestant writers that have been counted most orthodox for some hundreds of years past, both in foreign countries and at home, have universally supposed the very same numerical godhead of the Father to be the godhead of the Son: and that it is the same infinite spirit, the same understanding and the same will, which exists in the Father with one relative property, that is also incarnate in the Son with another relative property: Only they suppose the superadded idea or relative property of fatherhood is not incarnate, but the superadded relative property of sonship. Now I cannot reasonably fear any just censures from those who follow this doctrine of all our reformed predecessors, because their opinion comes so very near to, or rather is the same with what I have asserted, though they add some human phrases to it, of which I have not yet been able to attain any ideas.

Answer II. Though the same numerical godhead belong to the Father and to the Son, yet it is not proper to say, the Father is incarnate, because the idea of fatherhood superadded to the godhead, includes the idea of the prime agent, and supreme ruler in the divine oeconomy; whereas the idea of incarnation belongs properly to one that is sent in order to become a mediator between God and man, and this belongs properly to the Son, as I shall shew immediately.

Answer III. Though in general we may suppose the very godhead of the Father to be united to the man *Christ Jesus*, according to these expressions in the tenth and fourteenth of *John*, and elsewhere, yet some have supposed there are other scriptures which represent *Christ* in his divine nature, as the word or wisdom of the Father, as a peculiar essential principle of self-manifestation in the divine nature: And if scripture does represent the great God under the peculiar idea or character of his wisdom or word, as manifesting itself in flesh, it is not so proper to say, God the Father was incarnate, but that the word or wisdom of God was made flesh, though the godhead of the Word is the same with that of the Father; for the wisdom of God is God. But I insist not on this answer, and therefore proceed.

Answer IV. The pre-existent soul of *Christ*, in whom the divine nature or godhead always dwelt, is properly the Son of God, derived from the Father before all worlds,

worlds; as his only begotten Son, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." *Heb.* i. 3. And this glorious human soul who lived many ages in an angelic state, and was the angel of God's presence, does seem to be the more immediate subject of incarnation. This Son of God properly took flesh upon him, and, shall I say, became as it were a medium, in and by which the divine nature of godhead was united to flesh and blood. Thus *Christ* is properly called God manifest in the flesh, because true godhead always dwelt in this human soul who is now incarnate: and he is properly called the Son of God manifest in the flesh, or *Christ* come in the flesh, because this human soul, who was properly the Son of God, was more immediately the subject of union to flesh and blood. And thus the expressions of St. *Paul* and St. *John* are reconciled, *1 Tim.* iii. 16. "God was manifest in the flesh:" and *1 John* iii. 8. "The Son of God was manifested;" and *1 John* iv. 2. "*Jesus Christ* is come in the flesh."

This sort of exposition of these texts wherein *Jesus Christ* and God the Father are represented as one, or as mutually inbeing and indwelling in each other, seems more exactly agreeable to the whole tenor of scripture, and best maintains the unity of the godhead, which is the foundation of all religion both natural and revealed; nor is it liable to those cavils, objections and inconveniencies with which other expositions are attended.

This exposition is free from those obscurities which attend the mutual inbeing and indwelling of the Father and the Son considered purely in their divine natures, which the learned have called *ἁμπεριχώρησις* and circum-incession. We can hardly suppose our Saviour intended that notion in *John* xiv. 7, &c. because it is a notion so mysterious and sublime beyond all the ideas that *Philip* and *Thomas* could frame at that season: And therefore we cannot imagine that *Christ* would go to amuse them with these insearchables, when they desired some instruction from him in the knowledge of God the Father.

This account of things plainly, intelligibly, and effectually secures true, proper, and eternal deity to God the Father, and to our blessed Saviour, and that in two distinct persons, without introducing any other godhead besides the godhead of the Father. Thus God the Father is the only true God originally, and yet *Jesus* the Son of God, by union to, and communion in the godhead of the Father, is also "the true God and the eternal life," *1 John* v. 20. "And this is eternal life to know the Father the only true God, and *Jesus Christ* whom he hath sent," *John* xvii. 3.

QUESTION

Q U E S T I O N VI.

Is Christ the express image of God the Father in the human nature, or in the divine?

A N S W E R.

In the human nature.

IN several places of scripture our Saviour is represented as the image of God: 2 Cor. iv. 4. "*Christ*, who is the image of God." Col. i. 15. "The image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature." Heb. i. 3. "The brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." Now it is an important enquiry what is the scripture sense in which *Jesus Christ* is the image of God the Father.

It has been the custom of many theological writers to suppose *Christ* in his pure divine nature to be this image of the Father to which the scripture refers: but there are some reasons which seem to oppose this opinion, and incline me to withhold my assent from it at present.

1. That our protestant divines have almost universally supposed the godhead or divine nature of *Christ* to be the self-same, entire, numerical godhead, nature or essence which the Father has, and differing only in his personality, or manner of subsistence, that is, filiation; whereas the Father's manner of subsistence is paternity. Now, according to this doctrine, the divine nature of *Christ* can neither be the image of the Father in his essence, nor in his personality and subsistence.

The divine nature of *Christ* cannot be the image of the Father's essence, because it is numerically the very same essence, and nothing is said to be the image of itself.

Neither can the peculiar subsistence or personality of *Christ* as God, be the image of the Father's personality or subsistence; for sonship or filiation is by no means an image of paternity or fatherhood, but is rather the very reverse, or contrary to it. A derived manner of subsistence can never be the express image of an underived manner of subsistence.

If therefore the person of *Christ* considered as God, be the same numerical godhead with the Father, together with a distinct personality, that is, filiation, and if he is neither the image of the Father's godhead nor his personality; then *Christ*, considered merely in his divine nature, cannot be the express image of the Father.

2. Another reason why *Christ* as God, is not the image of God the Father, is because he is called the image of the invisible God. Now the godhead of *Christ* is as much invisible as the Father's godhead is; and therefore when he is called the image

of the invisible God, it must signify, he is that image whereby God becomes visible, or is made known to men; and for this reason this title of *Christ* must include such a nature in *Christ* whereby the invisible God is made known to mankind, that is, it must include something of his inferior or human nature, and perhaps has a prime reference thereto.

3. When *Christ* is called the image of God in some scriptures, it would naturally lead us to conceive him distinct from, and in some sense inferior to that God whose image he is; and therefore it doth as naturally lead one to conceive *Christ's* godhead is not denoted in those scriptures; for the godhead of *Christ* and the Father is one, whereas the image is something inferior to the original.

Let it be noted also, that every man is called the image of God, 1 *Cor.* xi. 7. And therefore this seems to be too low a character of *Christ*, considered in his pure godhead.

But there are three senses in which *Christ* is the most noble image of God.

1. This title most admirably agrees to *Christ* considered as man: His human soul is the first, the greatest, the wisest, the holiest, and the best of all created spirits: The man *Jesus* is the wisest, holiest, and best of men, formed after the image of God in the greatest perfection; and probably his human soul in his pre-existent state was the first-born of every creature, and the beginning or chief of the creation of God, and who hath more of resemblance to God in all natural and in all moral perfections than any man ever had, or than the whole creation besides.

2. And if it be further considered that this glorious man *Jesus Christ* even in his pre-existent, as well as in his incarnate state, is intimately united to his divine nature, that is, to the same godhead that belongs to the Father, or to the eternal Word or wisdom of God; then the very perfections of God himself shine through the human nature of *Christ*, in a most resplendent manner: *Christ* as God-man is indeed the brightness of his Father's glory, and the most express image of his person: and in this sense it may be granted that *Christ* is such an image of God as to be also God himself, "God manifest in the flesh, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. God over all blessed for ever," *Rom.* ix. 5.

Thus far we have seen in what sense *Christ* may be called the image of God the Father, in the very constitution of his person: Let us also now consider him,

3. In his character of mediator; and so he becomes the image of the invisible God in yet a farther sense. He is the Father's ambassador to us, and in that sense he is the image of God, since he represents God among men. He is also king of kings and Lord of lords, vested with a sovereign dominion over all things by the appointment of the Father; and therefore he may be called the express image of his Father's person, as he is appointed heir and Lord of all things: And as *Adam* was the image of God, in his dominion over creatures in this world, so *Christ* is a much more glorious image of God the Father in his dominion over the upper and lower worlds.

Thus, though our blessed Saviour considered in his pure godhead or divine nature cannot be so properly called the image of the invisible God, or the express image of the Father, yet considered, 1. as man, 2. as God-man, or 3. as mediator, those ascriptions may very properly belong to him.

NOTE,

NOTE, In another treatise which will be published in a few months, concerning the glory of *Christ* as God-man,* and the pre-existence of his human soul, there will be an abridgment of a larger discourse of the reverend doctor *Goodwin's*, concerning "the glories and royalties of *Jesus Christ* considered as God-man, and of his being the express image of the Father."

Q U E S T I O N. VII.

Are the worship of God and his Son Jesus Christ consistent with one another ?

1. **G**OD is a spirit, that is, a being who has understanding and will ; infinite in knowledge, and in power, and in every perfection.

2. There is but one only living and true God, that is, one infinite spirit. And I express myself thus, lest if we suppose more infinite spirits than one, we should give occasion to say, we believed more gods than one. Three infinite spirits seem to me to be three gods.

3. This one true God is the only proper object of divine or religious worship. This doctrine was asserted by *Moses*, supported by the prophets, and confirmed by the Lord *Jesus Christ* himself.

4. In scripture *Christ* expressly calls God the Father the only true God, as distinct from himself ; *John xvii. 3.* And the apostle *Paul* confirms it, "To us there is but one God, even the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord *Jesus Christ*, by whom are all things." *1 Cor. viii. 6.*

5. *Jesus Christ*, who is the Son of God, is evidently represented in scripture as another distinct spirit different from God the Father, both before and after his incarnation.

Before his incarnation he had a distinct consciousness or understanding, whereby he knew and was conscious of his own appointment to various services and his own mission by the Father ; he knew all the offices he himself was to sustain, the flesh and blood he was to take upon him, and the work that he was sent to do by the Father's appointment. These personal consciousnesses of *Christ* are all different from the personal or individual consciousnesses of God the Father. *Christ* had also a distinct will, different from the Father, whereby he consented to what the Father's will ordained concerning him, he accepted of the mediatorial office at the Father's hand, and by his own will submitted to that incarnation which the will of the Father appointed for him : All this before he was actually incarnate. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God ; a body hast thou prepared me." *Psal. xl. 6. Heb. x. 5.*

As for his appearance after his incarnation, it is sufficiently evident he is another distinct spirit, different from the true and eternal God the Father ; for he was con-

* This was published 1746.

scious of his wearing flesh and blood, and of all the sensations of hunger, thirst, and pain, which he derived thence: He was then complete man in body and soul, who knew and worshipped and obeyed his Father and his God. His own words confirm this: "I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me," *John* vi. 38. "Father, not my will, but thine be done," *Luke* xxii. 42.

6. Yet this Son of God often appears in scripture as the object of divine or religious worship. It is thus in some places of the old testament, when he appeared as the angel of God's presence; for *Abraham*, *Moses* and *Joshua* worshipped him as the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and as *Jehovah*, and as the captain of the host of the Lord: and in *Psal.* xlv. 11. we are required to worship him; "He is thy Lord, and worship thou him."

And that we have several examples of worship paid to our Lord *Jesus Christ* in the new testament, especially after his resurrection and his ascension, is evident from the writings of the evangelists and the apostles. *St. Stephen* worshipped him, "Lord *Jesus* receive my spirit," *Acts* vii. 59. and *St. Paul*, *2 Cor.* xii. 8. "For this I besought the Lord thrice." And all the saints and angels in heaven do worship him, *Rev.* v. 12, 13.

7. Thence it must follow that *Jesus Christ* the Son of God, though he be an distinct spirit, yet he must be some way one with the true and eternal God, that he may be a proper object of religious or divine worship. Thus he expresses himself, *John* x. 30. "I and my Father are one." He must be some way the same God, or the same infinite spirit with the Father, while he is also another distinct inferior spirit, different from the Father.

8. Scripture does not teach us to conceive how this can be, but by so near an union between this supreme or infinite spirit and the inferior or finite spirit, as may constitute one compounded person, one complex agent or principle of action, one complex object of honour, that is, God and man. And thus the Son of God seems to be represented often in scripture as a complex person, or as two distinct spirits or beings in a personal union.

In the old testament he is the man who conversed with *Abraham* and who wrestled with *Jacob*; he is the angel of the covenant, the angel in whom the name of God is, the angel of the presence of God, or a messenger sent from God, and yet he is also the *Jehovah*, the God of *Abraham* and *Isaac*, the "I am that I am". He is spoken of as the child born, the Son given; and yet the mighty God, and the holy one whom the angels adore.

He is represented also in the new testament as the man that died, rose, and ascended to heaven; and also as the *Jehovah* or God of *Israel*, who is described in the lxxviii. *Psal.* compared with *Ephes.* iv. 8. as "ascending on high, leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for men. He is God manifest in the flesh, *1 Tim.* iii. 16. or a man in whom dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily, *Col.* ii. 9. He is the Word who was with God, who was God, and who was made flesh, and tabernacled among men," *John* i. 1, 14.

Now this near, intimate and unspeakable union between the man *Jesus* and one eternal God lays a sufficient foundation for divine names, titles, attributes, worship and honours to be ascribed to *Jesus Christ* the Son of God. He and the Father are one, *John* x. 30. that is, so united, that one godhead is in both by this union. He is in the Father, and the Father in him. It is the Father in him that doth his wonderful works.

works. *John* xiv. 10. "He was in the beginning with the Father : The Word was with God, and the Word was God," *John* i. 1.

9. With regard to the blessed Spirit of God, though I think true godhead is ascribed to him, and personal actions are sometimes attributed to him in scripture, yet as we are not expressly, plainly, and particularly informed, whether he be a really distinct principle or power in God or has a proper distinct personality of himself, so neither are we expressly required to worship him in any text of the bible that I can find. Nevertheless, as divine attributes and actions, and sometimes personal characters are ascribed to the Spirit of God in the language of scripture, I think the reason of things sufficiently authorizes and allows religious or divine worship to be paid to him, though we may not precisely know the manner how he is God, or how far he is a distinct person.

10. What particular distinctions may be in the godhead or divine nature itself, and how great these distinctions may be, scripture does not so evidently assert, nor so clearly explain them to us. And in this place I would not on the one hand go beyond scripture, nor on the other hand would I talk without ideas. But so far as I have represented this matter of divine worship, I think there are ideas, and those borrowed from scripture too, which go along with my words all the way; and I must acknowledge this is the clearest conception I can arrive at in representing this subject, after many years study of the scripture, and much prayer for divine instruction.

11. If we could once persuade ourselves to try to read every scripture that relates to the doctrine of the trinity as placed in this light, without any prejudicate opinions derived from other human schemes, I think that doctrine would be found much more easy and intelligible than it is generally made; and the worship of the only true God would stand ascertained and confirmed; and yet *Jesus Christ* the Son of God being one with the Father, or being God and man in one complex person, might become the object of religious worship, according to the representations of scripture, and without any offence to human reason.

12. If this be the true state of things, then the one eternal God abides still the only object of worship; whether he be considered as absolute in himself under the character of the Father of all, or as united to the man *Jesus Christ*, and dwelling in him by a personal union. Thus the Father and the Son are both worshipped, but when the Son is worshipped, it is as one with the Father, and to the glory of the Father, *Phil.* ii. 11.

And among other reasons this is one, "why it has pleased the Father that all the fulness of the godhead should dwell in him bodily," *Col.* i. 19. ii. 9. that being so nearly united to God, or one with him, he might be a proper object of divine worship together with the Father. *Rev.* v. 14. "Blessing and honour, and glory and power be to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the lamb for ever."

QUESTION

Q U E S T I O N V I I I .

What is the worship paid to our blessed Saviour, who is the image of God?

Proposition I. **T**H E R E is something in the reason and nature of man that directs and inclines him to own and worship some God, or some superior being, from whom himself and all his enjoyments are derived, and on whom his expectations depend.

Proposition II. Reason and revelation conspire to teach us that there is but one true God.

Proposition III. This one true God has required expressly in his word, that he alone should be the object of our worship or religious homage: and it is several times repeated with much solemnity in the old testament and in the new.

Proposition IV. There is something in the nature of man that inclines him to reverence and respect the image of that being which he worships: And the reason is evident; because the image is supposed to be something more within the reach of his senses, and therefore more suited to his bodily nature, than God who is the spiritual and unseen object of his worship: or at least, because he can have the image sensibly present with him when he has not the original: and the image being supposed to have the likeness or resemblance of the original object of worship, it refreshes the memory and brings to mind the excellencies of the divine original.

If we love or honour a friend, a father, or a king, we desire to have their pictures or images near us, we pay a sort of esteem, love and veneration to those pictures, upon the account of their likeness to the original persons: and we also pay our esteem, love and veneration to the absent original by the means or medium of these pictures.

It is from this principle that the heathens in all nations, who have worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, or their kings, heroes and ancestors, have generally made pictures and images of them, and either revered and worshipped the images or worshipped the originals in and by those images, or both. And for this reason, in the corrupt antichristian state, they did not only worship the beast with seven heads and ten horns, but they made an image thereof and worshipped it. *Rev. xiii. 14, 15.*

Proposition V. God has expressly forbidden men to make any image of himself and worship it, or even to make it a medium of paying their religious homage and worship to himself. The second command is most express in this matter; and this is in general esteemed by all protestant writers to be the plain sense of that commandment: And one chief reason of the command is because mankind is so prone by nature to worship images which they have made themselves.

Proposition VI. God himself has never shewn or given us any express image of himself but one, and that is his own well-beloved Son *Jesus Christ*. *Heb. i. 2.* "He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." "He

is the image of God," 2 Cor. iv. 4. And in Col. i. 15. "He is the image of the invisible God." Now this expression seems to have a prime reference to his human nature; or, as the learned and pious doctor *Goodwin* asserts and proves, it must at least include his human nature in it, because every thing that relates directly to the divine nature of *Christ* is as invisible as God the Father, and therefore his divine nature considered alone would never have been so particularly described as the image of the invisible God.

Proposition VII. The great God himself has required us to make this his image the medium of our worship paid to him. *Eph.* ii. 18. "By him we have access unto the Father." *Col.* iii. 17. "Give thanks to God even the Father by him." And he also requires men and angels to worship this his image. *John* v. 23. "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." *Heb.* i. 6. "Let all the angels of God worship him." Thus far has the blessed God indulged or encouraged that natural inclination in man to reverence the image of that divine being which he worships.

Proposition VIII. To this end it has pleased the great God in a special manner to assume into the nearest union with himself this his own Son, and thereby to render him a more complete image of himself: Thus the Son, who is the express image of the Father and the brightness or splendor of his glory, *Heb.* i. 3. is also one with the Father, as *Christ* expresses it, *John* xiv. 10. "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father:" And the reason he gives is this, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." *John* x. 30. "I and my Father are one," that is, by this union, as it is explained verse 38. And this is done not only to render him capable of his glorious offices, but of divine honours too; that *Jesus Christ* might be worshipped, and yet that according to God's original command, that which is not God might not be made the object of our worship.

Since there cannot be more gods than one, and since proper deity could not be communicated to the man *Jesus*, who is the image of the invisible God, to render him a partaker of our worship any other way, therefore proper deity is united to him that he might be one with God. And thus as the Word who was God was made flesh, *John* i. 1, 14. by his personal union to flesh, so the man *Jesus* may be said to become God, or to be God, by his personal union to God.

Thus the human nature of *Christ* being a creature most like to God, and being inhabited also by godhead, is the brightest image of the invisible God, and is one with God himself, and that as our divines express it by a personal union: And thus he is taken into as much participation of that worship which men pay to God, as a creature is capable of receiving, and as the original law of worshipping none but God can admit. See dissertation III. from page 533—544.

Proposition IX. When the ancient heathens worshipped the images of their gods, the best way they could ever take to vindicate it was under this notion, that they supposed their gods to inhabit their own images, and thus they worshipped the image together with their God dwelling in the image: but with far better authority and with infinitely more justice and truth may christians worship the Son of God who is the only appointed image of the only true God, subsisting in a personal union with the indwelling godhead.

Proposition X. This may be illustrated by a very lively similitude. A vast hollow globe of crystal, as large as the sun, is in itself a fair image or resemblance of the sun:

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But if we might suppose the sun itself included in this crystal globe, it would thereby become a much brighter and nobler image of the sun, and it would be in a sense one with the sun itself, or one complex being. And thus the same honourable ascriptions which are given to the sun because of his light and heat, might be given also to this crystal globe considered as inhabited by the sun itself, which could not be done without this inhabitation.

Then whatsoever honours were paid to this globe of crystal would redound to the honour of the sun, even as the divine honour and adoration paid to our blessed Saviour arises from the personal union of the human nature with the divine, and finally redounds to the glory of God. *Phil. ii. 11.*

Let it be observed here, that though I borrow an emblem or a resemblance of this divine doctrine from the world of nature or from the heathen nations, yet the doctrine itself is entirely derived from scripture, and might easily be confirmed by many more citations out of the sacred writers.

A N
E S S A Y

On the

True IMPORTANCE of any HUMAN
SCHEMES

To explain the Sacred

Doctrine of the Trinity.

S H E W I N G,

- I. THAT no such scheme of EXPLICATION is necessary to salvation.
- II. THAT it may yet be of great use to the christian church.
- III. BUT all such EXPLICATIONS ought to be proposed with modesty to the world, and never imposed on the conscience.

Vol. VI.

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REPORT

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S E C T I O N I.

THE first of these points is already argued in a discourse on the "Christian doctrine of the trinity," proposition XV. See page 461—464. and we only take leave here to mention those heads of argument, and to enlarge a little on the same subject.

1. "Any particular explication of the scriptural doctrine of the trinity can never be necessary to salvation, because, though the doctrine itself of three personal characters which have communion in one godhead, be clearly revealed, yet the modus how they are one, and how they are three, is not clearly and plainly revealed." And indeed if this modus be revealed at all in scripture, yet it is in so obscure a manner, that we can come at it only by laborious reasonings and a train of difficult consequences; whereas all necessary articles are and must be clear and plain: and if they are not contained in express words, yet they must lie open and obvious to a natural and easy inference.

2. Any particular explication of this mystery is not necessary to salvation, because "the most pious as well as the wisest and most learned christians have had very different sentiments on this subject, and gone into different schemes of explication;" and that in the several ages of christianity, as well as in our present age. The very mention of the venerable names and opinions of doctor *Cudworth*, bishop *Bull*, bishop *Stillingfleet*, bishop *Fowler*, bishop *Pearson*, doctor *Wallis*, doctor *Owen*, and Mr. *Howe*, is sufficient to confirm this second reason.

3. "We may pay all due honours to the sacred three, which are required in scripture, while we believe them to be represented as three personal agents, and as one in godhead, without any particular explication how they are one, and how they are three."

Now it is evident that scripture hath more directly and expressly laid our salvation upon the special divine characters or offices which the Father, Son, and Spirit sustain in the bible, and upon the peculiar blessings which we derive from them, and the peculiar honours to be paid to them, rather than upon any nice explication of their intimate essence and union, their nature and difference; and therefore such a nice explication is not of necessity to salvation.

It is evident to me, that divine and religious ascriptions and honours are paid to the Father, Son and holy Spirit in scripture, and I think they are due to them all. Now how these divine honours can be paid by any who deny them to have some true and proper communion in the eternal godhead, I cannot well understand. But I can easily conceive that divine honour may be given them without knowing exactly the precise points and boundaries of their union and distinction. See more in "christian doctrine of the trinity," proposition XXI. page 485—489.

Do we not find it sufficient in all the common affairs of life, to manage a thousand concerns wisely with regard to the human soul and body, and with regard to each particular being of the animal, the vegetable, and the intellectual world, if we do but just know whether it be an animal, a vegetable, or an intellectual being, without any determinate, philosophical notions and ideas of the essences and specific differences of all, or any of these, and without determining how far they agree, and how far they differ? And why may it not be so in the affairs of religion? He may be a very wise man, and dispose and direct his affairs admirably well with regard to his king, his bishop, his father and his friend, by that common and general knowledge which he hath of their capacities and powers, their several offices and the relations they stand in to him, without any precise acquaintance with their particular natural constitutions, or the relations they stand in to one another. He may be a most discreet manager of his affairs, and speak and do all things in proper time and place, without knowing philosophically what place is, or what is time: and he can be contented with this ignorance, and be a wise man still. And why may he not be a christian with the same degrees of knowledge of the things of christianity, that is, without philosophical science of the abstract nature of God and *Christ*.

A poor labourer or a shepherd believes *Jesus Christ* to have the proper divine powers of knowing, managing and governing all things; therefore he prays to him, and trusts in him as his Lord and his God, without any notion either of self-existence and independency, or without the least thought of consubstantial generation, eternal sonship, and necessary emanation from the Father; all which ideas some writers include in the divine nature of *Christ*, though perhaps without any sufficient authority from scripture. He believes him to be the true God, and Son of God, and the appointed mediator to bring him to God; therefore he honours and adores him, and depends on him under that character, without any notion whether his sonship belong to his human or divine nature. He believes him also to be the son of man, but perhaps he may not ever have heard whether he had an earthly Father or no, or that he was the son of a pure virgin. Now what is there in all this ignorance that forbids him to be a true christian and a sound believer?

But I would pursue this argument a little, under some more parallel instances.

The learned world well knows what corporeal notions the famous ancient father *Tertullian* had of the soul of man; what immaterial and refined opinions *Des Cartes* and his followers have entertained concerning the presence or place of spirits; and what were the contrary sentiments of doctor *Henry More* and his admirers.

Now may not a *tertullianist* take proper care for the salvation of his soul, though he thinks the nature of it be corporeal? May not the soul of a *cartesian* find the right way to heaven, though he believes his soul has no relation to place, and exists no where, or in no certain place? May he not worship God with acceptance in spirit and in truth, though he conceive God himself, as an infinitely wise and powerful mind void of all extension, and who hath no relation to place? And though he suppose his omnipresence to be nothing else but his universal knowledge and power and agency, through all times and places? And may not a *morist* with the same acceptance worship the same God, though he believes him to be infinitely extended and penetrating all bodies and all possible spaces?

What is there in these philosophical particularities, that forbids a man to be truly pious, while he believes his soul to have an immortal being after this life, and
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while he supposes God to have all the requisite properties and powers for a Creator and governor, and judge of the world?

You will say, some of these persons hold gross inconsistencies, and believe impossibles, while they suppose "a corporeal soul to be immortal; or a God infinitely extended through length, breadth and depth, who is a pure spirit:" and therefore such a soul cannot be immortal, and such a God cannot know, or govern, or judge.

I answer, It may possibly be so: These may be great inconsistencies; and yet a man may sincerely believe them both, who does not see the inconsistency of them. And if we must be condemned to hell for believing inconsistencies, then wo be to every son and daughter of *Adam*. What man is there in the world free from all error? And yet every error which he holds, is perhaps inconsistent with some truth which he believes: It is hard to write anathema upon a man's forehead, because of some inconsistency in his opinions, while he believes all necessary truths, and practises all the necessary duties relating to God and *Christ*, and his own soul.

You may perhaps object and say, that he that believes the soul to be corporeal, by consequence does not believe it to be immortal; or he that believes God to be infinitely extended in length and breadth, by consequence does not believe God to be a spiritual being, who can know and judge human affairs: And thus in the same manner by the consequence of his own suppositions, the man that holds these doctrines may perhaps be proved to be a brute and an atheist.

I reply, And must all the consequences that can be drawn from the mistakes of any man be imputed to that man as his own opinions? This would make dreadful work in the christian church. The *arminian* would reduce the *calvinist* into blasphemy and atheism; and likewise the *calvinist* the *arminian*. By this uncharitable method each of them would be called atheists and blasphemers, and be utterly excluded from christian communion by such a perverse practice as this.

I would add yet further, that by such uncharitable constructions as these, the *cartesian* christian might say, I cannot join in worship with doctor *More*, and his followers, for we have not the same object of worship: I worship a God who is a pure spirit, a pure thinking being, without extension or dimension; but they worship a being infinitely extended, that is, infinitely long, broad and deep. The *morist* might cry with the same zeal, I cannot worship with a *cartesian*, for we worship not the same object: He adores a God that is properly in no place; but I worship that God who penetrates all things and places, and is expanded through all.

Now if such objections as these are indulged and supported, no two persons could join together in any part of divine worship who had such different ideas of the divineness or attributes, lest they should imagine they worship two distinct or different deities. And if this were admitted, where could we find two persons who had so exactly the same ideas of God as to hold communion in one worship?

This wretched practice of imputing all the distant consequences of any man's opinions or mistakes to him, is quite contrary to our Saviour's general rule, *Matth. vii. 12.* "What you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Let these objectors be pleased to consider that doubtless they themselves in some parts of their religion are guilty of some errors or mistakes in their opinions; for no man's knowledge is perfect: And if those errors should be pushed home to their utmost consequences, perhaps they might terminate in blasphemy, atheism, or mere nonsense: But no man would be willing to be treated in this manner himself, viz. to have all the utmost consequences of his mistaken opinions be imputed to him, there-

therefore he ought not to treat his brothers so; according to that universal rule, "What ye would that men should do unto you, that do ye also to them," *Matth.* vii. 12.

Now to apply these things to the present case.

Suppose, for instance, *Timon* and *Pitbus* both believe *Christ* to be the true God: but *Timon* supposes him not to be self-existent, because he saith, he is a Son, derived from the Father by an eternal generation. On the other hand, *Pitbus* believes him to be self-existent, because he is God. Now has *Pitbus* reason to say, that because *Timon* doth not believe the self-existence of *Christ*, therefore by consequence he does not believe his divinity? Or, should *Timon* be permitted to conclude, that because *Pitbus* believes the self-existence of *Christ*, therefore by consequence he does not believe his sonship? Would it be agreeable either to the reason of a man, or to the charity of a christian, that these two men should anathematize one another, or seclude each other from christian communion because of the consequences of their opinions, while they both profess to maintain that *Jesus Christ* is the Son of God, and has such communion in and with the eternal godhead, as that both of them profess him to be true God, and both pay him divine worship.

Now what I would infer from hence is this, that since the different explications of the doctrine of the trinity may be so abused to give such occasions for contest, where christians are not wise and charitable, I would rather exclude all the particular modes of explication from the terms of christian communion, than I would exclude one christian from the church of *Christ*. Where a man professes that there is but one God, and yet that Father, Son and Spirit, have such a distinction from each other, and such a communion in and with this one godhead as renders them all-sufficient for the characters and offices which they sustain in the gospel, and pays proper honours to them accordingly, I would never constrain him to determine any farther upon those difficult points of the union and distinction of the sacred three; of the self-existence, the eternal generation, or eternal procession of the Son and holy Spirit. Nor whether they are three natures united in one godhead, or whether one individual nature only.

To sum up the whole, it is evident to me, that the holy scripture itself, as I have already proved elsewhere, lays the stress of our salvation upon a belief that *Christ* is the *Messiah*, the appointed all-sufficient Saviour, a trust in the proper atonement or sacrifice of *Christ* for the forgiveness of sins, a dependence on his grace and Spirit for light and holiness, and a submission to his government, much more than it does upon any precise and exact notions or hypotheses concerning his divine and his human nature; even though the union of the divine and the human nature in him are in my judgment necessary to render his salvation complete.

Scripture teaches us to concern ourselves about regeneration and grace to be received from the blessed Spirit, more than about the nature or essence of that Spirit which regenerates us. It makes our eternal interest depend upon the glorious characters, offices and operations of the three persons of the blessed trinity, and our respective honours paid to them, rather than upon our philosophical and exact acquaintance with their inmost essence or essences, and their personal distinctions. I must believe that the great God will make merciful allowances to sincere souls for their different sentiments, or for their ignorance and darkness in so sublime and mysterious an article, which almost all parties allow to contain some unknowables and unconceivables in it.

SECTION

S E C T I O N II.

“**Y**ET where God is pleased to give greater degrees of light and knowledge, we can further explain these mysteries of christianity in clear ideas and proper language, it is a piece of excellent service done to the gospel of *Christ*.”

A clear and happy explication in what manner the Father, Son and holy Spirit are to be conceived as three personal agents, and as having communion in one godhead would carry in it many desirable advantages.

1. This would be like a ray of sacred light let into some of the most dark and difficult passages of the word of God. This would help us to unfold many scriptures which at present lie sealed in obscurity; or at least it would afford us the true sense of several texts which by reason of the various expositions of them have hitherto given but an uncertain found and doubtful notices of divine truth. It would clear up a large part of the word of God to our understandings, and teach us to read the sacred transactions of the Father, Son and Spirit in the bible with more abundant edification.

2. This might teach us to perform our various duties of adoration, faith, love and obedience to the sacred three, so far as scripture requires it, in a more distinct and rational manner than we have hitherto done. The humble christian would view and adore his heavenly Father, his Saviour and his Sanctifier with much more inward pleasure, when he should be enabled to do it with much clearer and more explicit ideas of their divine unity and distinction.

3. Such a happy explication of the mystery of the blessed trinity would vindicate this doctrine against the cavils of the unbeliever as well as against the scoffery and insults of the prophane world. This would make it appear how the Son and the Spirit might be true God without injury to the divine honour of God the Father.

There have been some antitrinitarian writers who have denied the possibility of the godhead of the Son and Spirit in any sense or modus at all; and have pretended to prove that every model and manner of explication of this doctrine hath some absurdity and inconsistency belonging to it. Now it would be certainly of considerable service to the truth to exhibit some scheme, some manner of explication to the world wherein it is fairly consistent with the reason of things and the language of scripture that the Son and Spirit may have communion in true godhead as well as the Father. And that though there be but one God, yet the divine names and attributes may be ascribed to the sacred three, as having communion in this one godhead.

4. This would be a glorious means of vindicating the protestant religion against the charges which are brought by the papists, who tell us, that we refuse their doctrine of transubstantiation because it seems inconsistent to sense and reason, and yet we believe the doctrine of the trinity which is charged with the same inconsistency. We often find fault with them for making the words mystery and supernatural an asylum and refuge whereby to screen themselves from the charge of a most absurd opinion, that is, “of bread becoming flesh, and yet retaining the properties of bread at the same time.” They in the like manner find fault with us for making the same words mystery and supernatural a refuge for ourselves, while we profess three distinct persons in one God.

I confess there are many things to be said, and that with great justice, to vindicate the conduct of protestant writers in the doctrine of the trinity, which can never serve to defend the popish doctrine of transubstantiation: for one is a theme or subject

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that concerns the deep things of the divine nature; the other relates but to flesh and bread, which are objects that fall entirely within the compass of our senses and our reasoning powers; and we can much better judge and determine what is and what is not a real inconsistency in the one than in the other.

Yet after all it would be a vast advantage in the defence of our religion against the assaults of the papists, and it would vindicate christianity most gloriously in the eyes of *jews*, heathens and all infidels, if we could find some plain, easy, natural and obvious account of this matter how the sacred three which are represented in scripture under distinct personal characters have a communion in one godhead.

5. I add farther, that if it were possible to exhibit a scheme of explication which should be so plain, so easy, so agreeable to the light of nature, and yet so happily correspondent with scripture as to captivate the assent of the learned and unlearned at the very proposal of it, what a glorious advantage would the church of *Christ* obtain by this means towards it's unity and peace! What a blessed end would be put to those shameful quarrels and contentions on this subject, that have in every age more or less divided the christian world and laid it bleeding with many wounds?

There are some difficult parts of our holy religion which have been so far explained by the united labours and prayers of pious and learned men, that controversies about them are well nigh ceased, and the disputes brought to an end. The humble believer has been enlightened and taught to understand the articles which he professes: The profane caviller and the subtil critic have been baffled by the mere force of argument set in a clear and easy light: and why may we not hope for the same success in this sacred article of the trinity, by humble and laborious enquiries into the word of God, with a dependence on the aids of the divine Spirit, who is promised to "guide us into all truth?" *John xvi. 13.*

It must be acknowledged indeed, there has no public received scheme been yet so successful to explain this doctrine but what has several difficulties attending it, and has left too much room for the cavil of unbelievers. Nor have any of these schemes hitherto very much assisted the unlearned christian in the practice of his devotions, or blessed him with much clearer and juster ideas of the matter than his own reading of the bible had given him before.

And it must be confessed also with sorrow and shame, that some writers have invented or enlarged special explications of the sacred doctrine with too great a neglect of scripture in their studies. They have affected to be wise in words without ideas. They have set forth their own learned explications of the doctrine of the trinity, in founding scholastic phrases and hard words, with great assurance; and have helped men to talk roundly on this sublime subject with a great exuberance and fluency of such language as has been established into orthodoxy. This sacred doctrine has been too often dressed up by authors in abundance of metaphysical phrases borrowed from the popish schools, but without any clearer conceptions of the truth than their primitive predecessors had attained, or than their meaner brethren possess without that learned language.

But though nothing has hitherto been done so effectually as one could wish, to remove all difficulty and confusion, yet he is a bold man that will venture to lay an everlasting bar upon our fervent prayers and humble study of the scripture, and upon all the labours and hopes of the present and future christian ages, merely because the ages past have not been favoured with those happy hints whereby to unfold these sacred mysteries, and to reconcile the difficulties that attend them.

SECTION

S E C T I O N III.

“**B**UT after all, whatsoever light or knowledge we may suppose ourselves to have attained in the explication of this sublime doctrine, we ought not to be oversollicitous to profelyte other christians to our particular scheme; much less to impose it on the consciences of others: We should ever take care lest by anxious enquiries into things less necessary, we should unhappily divert ourselves or others from those duties and practical regards, which we all owe to the Father, Son and Spirit, and which all parties agree to be necessary to salvation.”

It is an important lesson both of natural and revealed religion, that we should lay out our greatest concern and zeal on things of the greatest consequence: and we have already proved, that it is of much higher moment to wait for divine benefits from the sacred three, and to pay our proper respective honours to the sacred three, so far as scripture requires it, than to know how far they are the same, and how far they are distinguished. Indeed when we have arrived at any farther light in some divine doctrine, we ourselves may find greater clearness of thought, with more ease, satisfaction and pleasure in the practice of especial duties; yet the most enlightened persons ought not to give unnecessary and unreasonable disturbance to all those who practise the same duties, though they do not attain so clear ideas as God may have blessed and favoured them with.

If we labour in our zeal to profelyte the learned to our scheme, the most part of them are so deeply rooted in their old opinions, so unmoveably established in their particular forms, so self-satisfied in what they believe, so much prejudiced against any further light, that we shall probably do nothing but awaken their learned anger, to fix the brand of heresy upon us, and to overwhelm the hints of any brighter discovery with clamours and hard names, and drown them in noise and darkness.

If we are too solicitous to persuade the unlearned christian to come into any better explication of this doctrine than he has learned in his younger years, we have the same huge prejudices to encounter here as in the learned world; nor can we hope for much better success, if we attempt to change his ancient opinion by a hasty and industrious zeal. Hard names and reproaches are weapons ever at hand, and common both to the wise and the unwise, the *greek* and the barbarian. The vulgar christian is as expert at them as the scholar.

Besides, if he be a person of weaker understanding whom we address with our new explication, and we set ourselves hard at work to shake his old notions, but in the mere modus of things, we may happen to unhinge him, as it were, and throw him off from his center; we may embarrass his mind with inward contests, which may be too hard for him; and we may tempt him to lay out too many of his thoughts and hours on some particular explications of this doctrine, on the substance of which he had long before built his pious practices and devotions, though mingled with some innocent mistakes.

Yet these accidental inconveniences are not a sufficient reason for our supine and perpetual contentment with confused sentiments and unintelligible speeches about the modus of sacred truths, if clearer ideas are any ways attainable. There are just and strong motives that may excite us to search into the deep things of God, and to propose all our improvements in knowledge, to the world and the church, though

there are no reasons or motives sufficient to impel us to impose our improved notions on others, or to raise contentions and quarrels on the account of them.

All our particular illustrations therefore, or clearer conceptions of this sublime doctrine which God at any time may have favoured us with, should be proposed to the christian world with great modesty, with a humble sense of our fallible natures, with a gentle address to the wise and to the unwise, without imposing upon their judgments or dictating to their faith, and with a zealous care to maintain all those necessary practical regards to the holy trinity, which are of so much greater importance.

And if it be an unreasonable thing to dictate to our fellow-christians, and urge our particular sentiments on them in these mysterious points, how much more culpable and domineering is it to establish any especial form of human explication of this sacred doctrine as a test of orthodoxy, and christianity! How vain a presumption it is with a pretence of divine authority to impose mere human explications upon the consciences of men, and to forbid them all the sacred blessings of especial communion in the gospel, unless they testify their assent to such a particular hypothesis or scheme of explication, which the imposers confess to be human, and yet impose it in their own prescribed form of words.

The persons who are guilty of this uncharitable practice may consecrate their impositions, and their excommunications with holy names, and call them pure zeal for the divinity of *Christ*; but I suspect it will be found in the great day to deserve no better a character than a mistaken zeal for the honour of *Christ*, mingled perhaps with zeal for the divinity of their own notions, which they had incorporated with the plain and express revelations of the godhead of *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

He that makes a private and particular explication of any doctrine which is dark and doubtful in itself, and not clearly revealed in scripture, as necessary as the doctrine itself, which is plain and clearly revealed, puts the matters of faith and opinion on the same foot, and intrudes too much upon the authority and kingdom of our Lord *Jesus* in his church.

T H E

T H E
G L O R Y of C H R I S T
A S
G O D - M A N
D I S P L A Y E D,
In Three D I S C O U R S E S.

V I Z.

Disc. I. A survey of the visible appearances of **CHRIST**, as God before his incarnation, with some observations on the texts of the old testament applied to **CHRIST**.

Disc. II. An enquiry into the extensive powers of the human Nature of **CHRIST** in it's present glorified state, with several testimonies annexed.

Disc. III. An argument tracing out the early existence of the human soul of **CHRIST**, even before the creation of the world.

With an A P P E N D I X,

Containing an abridgment of doctor **THOMAS GOODWIN**'s discourse of the "Glories and Royalties of **CHRIST**," in his works in folio, Vol. II. Book iii.

T H E

P R E F A C E.

OUR Lord *Jesus Christ* is the author, the foundation and the glory of our religion. The scripture teaches us to describe this blessed person two ways, that is, as a man who is one with God, or as God who is one with man.

He is called sometimes "God with us," *Matth. i. 23.* "God manifest in the flesh," *1 Tim. iii. 16.* that is, God dwelling in our mortal nature. At other times he is described as the man *Christ Jesus*, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily," *1 Tim. ii. 5.* and *Col. ii. 9.* A man "of the seed of *David* after the flesh, who is God over all, blessed for evermore," *Rom. ix. 5.* A man whose flesh *Thomas* the apostle saw and felt, and yet called him "My Lord and my God," *John xx. 27, 28.* Upon such scriptures as these my faith is built.

And as it is the most general sentiment of the christian world in our age, so I must acknowledge it is very evident to me, that our blessed Saviour is often represented in scripture as a complex person, wherein God and man are united, so as to make up one complex agent, one intellectual compound being, God joined with man, so as to become one common principle of action and passion. *Christ* wrought miraculous works, and yet it is "the Father or God in him who doth these works," *John xiv. 10.* The God and the man are one.

And on this account the child *Jesus* may be well called the mighty God, *Isai. ix. 6.* And God himself is said to redeem the church with his own blood, *Acts xx. 28.* And to lay down his life for us, *1 John iii. 16.* This intimate or present union between God and *Christ* allows him to say, *John x. 38.* "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." And verse 30. "I and the Father are one."

Since *Christ Jesus* in his person and his offices hath so large a share in our holy religion, we cannot be too well acquainted with his various glories. It is the study and joy of angels to pry into these wonders, *1 Pet. i. 12.* And it is the duty of men to grow in the knowledge of *Christ* their Lord, their God, and their Saviour, *2 Pet. iii. 18.*

It is granted, that many things relating to the ever blessed trinity may have heights and depths in them which are unsearchable by our understandings. Though we learn from scripture, that true and proper deity is ascribed to the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit, and that they are represented often in scripture as distinct personal agents; yet after all our enquiries and prayers we may be still much at a loss to describe exactly wherein this distinct personality consists, and what is the distinct communion of each of them in the divine nature. We have never yet been able with any strong evidence and clear certainty precisely to adjust this sacred difficulty, how far they are one, and how far they are three. Several schemes and hypotheses have

have been invented for this purpose, and the best of them falls short of solving all questions relating to this doctrine completely to our satisfaction, though some of them are evidently much more agreeable to scripture than others.

As it is our great happiness, that the knowledge of any such particular schemes of explication are not necessary to the salvation of men, so neither are any of those different schemes of the trinity at all needful to our present enquiries concerning that glory of *Christ*, which is the subject of this treatise.

Let no humble christian therefore be jealous of losing his own form of explaining the trinity by reading these discourses, nor let him be afraid of being led into any particular human schemes or explications of that divine doctrine. I have so far laid them all aside in this book, that there is scarce any hint of any of them, and that in a very slight and transient manner.

The glories of *Christ*, both in his divine and human nature, which are here unfolded, are not necessarily confined to any particular schemes or hypotheses of the trinity. All that I pretend to maintain here is, that our blessed Saviour must be God, and he must be man; God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, that is, one complex personal agent. Those who believe this doctrine may read these treatises without danger or fear; for I would always endeavour to search out divine truth, and promote the knowledge of *Christ*, as far as possible, without offence to the bulk of the christian world, or any of the truly pious and religious of every party.

These three discourses were written at three distant and different times: I hope therefore my readers will be so candid as to bear with a small repetition of the same thoughts, or with references from one discourse to another, though not expressed in so regular a manner as though I had all three constantly in one view.

Though the order in which these discourses stand be not adjusted according to chronology, yet it is such an order as I thought most proper to lead my reader by degrees into these discoveries of the glory of *Christ*.

In the first of these discourses I have maintained the "godhead of *Christ* in his appearances under the old testament." The doctrine itself is entirely agreeable to the common sentiments of all our divines, and I have confirmed it by such arguments as seem to me most effectual and convincing. I persuade myself the generality of my readers will concur with me in these sentiments, though I will not say I have borrowed my method of argument and vindication from any but the sacred writers.

In the second and third discourses perhaps they will find some things, which though they are derived from scripture, yet appear to be more uncommon, and which have not been taken notice of by many authors. With regard to these, I beg leave to make these few requests to those who will seriously, and with a honest heart peruse what I have here written.

1. That they would suffer themselves to believe with me that we have not yet attained all knowledge, nor particularly apprehended all those things that may be learned from the bible concerning our Lord *Jesus Christ*: and that they would permit themselves also to think with me, that we are all fallible creatures, and that it is possible for us to have been mistaken in some points, at least of lesser moment, which we have been taught to believe before we were capable of searching the word of God for ourselves: for the best of men who have been our teachers know but in part, and therefore they could prophesy or instruct others but in part, 1 Cor. xiii. 9. Though they have

have spoken the truth, yet perhaps they have not spoken all the truth which lies hid in the holy scriptures.

2. That my readers would not be startled and discomposed at any thing which may seem new and strange to them at first appearance, nor be frightened at a sentence, as though heresy were in it, because it may differ a little from the sentiments which they have hitherto received. That very same notion in any science whatsoever, which may perhaps surprize us at first, by reading further onward may become plain and easy and certain: and I can assure them, that there is not one sentence in all these discourses but what is very consistent with a firm belief of the divinity of *Christ*, and a just and sincere concern for the most eminent and glorious truths of the gospel, as they are professed by protestants among us against the *Jocinian* and *arian* errors.

3. That they would not rashly conclude that any christian doctrine is lost, or any article of their faith endangered, or the proper deity of our Lord *Jesus Christ* dropped or neglected, if they should be led to interpret a few texts of scripture in another manner than they themselves have been formerly used to explain them: for it must be acknowledged, that some pious and zealous writers for the truth have mustered together out of all the bible whatsoever texts could possibly be turned by art or force to support any one doctrine which they undertook to defend, just as ancient heretics have done to support their errors. Now among this great number of scriptures, it may be easily supposed, that there is here and there one which is not so fit and apposite to their purpose, and which does not carry in it naturally that sense which has been imposed upon it; or at least which does not contain that force of argument which has been generally believed; and yet the same point of doctrine may remain unmoveable, without the help of that particular text.

Now though they have been learned and wise and pious men that have used these scriptures to support some particular doctrine of scripture or article of faith, yet it is possible they may have been mistaken in the application of them. Later days, and the maturer age of the world have given light to many passages of the bible which were not well understood in the days of the fathers: and though I read their writings with sincere reverence, yet not with an absolute submission to their dictates. The same doctrines and articles of faith which they espoused and defended in their time, may be still espoused and defended with as much zeal and success in our day by some new arguments brought to support them, though in reason and justice we are constrained to drop some of the old ones. Besides,

There is more honour done to the cause of christianity and the gospel, by building all the articles of it upon such scriptures only as are firm and unshaken to support them, than by multiplying feeble shews and shadows of defence. We expose ourselves and our faith at once to the insult and ridicule of our adversaries, by persisting in a mistaken exposition of scripture, and by maintaining every colour or false appearance of argument, even though it be in the defense of a most important truth. We ought to make use of all the advantages of encreasing light, nor continue in a wrong application of scriptures to support any point of our faith in opposition to their most open and evident meaning. Though truth is infinitely preferable to error, yet men may use insufficient arguments for one as well as the other. And in our days, I conceive a wise and thoughtful man will not be charmed at once with a title-page, merely because it pretends to many hundred proofs of the godhead of *Christ*.

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4. I request that they would consult their bible with diligence, as I have done, especially in the places which I have cited, and like honest english readers would look only at the sense as it lies before them, and neither consider nor care whether it be new or old, so it be true : For he that doth this, is much more likely to be led into the truth than a greater scholar, full of his own notions which he has learned in the schools, who brings his own opinions always to direct and determine his own interpretation of scripture whensoever he reads it ; and thus he interprets every text, not so much according to the plain, obvious, and easy sense of it, and in correspondence with the context, as he does in correspondence with his own opinions and his learned schemes.

5. That they would suffer themselves to yield to truth wheresoever they find it, and imagine that the loss of an old opinion by the force and evidence of truth is a victory gained over error, and a honourable advancement in their own knowledge in the things of God.

6. That they would apply themselves with sincere diligence to consider the evidence of scripture for any of the opinions that I have proposed or maintained, rather than labour to invent objections as fast as ever they can against it, as though they knew it was false before-hand ; for if we read a treatise which contains ever so much truth, with a previous aversion to the doctrines of it, and a resolution before-hand to object against it all the way, we hinder ourselves from attending to the force of reason, and prevent our minds from taking in the evidence on which any doctrine is founded.

I grant it is necessary that all just objections should have their due weight, and they ought to be well considered in our enquiries after truth ; yet when any doctrine has many and strong arguments from scripture and reason advanced to support it, one difficulty or two which at present seem hard to be solved, should not utterly forbid our assent, since, as bishop *Fowler* well observes, " There are scarce any notions so plain as to be incapable of being obscured and called in question, except the first and self-evident principles, or the immediate consequences of them." Because we understand not what is difficult, we must not merely for that reason deny that which is clear and plain ; and if we will refuse to believe any proposition until we are perfectly able to master all objections against it, we may be sceptics all our days, both in matters of philosophy and religion, and even in some doctrines of the highest importance, and with all our pretences to learning, may finish our lives like mere fools.

7. That they would acknowledge that the glories of our blessed Lord are so many, so various, and so sublime, that there is but very little of them yet known, in comparison of the unknown glories which he possesses ; and that a sincere love to *Christ* and a zeal for his honour, should lead them out with pleasure and expectation to meet any further discoveries of this kind, which may be drawn from the word of God. That they would withhold themselves from a hasty refusal to receive all such manifestations, lest they should prevent the growing honours of their Saviour.

8. While I am tracing these early and sublime glories of our blessed redeemer, by the gleams or the rays of light which are scattered in several parts of his word, I intreat my friends, that they would not be too severe in their censures of any mistaken step, while I own myself fallible, and am ready to retract any mistake.

If

If they should meet with any expressions which in their opinion do not stand so perfectly just and square with other of my sentiments in some distant parts of these essays, I would persuade myself they will be so candid as to interpret them in a confidence with the general scope and design of my argument, and with my avowed sense of things in the more important points of religion.

It is an easy matter to be led a little astray in pursuing such an uncommon track through the third heavens, the present exalted residence of our glorified Saviour; and in tracing the foot-steps of our blessed Lord through long past ages of his pre-existent state, be they never so certain, which commenced before these lower heavens were formed, or time was measured by the sun and moon. Succeeding writers may more happily conduct themselves in so glorious an inquiry, and correct my wanderings: But I am persuaded my gracious Redeemer will forgive what errors he remarks in these sincere attempts to advance his honour; and I hope my pious readers will find some degrees of entertainment, as well as improvement, and feel some devout thoughts awakened in them sufficient to influence their charity and candour.

9. That they would not imagine that all these notions and opinions which may be something new and strange to them, are pure inventions of my own, and mere fallies of imagination.

I must acknowledge indeed that I have endeavoured to carry on the hints I have met with in some great and honoured writers to a further length, and to trace the golden thread of these discoveries through far distant scenes and ages, by the light both of reason and scripture: But as I have no ambition to assume these discoveries to myself, so I ought in justice to stand secure from these censures which a heated and warm zeal for ancient land-marks, is ready to throw upon every thing that bears the appearance of novelty.

I have therefore in the end of some of these discourses or inquiries, cited several writers of name and eminence, and called in the assistance of their authority to cover these essays from the sudden and severe reproaches of those who reverence the names of those great, and learned, and pious men. And what such venerable authors thought very consistent with orthodox doctrine, and so useful and necessary to support the honours of our blessed Lord, I humbly hope and request that my readers will not hastily abandon and reject as heresy, and renounce it at once without due consideration of the arguments.

And as for those who have a great regard for the writings of so ingenious and so pious a man, so evangelical an author, and so great a divine as doctor *Thomas Goodwin*, I might recommend to them the perusal of his treatise of the "royalty of *Jesus Christ*, as God-man," which I have abridged here; and before they read these essays I might intreat them to read this abridgement, though I dare not pretend to give my assent to all his opinions in these papers, or support them.

Give me leave to finish this preface, so far as it relates to the discourses on the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, and the extensive powers of his glorified human nature, in the modest and amiable language of that ingenious gentleman who wrote many years ago of the progressive knowledge of souls in the future state. "If any thing should drop from my pen in the progress of this discourse which may seem too affirmative, and hardly reconcilable with a becoming modesty and jealousy, I desire those luxuriations of expressions may receive some abatements, and be made fairly agreeable thereunto. For although I may possibly be indifferently well persuaded of the truth of what I shall

discourse, yet I am not certain : It is not improbable that I should be mistaken : I am of human race, and have no privilege of exemption from human infirmities and errors."

"Whether the proofs that I shall make of this proposed theme be valid or invalid, the reader must determine when he hath weighed and considered them. I am content that they be esteemed just as they are. If my arguments be thought invalid, and my opinion rejected, it will be no matter of provocation to me. If they be thought cogent, and my opinion worthy of acceptation with pious and ingenious men, perchance I may be a little pleased therein. But if it may advance the honour and the love of God, my Saviour, and make heaven the more acceptable to the thoughts and Meditations of christians, because we have so glorious a mediator dwelling there, I am sure I shall greatly rejoyce."

DIS

DISCOURSE I.

The GLORY of CHRIST as GOD-MAN displayed,

By a SURVEY of the visible appearances of CHRIST as
GOD, before his incarnation.

S E C T I O N I.

An historical account of these appearances.

SINCE the *socinian* doctrines have been effectually refuted by many learned writers, especially in the last century, it is now, I hope, confessed almost universally in the *british* islands, that our blessed Saviour had a real existence long before he appeared in flesh and blood, and dwelt among men. It is also generally acknowledged that he often appeared in a visible manner under the patriarchal and moisaical dispensations, assuming the names, and sustaining the character and person of the great and blessed God. Yet it has been a matter of contest in these latter years, as well as in the ancient days of *Arius*, whether *Christ* in his complex person, include godhead or not: or whether he be nothing else but a creature or a mere contingent being, and is only called God, as sustaining and representing the character and person of one who is infinitely above him, even the great and eternal God. This is the great and important question of the age.

Now that this matter may be determined with more evidence and certainty, let us first trace out the account which the old testament gives us of the various seasons and occasions on which God, the Lord*, the Lord God, *Jehovah*, the Almighty, the
5 A 2 God

* Let the unlearned reader take notice, that there are two *hebrew* words, viz. *Jehovah* and *Adon* or *Adonai*, both which our translators render Lord. The first, viz. *Jehovah*, signifies the eternal or unchangeable,

God of *Abraham*, &c. is said to appear amongst men, with a few remarks on them in passing; and afterward we shall be enabled to draw more particular inferences from these scriptures concerning the deity of *Christ* and his appearances before his incarnation.

Whosoever will read the four first chapters of *Genesis* with due attention, will find a very plain and easy representation of the great God, first creating all things, and afterward appearing to *Adam*, *Eve*, and *Cain*, and conversing with them with a human voice, and very probably in a human shape too. I am well assured that any common reader who begins the bible without prejudices or prepossessions of any kind, would naturally frame this idea under the words and expressions of *Moses*, the sacred writer.

In the first place, God represents his own design of creating man in this manner, viz.

Gen. i. 26. "And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, &c. Verse 27. So God created man after his own image: in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them:; And God blessed them and said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, &c. Verse 29. And God said, behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, to you it shall be for meat, and to every beast of the earth; and to every fowl of the air, &c."

Now it is very probable, that when God had made man, he appeared to him in man's own shape, and thus made it known to *Adam*, that he had formed him in his own image, even as to his body; that is, in such a form or figure as God himself did, and would frequently assume, in order to converse with man: And perhaps God also might acquaint *Adam* with the natural and moral perfections of his own soul, viz. knowledge, righteousness and holiness, wherein he resembled his maker, and bare his likeness, as well as that God himself sometimes assumed the figure of a man.

Let it be noted here also, that when God blessed some part of the animal creation, it is expressed only, "God said, but not to them as hearers, be fruitful and multiply," as verse 22. that is, God put forth a divine volition or command concerning the multiplication of inferior creatures; but he spake to *Adam* and *Eve* directly as his hearers, and most likely with a human voice, for he said unto them, "Be fruitful and multiply;" and told them that he had given them the fruits of the earth for their food, and that he had given it also to the fowls and the beasts: Whereas God is not said to speak thus concerning food to the beasts or to the fowls themselves, but only told *Adam* what he had appointed for their common food. This looks like a human appearance conversing with him, and will appear more evidently in what follows.

Gen.

changeable, and has been sufficiently proved to be the proper name of the great God, the God of *Israel*, peculiar to him and incommunicable to creatures; and it is written always in capital letters LORD, for distinction sake, "Thou whose name alone is *JEHOVAH* art the most high over all the earth," *Psal. lxxxiij. 18.* though it had been much better if the *hebrew* name, *Jehovah* itself had been always written in our *english* bibles, that the hearer might distinguish it as well as the reader. The other name, viz. *Adon* or *Adonai* is also translated Lord, and written in small letters, because it is not the proper name of the great God; it signifies his lordship or dominion, and is not so peculiar nor incommunicable.

Now let it be observed, that in almost every place which I have cited to shew the various appearances of the LORD to men, it is the name *Jehovah* is used, which the reader will find distinguished by capital letters in the *english* bible.

Gen. ii. 16. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree in the garden thou mayst freely eat; but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it." Verse 19. And the Lord God brought every beast of the field and every fowl of the air to *Adam* to see what he would call them. Verse 22. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man." All this seems to be the transactions and language of the Lord God appearing in human shape, and with human voice to *Adam*.

Gen. iii. 8. "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and *Adam* and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. 9. And the Lord God called unto *Adam*, and said unto him, where art thou? 10. And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself. 11. And he said, who told thee that thou wast naked? &c. Verse 13. And the Lord God said unto the woman, what is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me and I did eat. Verse 21. Unto *Adam* and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them, &c."

I think there is a very plain description of a visible appearance and a human voice in this scene and these dialogues. *Adam* and his wife could never be said to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord, if he had not before manifested a visible presence to them; nor could they know his voice, if he had not conversed with them by a human voice before: This is a pretty plain proof that God conversed with them in a human manner in the foregoing instances. Nor yet could they have hid themselves from a mere voice among trees, nor could they have been ashamed of their nakedness before a mere voice, if they had not known God before by a visible presence and appearance, whose face they now avoided among the trees.

It is probable that God not only conversed with *Adam* and *Eve*, but with their children and family in the same manner in the beginning of the world; for you read a plain dialogue between God and *Cain*, Gen. iv. 6. "And the Lord said unto *Cain*, why art thou wroth? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And the Lord said unto *Cain*, where is *Abel* thy brother? And *Cain* said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper? And God replied again, what hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood cryeth unto me from the ground, &c. A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth: And *Cain* said unto the Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear: Behold thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, and from thy face I shall be hid. Verse 16. And *Cain* went out from the presence of the Lord." Surely every reader among the *jews*, for whom *Moses* wrote this, would have an idea of the great God's appearing and conversing with *Adam* and his household in a human shape, and after the manner of men: and then *Cain* went out from the presence of God.

But whatsoever shape appeared to them, I think it must be granted, that God appeared in a visible manner, where the expressions are so plain and so strong, where the repetitions are so many, that the Lord, that is, *Jehovah*, the Lord God appeared, and sat or walked, and did and spake this or that. In so many transactions and dialogues it is very hard to suppose that there was nothing else but a created angel came assuming the name of God. Surely such sort of representations would lead all common readers into a gross mistake, if God himself were not here at all in a special and visible manner.

It is very probable there might be some glorious light, some awful brightness, that frequently surrounded and invested this human form in which God appeared and conversed with man, and which might be called his divine form, that he might be thereby in some measure distinguished and well known as God. Doubtless the Lord, *Jehovah*, when he came down to visit men, carried some ensign of divine majesty with him, some splendid cloud or luminous rays about him when he designed that men should know God was there. It was such a light appeared often at the door of the tabernacle, and fixed its abode on the ark between the cherubims, and by the *jews* was called the *shekinah*, that is, the habitation of God. And thence God is described in scripture as "dwelling in light, and clothed with light as with a garment," *Psal. civ. 4.* but in the midst of this brightness there seems to have been sometimes a human shape and figure. And probably this heavenly brightness was that divine clothing, that form of God of which *Christ* divested himself when he came to tabernacle, or dwell in flesh, with a design of humiliation, though he might converse with men heretofore arrayed in this lightsome robe, this covering or habitation of God, which also he put on at his transfiguration in the mount, when his garments were white as the light; and at his ascension to heaven, when a bright cloud received or invested him, and when he appeared to *John, Rev. i. 13.*

And as God visibly conversed with *Adam* and his family, so also with several of the patriarchs. He was seen often by them, especially such of them as were most eminent for holiness in a degenerate age, and conversed familiarly with them in a visible manner: And thence probably came the phrase, "*Enoch* walked with God," *Gen. v. 22, 24.* and "*Noah* walked with God," *Gen. vi. 9.* which in process of time became a common phrase to signify a pious man, who conversed much with God in a spiritual manner, though those visible appearances were not then vouchsafed to him.

When God had chosen *Abraham* to be his peculiar favourite, he appeared to him frequently, *Acts vii. 2.* "The God of glory appeared to our father *Abraham* when he was in *Mesopotamia*, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, &c." And when he came into the land of *Canaan*, *Gen. xii. 11.* "The Lord appeared unto *Abraham*, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land; and there he built an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him; or, as the *hebrew* expresses it, who was seen by him." These seem to be visible appearances surrounded with light or glory, and therefore it is said, "the God of glory appeared to him."

Gen. xv. 1. "After these things the word of the Lord came unto *Abraham* in a vision, saying, Fear not, *Abraham*, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward: And *Abraham* said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me? &c." Here was a vision, and here was a voice; the person that appeared was the Lord God or *Jehovah Elobim*: and yet it is said, "The word of the Lord came to him in a vision:" probably this signifies *Jesus Christ*, the Logos or Word of God. And yet, verse 7. he assumes the name of *Jehovah*, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of *Ur* of the *Chaldees*:" and verse 17. a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between the pieces of the divided sacrifice in token of God's making a covenant with *Abraham*; as it follows, verse 18. "In that same day, the Lord, or *Jehovah*, made a covenant with *Abraham* *."

Gen.

* Here let it be observed, that the ancient *jews*, such as the talmudists or commentators on scripture, and *Philo* represent the Memra, the Logos, that is the Word of the Lord, as appearing to the patriarchs in

Gen. xvi. 7. "The angel of the Lord found *Hagar* in the wilderness, and said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly;" and though he be called the angel of the Lord, in four places of this narrative, yet verse 13. "She called the name of the Lord, or *Jehovab*, that spake to her, Thou God seest me." The person who appeared therefore seems to be one who was an angel of the Lord, and was also the Lord or *Jehovab*.

Gen. xvii. 1. "When *Abraham* was ninety years old and nine, the Lord or *Jehovab* appeared to him, and said unto him, I am the almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. Verse 3. And *Abraham* fell on his face: And God talked with him, saying, Behold my covenant is with thee, &c. to be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee, &c. and I will be their God." Here is another dialogue; and "God said unto *Abraham*, — and *Abraham* said unto God," verses 9, 15, 18. and in verse 22. "he left off talking with him, and God went up from *Abraham*," that is, the visible appearance ascended out of *Abraham's* sight.

Gen. xviii. 1. "And the Lord, *Jehovab*, 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 before 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 favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant." His first address was made to one of the three, who seemed to bear superior glory; afterward he invites them all to eat, and "he took butter and milk, verse 8. 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 he said; *Sarab* thy wife shall have a Son: at which tidings when *Sarab* laughed within herself, the Lord, or *Jehovab*, said to unto *Abraham*, Wherefore did *Sarab* laugh? Verse 13. Is any thing too hard for the Lord, or *Jehovab*?" Now I think it is evident that one of these three men was expressly called *Jehovab*: two of them went onward toward *Sodom*, but he that is called *Jehovab* seemed to stay behind; verses 16, 17, and 22. "The men, that is, the two men, turned their faces from thence, and went towards *Sodom*, but *Abraham* stood yet before *Jehovab*." And a long dialogue there ensues between *Abraham* and the Lord or *Jehovab*, about the sparing of *Sodom*, wherein *Abraham* addresses him as the true God, in verse 33. "The Lord, *Jehovab*, went his way as soon as he had left communing with *Abraham*, and *Abraham* returned to his place." And Gen. xix. 1. "There came two angels to *Sodom* at even," which most probably were the two men that left *Abraham* while *Jehovab* tarried and talked with him. Now it is evident in the conversation that neither of these two angels assumed the name of *Jehovab*;

in almost all these places where God is said to appear: and of this divine Word they give us two different ideas, as I have shewn elsewhere: The one is, that it signifies something in and of the true and eternal godhead, some distinct principle in the divine nature itself, which is called the Word or Wisdom of God, whereby God revealed himself to men. The other is the idea of some most excellent angel in whom God resided, and by whom God manifested himself, and who was upon that account called the Word of God. Their writings lead us plainly to both these ideas: Nor is it at all unreasonable to suppose, that both these ideas may be united in one, and thus compose a sort of complex person, an angel inhabited by true godhead under the idea of divine Wisdom. Some have called this person a god-angel in all these visible appearances; and why may not our blessed Saviour be this god-angel by reason of his human soul pre-existent and united to godhead in its unincarnate or angelic state, that is, before he became complete God-man, and afterward he was "made a little lower than the angels" by dwelling in flesh and blood? See more of this matter in other writings. But this I do but just mention as I pass along, and in the margin only, because I would not enter into any modus of explaining the internal distinctions in the godhead in these discourses: especially since these discourses agree well enough with any known scheme of internal distinctions in the godhead.

bovab; for verse 13. they say, "The cry of the men of *Sodom* is waxen great before the face of the Lord, that is, *Jehovab*, and *Jehovab* hath sent us to destroy it." This narrative gives us a plain account of the great God appearing to *Abraham*, and conversing with him in the form of a man; for it is said, he "appeared to *Abraham*, or was seen of him, talked with him, and went up from him."

Gen. xxi. 17. "God heard the voice of the lad, *Ismael*, and the angel of God called unto *Hagar* out of heaven, Arise, lift up the lad, for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water." Here is a person speaking, who seems to assume something of godhead, who yet is called the angel of God: But whether there was any visible appearance, the scripture saith not.

Gen. xxii. 11. "The angel of the Lord called to *Abraham* out of heaven, and said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, that is, *Isaac*, for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thy only son from me. Verse 14. And *Abraham* called the name of that place *Jehovab Jireb*. Verse 15. 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, that in blessing I will bless thee, because thou hast obeyed my voice." Here also is an angel of *Jehovab*, who seems to assume the character of deity: but whether there was a visible appearance or only a voice is not certain.

Gen. xxvi. 2. "And the Lord, *Jehovab*, appeared unto *Isaac*, and said, Go not down into the land of *Egypt*; sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and I will bless thee, I will perform the oath which I sware unto *Abraham* thy father. Verse 24. And when *Isaac* went to *Beersheba*, the Lord appeared to him the same night, and said, I am the God of *Abraham* thy father: Fear not, for I am with thee." Besides these two, I remember not any other appearance of God to *Isaac*.

The two first appearances which we read, that God made unto *Jacob* were both in a dream; one in *Gen.* xxviii. 12. "The angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder, set up on the earth and reaching to heaven; and behold the Lord, or *Jehovab*, stood above it, and said, I am *Jehovab*, the God of *Abraham* thy father, and the God of *Isaac*. *Gen.* xxviii. 12, 13. and verse 16. *Jacob* said, surely the Lord is in this place. *Gen.* xxxi. 11, 13. And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, *Jacob*; and I said, here am I: And he said, I am the God of *Bethel*, where thou vowedst a vow unto me." Here is an angel in a divine or inspired dream calling himself the God of *Bethel*. And verse 24. "God came to *Laban* the Syrian by night in a dream, and said to him, Take heed that thou speak not to *Jacob* neither good or bad." Doubtless these ancients had sufficient rules of distinction to know when such a dream was divine.

Gen. xxxii. 24. "And *Jacob* was left alone, when his wives and children were gone over the ford, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day: And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh: And *Jacob* replied, I will not let thee go except thou bless me: And he said, Thy name shall be called no more *Jacob* but *Israel*, for as a prince hast thou power with God, and with men, and hast prevailed; and *Jacob* called the name of that place, *PENIEL*, for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved*." Now if we compare this history with

Hosea

* We find here it was a very ancient opinion that "no man could bear the sight of God and live:" What is the true meaning of it, see in the following reflexions on the appearance of the glory of God to *Moses* at the giving of the law, *Exod.* xix. and xx. and in the hole of the rock, *Exod.* xxxiii. 9.

Hosea xii. 3, 4, 5. we shall find that this person who wrestled with *Jacob*, and is here called a man, and also God, is by the prophet called God, and an angel, and the Lord God of hosts, even *Jehovah*. The words are these, "By his strength he had power with God, yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him, he found him in *Bethel*, and there he spake with us; even the Lord God of hosts, *Jehovah* is his memorial."

Gen. xxxv. 9. "And God appeared unto *Jacob* again when he came out of *Padan-aram*, and blessed him. And God said, I am God almighty, be fruitful and multiply, &c. And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him. And *Jacob* called the name of the place where God spake with him, *Bethel*."

Gen. xlvii. 2. "God spake unto *Israel* in the visions of the night, and said, I am God, the God of thy father, fear not to go down into *Egypt*." In *Gen.* xlviii. 3. *Jacob* rehearsed the former appearance of God to him; "God almighty appeared to me at *Luz* in the land of *Canaan*, and blessed me." And verse 15. he blesses *Joseph* thus, "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," that is, the sons of *Joseph*. And in this recognition of the former appearances, and favours of God, *Jacob* seems to make the God of his fathers, *Abraham* and *Isaac*, to be the same person with the angel that redeemed him from all evil.

After this I find no more such appearances of God unto men, till that glorious apparition to *Moses* in the burning bush.

Exod. ii. 2, 3. "And 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. Verse 3. And *Moses* said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. Verse 4. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the middle of the bush, and said, *Moses, Moses*. And he said, here am I. Verse 5. And he said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Verse 6. 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. Verse 7. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in *Egypt*, &c. Verse 13. 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? Verse 14. 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. Verse 15. 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 for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." Chapter iv. 1. "And *Moses* answered and said, But behold, they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee." And in order to prove that the Lord or *Jehovah* had appeared unto him, "The Lord said unto him, Cast thy rod on the ground, &c. Verse 5. That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of *Abraham*, the God of *Isaac*, and the God of *Jacob*, hath appeared unto thee." And thus the sacred dialogue between God and *Moses* proceeds. This same history is briefly repeated by *Stephen*, *Acts* vii. 30—36.

Whoever reads this narrative, will plainly find, that this person who appeared to *Moses*, was both the angel of the Lord, and was God himself: For it is said, *Moses* was afraid to look upon God. He is called an angel by the sacred writer at his first appearance, but he is also called in the succeeding parts of the narrative God the Lord, *Jehovah*, the God of *Abraham*, &c. The sacred historian calls him so frequently, and he himself roundly and strongly calls himself so. He assumes the highest names and titles of the supreme God, "I am that I am, &c." and that in the most solemn and majestic manner that it is possible God himself could do, if he designed never so plainly to declare his own personal presence.

Now I would humbly propose these questions to every reader, Whether if he should put himself as it were in the place of *Moses*, he would not have been fully convinced, and believed that the great and eternal God was the person actually immediately present in the burning bush in an extraordinary manner? Whether he could avoid believing that the person who spake to him was really the true and eternal God? And though he might suppose that it was an angel that appeared there, whether such strong, express and solemn assumptions of the divine nature, would not lead him to believe that God and this angel, at least in that season, and for that purpose, were so far united as to become as it were one agent, one speaker, one complex person? And whether *Moses* himself could have any other idea of this appearance, but as God, the great and blessed God, dwelling or residing in, and acting and speaking by this angel? Whether the mere idea of a creature, an angel sent as a vicegerent or deputy to speak in the name of God, could answer these sublime assertions of the sacred writer, and these divine characters so strongly assumed by the angel? And whether any unprejudiced reader could understand this to be the mere messenger of an absent God, since there is no notice through all this narrative that he was merely an angel sent from God, considered as absent, to carry a message to *Moses*, but rather many notices given both by the person appearing in the bush, and by the sacred historian, that God himself was there, or such an angel who was also the great and blessed God?

Exod. iv. 24. "And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met *Moses*, and sought to kill him," upon which *Zipporah* circumcised her son. This seems to be an apparition of the Lord or *Jehovah* in the form of a man, something like God's wrestling with *Jacob*, and giving *Moses* a terrible reproof, because he had neglected to make his son pass under that sacred rite of circumcision.

Exod. vi. 2. "And God spake unto *Moses*, and said unto him, I am the Lord: and I appeared unto *Abraham*, unto *Isaac*, and unto *Jacob*, by the name of God almighty, but by my name of *Jehovah* was I not known to them." Can any thing more strongly express the ancient appearance of the true God himself to the patriarchs, who also appeared lately to *Moses* under a new name?

After this you have a multitude of instances, wherein the Lord or *Jehovah* conversed freely with *Moses* upon every occasion; whether under any visible appearance or figure, the scripture does not acquaint us, except in the following instances.

Exod. xiii. 21. "And the Lord, or *Jehovah*, went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them in the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light." Who in *Exod. xiv. 19.* is called the "angel of God which went before the camp of *Israel*"; he now removed and went behind them, and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them." And in verse 24. of this chapter, he is again called *Jehovah*: "It came to pass in the morning-watch, the

the Lord, that is, *Jehovah*, looked unto the host of the *Egyptians*, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud."

Exod. xvi. 9. *Moses* bid *Aaron* say to the people, "Come near before the Lord; and as *Aaron* spake to the whole congregation, behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud; and the Lord spake unto *Moses*, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of *Israel*, — and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God."

Exod. xvii. 5, 6, 7. "The Lord said to *Moses*, Go on before the people, and take with thee the elders of *Israel*, — Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in *Horeb*, and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it. — And he called the name of the place *Massab* and *Meribab*, because of the chiding of the children of *Israel*, and because they tempted the Lord." Here God promises to stand before *Moses* on the rock, and the *Israelites* are said to tempt the Lord, which is applied to *Christ*, *1 Cor. x. 4.* This rock on which God stood is called *Christ*, that is, the type of *Christ* in whom God dwelt. And verse 9. they are said to tempt *Christ*, that is, they tempted God, appearing in a visible manner as standing on a rock.

The other place where they tempted God, is *Deut. xxi. 5, 6.* for want of bread and water, and "the Lord sent fiery serpents, &c." Both these are joined together, *Deut. viii. 15.* And in both places we may justly say *Christ* was tempted, that is, God appearing as the leader of *Israel* in the wilderness: For if it is expressly asserted, they tempted *Christ* when the serpents slew them, where there is not any express account of a visible appearance of God in the history, much more may it be said they tempted *Christ* when *Moses* smote the rock, where there was a visible appearance of God as standing on the rock.

Exod. xix. 2, 3. "*Israel* camped before the mount *Sinai*, and *Moses* went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain. Verse 9. And the Lord said unto *Moses*, Behold, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee. Verse 18. And mount *Sinai* was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Verse 19. *Moses* spake, and God answered him by a voice. Verse 20. And the Lord called *Moses* up to the top of the mount, and *Moses* went up." *Exod. xx. 1.* "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of *Egypt*, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me, &c. Verse 19. And the people said to *Moses*, Let not God speak to us, lest we die. Verse 21. And the people stood afar off, and *Moses* drew near unto the thick darkness where God was; and the Lord said unto *Moses*, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of *Israel*, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven." Thus God gave his laws to his people from mount *Sinai*; but neither *Moses* nor the people did at this time see any similitude or figure; for so *Moses* tells them, *Deut. iv. 12.* "And the Lord spake unto him out of the midst of the fire: Ye heard the voice of the words; but ye saw no similitude, only ye heard a voice."

And indeed it is probable that *Moses* never saw any form of the countenance, or face of a man, in all the appearances of God to him: And though it be said, *Deut. xxxiv. 10.* "There arose not a prophet since in *Israel* like unto *Moses*, whom the Lord knew face to face," yet we know that the same expression is used concerning the people of *Israel*, *Deut. v. 4.* "The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire." Therefore this can mean no more than that God spake with *Moses* and with the people as one man does to another,

when they mutually see each other's faces; though the favour and intimacy to which *Moses* was admitted, was much greater than what God bestowed on the people; because *Moses* held long dialogues with God several times, and could go and ask him any thing, almost upon every occasion. But still it seems probable, I think, that *Moses* never saw any human face in his converses with God; for when *Moses* in *Exod.* xxxiii. 18. desired to see the glory of God, God denied his request, and said, "Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live:" Upon the whole therefore, this expression face to face, in these texts, must signify no more, than a condescending manner of conversing with men by a voice, as one man converses with another, when they see each other's faces: though it is abundantly evident that some of the more ancient patriarchs conversed with God in the form of a man, and probably saw a human face at least in a confused vision, and as has been before declared.

Yet there remains some difficulty still in what sense God said, "Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live," when it is probable that *Abraham* and *Jacob* long before, and afterward *Josua* and *Gideon* saw the face of that angel who is called *Jehovah*: and my reason for it is this, because they took him to be a man when they first saw and spake with him, and therefore at first perhaps there was no peculiar lustre of glory, or cloud to conceal his face and distinguish him from a common man.

Answer. 1. It is granted that this expression cannot signify that no living man should ever see an apparition of God with a human face, at least in a general glimpse, for the reasons which are just now mentioned. 2. Nor can this awful expression of "not seeing the face of God and live," signify that no living man can see the essence of God as he is a spirit, and invisible to bodily eyes; for in this sense angels and human souls are invisible as well as God himself. Therefore, 3. I think it must intend that no man in this mortal state can bear the sight of such intense rays of light and glory as perhaps he assumes in heaven, and as would become the great God to assume on earth, if he appeared in all the corporeal splendor due to divine majesty appearing among men, as in *Christ's* appearance to *John*, *Rev.* i. 17. "he fell down as dead." And this exposition is yet more probable, if we consider that *St. Paul* describes God "as dwelling in that light which no man can approach unto;" and upon this account it is added, "whom no man hath seen, nor can see," *1 Tim.* vi. 16. For in this sense, "our God would be a consuming fire," *Heb.* xii. 29. and that in the most literal sense.

It is very probable, that the unsufferable blaze of the glory on the mercy-seat was always allayed with the cloud intervening, which might be an emblem or type of "God manifest in the flesh;" that is, God dwelling personally in the man *Jesus*, or in the flesh at his incarnation. And it is probable also for this reason, that the high priest, when he went into the most holy place, was to make the smoke of the incense arise between this glory and himself, that he might not die by his curiosity or too near approach.

Exod. xxiii. 20. "God says unto *Moses*, Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Verse 21. Beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him." Here some critical writers have remarked two things, 1. That the name of God is sometimes put for God himself, as *Psal.* xx. 1. "The name of the God of *Jacob* defend thee:" So that God himself most probably dwelt in this angel. 2. It is said, my "name is in the midst of him" בְּקִרְבוֹ
which

which intimates a real indwelling; which also further appears, because it is said, "he will not pardon your transgressions;" now an authority to forgive, or not to forgive sins, is a prerogative of God. And why may we not suppose the fulness of the godhead dwelling in this angel, who was a spirit, as well as the "fulness of the godhead dwelling bodily" in the complete human nature of *Jesus Christ* when he took a body, as *Col. ii. 9*? I add yet further, that we have much reason to believe that this is the same angel, that so often assumed the sublimest names of God in his appearing both to *Moses* and to the patriarchs.

Exod. xxiv. 9. "Then went up *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, and seventy of the elders of *Israel*. Verse 10. 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. Verse 11. And upon the nobles of the children of *Israel* he laid not his hand:" that is, he did not destroy them though they saw God, and it follows, "Also they saw God, and did eat and drink." Here it is probable they saw nothing but a very bright or fiery cloud, as in verse 16. But out of the midst of it God perhaps might converse with *Moses*; otherwise how could they know that this was the God of *Israel*? But I am inclined to believe they saw nothing of any human form; though indeed it is expressed, "there was a paved work of sapphire under his feet," which may signify only beneath him, that is, beneath this fiery cloud: but it is certain, his face they saw not. The children of *Israel* were so prone to idolatry, that God never gave them, nor perhaps even to *Moses*, the sight of an human face in all their visions, that there might be no foundation for framing an image like him, *Deut. iv. 16*. And it is evident that when *Moses* "went up into the mount, verse 16. it was only a cloud covered the mount, and the glory of the Lord abode upon mount *Sinai*; and the sight of the glory of God was like devouring fire on the top of the mount;" whence probably *St. Paul* might derive that expression, *Heb. xii. 29*. "Our God is a consuming fire."

Exod. xxv. 21. "And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark. Verse 22. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee, from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims, which are upon the ark of the testimony," *Exod. xxviii. 30, 35*. When *Aaron* goes into the holy place where the mercy seat stood, he is said to go in before the Lord. Upon this account the Lord of hosts is said to dwell between the cherubims, *1 Sam. iv. 4.* and *2 Sam. vi. 2.* and *Psal. lxxx. 1.* and *xcix. 1.* On this account also when the ark was moved from place to place, God himself is said to remove, *Psal. xlvii.* When *David* carried the ark into *Zion*, verse 5. "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." And when the ark came into the tabernacle or temple, *Psal. xxiv. 7.* "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in: The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory." And when *Solomon* built the temple and brought in the ark of God to it, *2 Chron. vi. 41.* *Solomon* said, "Arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place, thou and the ark of thy strength:" which is repeated, *Psal. cxxxii. 8.*

And concerning *Zion* it is said, *Psal. lxxviii. 18.* "This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in. Verse 17. The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: The Lord is among them as in *Sinai*, in the holy place." As God appeared on *Sinai* in a visible cloud, in fire or glory, where thousands of angels surrounded him, so God dwelt in *Zion* over the mercy-seat in a visible and bright cloud, between the cherubims, representing the attendance of angels. Then follows, verse 18. "Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive,"

tive," which is applied to *Christ*, *Ephes.* iv. 8. Thus the ascent of the ark of God to *Zion*, was a type of the ascension of *Christ* to heaven: For as God dwelt upon the ark between the cherubims in a bright cloud, under the *jewish* dispensation, and thence communicated his mind to men, and was there solemnly invoked and worshipped, so the "fulness of the godhead dwelt bodily in the man *Christ Jesus*," *Col.* ii. 9. and thus God in *Christ* reveals himself to us, and is worshipped and invoked by us under the christian dispensation; but still with this difference, that the union between God and man in *Christ Jesus* is much more near, more intimate and glorious, so as to make one complex person or God-man, and it is so constant as never to be dissolved; for *Christ*, who is of the seed of *David*, after the flesh, is by this union "God over all blessed for evermore." See *Rom.* ix. 5.

Exod. xxxi. 18. "When God had made an end of communing with *Moses* on mount *Sinai*, he gave unto him two tables of testimony, tables of stone written with the finger of God." This seems to intimate a human shape giving the tables to *Moses*, but not the vision of a human face.

In *Exod.* xxxii. 2. When *Israel* had offended God by the golden calf, he said, "I will send an angel before thee, and I will drive out the *canaanites*, &c. for I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiff-necked people, lest I consume thee in the way." It is the opinion of doctor *Owen* on this place, that the angel which God in his anger told them he would send before them, when he himself refused to go up in the midst of them, was different from that angel whom he promised to them, *Exod.* xxii. 21. "in whom the name of God was:" But upon their mourning and repentance, and upon the intercession of *Moses*, verses 4. and 14. God says, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest;" which is much the same thing as if he had said, the angel of my presence shall go with thee, for so this angel in whom the name of God dwelt, is called, *Isai.* lxiii. 9. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them."

Exod. xxxiii. 9. "*Moses* entered into the tabernacle, and the cloudy pillar descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord * talked with *Moses*, and all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent-door. Verse 11. And the Lord spake unto *Moses* face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Yet, as I before intimated, perhaps this signifies only free mutual discourse like human and friendly conversation; for a few verses afterwards, God refused to let *Moses* see his face, verse 20. "Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live."

Upon this account it may be queried, whether *Moses* ever saw the likeness of a human face in all the appearances of God to him: yet there seems to be the similitude of the back of a man as to the shape of his body, in which God appeared to *Moses* at his request; for the Lord said, verse 21. "Behold there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock. Verse 22. And it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by that I will put thee into a cleft of the rock, and I will cover thee with my hand while I pass by. Verse 23. And I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen."

And

* Note, The Lord is not in the original in this place; and this is the only place that occurs to me — where the nominative case is wanting when God or the angel is said to talk with *Moses* out of the cloud; but verse 11. immediately it is said, "The Lord, that is, *Jehovah* spake to *Moses* face to face." And *Exod.* xxxiv. 5. it is said, "The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with *Moses* there, &c." So that this single ellipsis or subintellection of the nominative case Lord, verse 9: ought not to be construed in opposition to all other places where the Lord himself is said to speak with *Moses*.

And accordingly in *Exod. xxxiv. 5.* "The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. Verse 6. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, &c. And *Moses* made haste and bowed his head toward the earth and worshipped. Verse 14. And the Lord said, thou shalt worship no other God, for the Lord, *Jehovah*, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

It is possible that these expressions of God's covering *Moses* with his hand while the glory of God past by, and *Moses* seeing the back parts of God, may signify no more than this, that in this particular appearance of God he arrayed himself in beams of light of such unsufferable splendor, that it would have destroyed the body of *Moses* had not God sheltered and protected him; and that the back parts which *Moses* saw, may only signify this same bright appearance after it was gone to a safer distance. Or we may suppose that there was a human form in this appearance, darting unsufferable light from his face, which for that reason could not be seen; and that *Moses* saw the similitude of the back of a man, after he was past to some distance from him.

It is not improbable but that in some of the other discoveries of God to *Moses* he might appear in the eyes of *Moses* in a human form with a bright, but not unsufferable shine of glory covering all his stature, even as the face of *Moses* himself might appear in the eyes of the children of *Israel*, when the skin of his face shone, so much that they were afraid to come nigh him, *Exod. xxxiv. 30.* And there is a great probability of it if we consider, that God said concerning *Moses*, *Numb. xii. 8.* "the similitude of the Lord shall he behold," that is, God in the figure of a man, though not his face.

God had promised in *Exod. xxix. 42.* "That at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation I will meet with the children of *Israel*, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory." This promise was accomplished, *Exod. xl. 34.* "When the tabernacle was erected, then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of God filled the tabernacle. Verse 35. And *Moses* was not able at that time to enter into the tabernacle of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle."

Levit. ix. 1, 4. "*Moses* called *Aaron* and his sons and the elders of *Israel*, and said, to-day the Lord will appear unto you. Verse 5. And all the congregation drew near and stood before the Lord. Verse 6. And *Moses* said, this is the thing which the Lord commanded, that ye should do. And the glory of the Lord shall appear unto you. And when *Aaron* had offered the appointed offerings for himself and for the people, verse 23. *Moses* and *Aaron* went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out and blessed the people; and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. Verse 24. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat, which when all the people saw they shouted, and fell on their faces." Here it may be observed, that the Lord is said to appear to them, verse 4. when verse 23. "it was the glory of the Lord appearing to the people," that is, a bright light and a consuming fire, verses 23, 24.

Numb. xii. 5. "And the Lord came down in the pillar of a cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called *Aaron* and *Miriam*, and they came forth. Verse 6. 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. Verse 7. My servant *Moses* is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. Verse 8. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches,

speeches, and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: Wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant *Moses*? Verse 9. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed. Verse 10. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle, and behold *Miriam* became leprous white as snow."

It is not easy to say what the precise difference is between the various ways of God's ancient discoveries of himself to men; but I think thus much is very plain, which I before hinted, that though the common method of God's converse with the people and with *Aaron* was by a voice proceeding from the bright cloud or *Shekinah*, yet that *Moses* was admitted to a more intimate converse with God in a way of dialogue, as one man talks freely with another, which the scripture calls face to face, and mouth to mouth: and on some particular occasions he beheld God in the shape or likeness of the body of a man, for it is said, "He shall behold the similitude of the Lord," though perhaps a cloud of glory might always cover his face, because the face of God was not to be seen by him.

Numb. xxii. 9. "And God came unto *Balaam*, and said, What men are these with thee? And *Balaam* said unto God, *Balak* the king of *Moab* hath sent unto me, saying, Come now curse the people, that is *Israel*. Verse 12. And God said unto *Balaam*, Thou shalt not go with them, thou shalt not curse the people; and *Balaam* said to the princes of *Balak*, The Lord or *Jehovah* refuseth to give me leave to go with you." And verse xxii. &c. there is the angel of the Lord meeting *Balaam* on the road to *Moab*, and conversing with him; but I do not find that this angel either assumes the name of the Lord, or is so called by the sacred writer: unless we may infer thus much by comparing what the angel said unto *Balaam*, verse 25. "The word that I shall speak unto thee, that shalt thou speak," with chapter xxiii. 3, 4. "*Balaam* said to *Balak*, peradventure the Lord will come to me: and God met *Balaam*. Verse 5. And the Lord or *Jehovah* put a word in *Balaam's* mouth, and said, Return unto *Balak*, and thus shalt thou speak, &c. Again, verse 16. And the Lord or *Jehovah* met *Balaam*, and put a word in his mouth, &c." Chapter xxiv. 2. "And *Balaam* lift up his eyes, and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he took up his parable, and said, The man who heard the words of God, who saw the vision of the almighty, having his eyes opened, hath said, How goodly are thy tents, O *Jacob*! &c." Whether this be sufficient to determine this angel to be *Jehovah*, I leave to the reader.

Deut. xxxii. 33. "The Lord your God went in the way before you in fire by night, to shew you by what way you should go, and in a cloud by day." *Deut.* iv. 12. "The Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of words, but saw no similitude, only a voice. Verse 16. Left ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure the likeness of male or female."

Deut. xxiii. 13. "Thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon, and thou shalt dig therewith, and cover that which cometh from thee: for the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp to deliver thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy, that he see no unclean thing in thee." This text does not indeed prove any appearance of God, but may be only a representation of God walking through their camp after the manner of men, to impress a more awful idea of the presence of God upon the people of *Israel*, that they might abstain from all legal impurities of every kind.

Joshua v. 13. "When *Joshua* was by *Jericho*, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and
Joshua

Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? Verse 14. And he said, Nay, but as the 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? Verse 15. 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." Chapter vi. 2. "And the Lord said unto *Joshua*, See I have given into thine hand *Jericho*, &c." Here it seems evident that the captain of the host of the Lord is also called the Lord or *Jehovah*; and *Joshua* is commanded, just as *Moses* was, to loose his shew from his foot, because the place was holy, that is, because God himself was present there.

Judges ii. 1. "And an angel of the Lord came up from *Gilgal* to *Bochim*, and said, I made you go up out of *Egypt*, and have brought you into the land which I swore unto your fathers, and I said, I will never break my covenant with you." This was certainly a human appearance, for the angel came from *Gilgal* to *Bochim*, which plainly intimates a visible person moving or passing from one place to another; yet the words are as plainly the language of God; so that, in all probability, this was also the angel of God's presence.

Judges vi. 11. "And there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in *Ophra*: and *Gideon* threshed wheat by the wine-press. Verse 12. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said unto him, the Lord *Jehovah* is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. Verse 13. And *Gideon* said unto him, O my Lord, if the Lord *Jehovah* be with us, why is all this befallen us? Verse 14. And the Lord *Jehovah* looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save *Israel* from the hand of the *Midianites*: Have not I sent thee?" Here is a long dialogue between the Lord and *Gideon*. Verse 20. "And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth; and he did so. Verse 21. Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and unleavened cakes, and there rose up fire out of the rock and consumed the flesh and the cakes: and the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight. Verse 22. And when *Gideon* perceived that he was an angel, *Gideon* said, alas, O Lord God, for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face. Verse 23. And the Lord said unto him, peace be unto thee; fear not, thou shalt not die."

On this transaction I make these few remarks.

1. This angel had doubtless a human shape, figure and voice, for he sat under an oak; and *Gideon* brought him a present of flesh and cakes to eat, thinking at first it might have been a man of God or a prophet; though when the angel bid him offer it in sacrifice, and then consumed it by a miraculous fire, he perceived that it was no man, but an angel of God; and it is hardly to be supposed, but that *Gideon* saw his face.

2. Here is an angel of the Lord, who by the sacred writer is several times called *Jehovah*; for these names the Lord or *Jehovah*, and the angel of the Lord, are used promiscuously by the historian, though *Gideon* did not know it was God himself.

3. The language which this angel speaks, is not such as would immediately determine *Gideon* to believe it was *Jehovah* or God himself who appeared, and therefore we find *Gideon* does not worship him nor address him as *Jehovah*.

4. Though *Gideon* does not expressly call this angel, God or *Jehovah*, but only perceived at last that he had seen an angel of the Lord, yet we may suppose that in his

recollection he took it to be that peculiar angel in whom God resided or dwelt, for he feared he should die because he had seen him. Now though there was an ancient and current opinion among the *Israelites*, that none could see the face of God and live, yet there does not seem to have been any such notion that death would ensue upon the sight of a common angel.

But however, whether *Gideon* supposed this angel to be inhabited by *Jehovah* or no, it is plain that the sacred historian calls him *Jehovah*.

Judges xiii. 3. "The angel of the Lord appeared to the wife of *Manoah*, and said unto her, thou shalt conceive and bear a son, &c. Verse 6. The woman came and told her husband, saying, a man of God came to me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible, &c. Verse 8. And *Manoah* entreated the Lord or *Jehovah*, and said, Let the man of God which thou didst send, come again to us. Verse 9. And God hearkened to the voice of *Manoah*, and the angel of God came again to the woman: she called her husband, and *Manoah* said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am. Verse 15. And *Manoah* said unto the angel of the Lord, Let us make ready a kid for thee. Verse 16. And the angel of the Lord said unto *Manoah*, I will not eat of thy bread, and if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord; for *Manoah* knew not that he was an angel of the Lord. Verse 17. And *Manoah* said to the angel of the Lord, What is thy name? And the angel said unto him, Why askest thou after my name, since it is a secret, אלהים or wonderful?" The same name which is given to *Christ*, *Isa.* ix. 6. "His name shall be called, wonderful. Verse 19. So *Manoah* took a kid, with a meat offering, and offered it to the Lord: and the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. Verse 21. Then *Manoah* knew that he was an angel of the Lord. Verse 22. And *Manoah* said to his wife, we shall surely die, because we have seen God." Here also is such an angel in whom God is supposed to reside, for *Manoah* said, "we have seen God," and therefore he thought that they should both die.

I do not remember any appearance of God to *David*. He saw the angel of the Lord that was sent to spread a pestilence among the people, by the threshing-place of *Araunah* the *Jebusite*, *2 Sam.* xxiv. 16. "And *David* spake unto the Lord or *Jehovah*, when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and done wickedly." But it does plainly appear by all the circumstances of the history, that this was that peculiar angel in whom God dwelt, or that the angel was called *Jehovah*.

The Lord appeared also to *Solomon*, *1 Kings* iii. 5. and ix. 2. but it was in a dream by night, whence therefore I derive no inferences at present.

1 Kings xxii. 19. The prophet *Micaiah* said, "I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right-hand, and on his left: and the Lord said, Who shall persuade *Abah*? &c." But this seems to be a vision divinely represented to the imagination of the prophet, from whence therefore I infer nothing concerning God's real appearances.

Job iv. 13. When *Eliphaz* represents the apparition of a spirit before his face in thoughts from the visions of the night, he does not give us sufficient ground to form any conclusions concerning the real appearance either of God or an angel, in a book of such sublime poetry, wherein this is introduced in a manner of what the poets call a machine.

Isai. vi. 1. "In the year that king *Uzziab* died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Verse 2. Above it stood the seraphims, each one had six wings, &c. Verse 3. And one cried un-

to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory. Verse 5. Then said I, Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts. Verse 8. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me. Verse 9. And he said, Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not." This appearance of the LORD or *Jehovah* to *Isaiab* in his glory is expressly attributed to *Christ* by the apostle; *John* xii. 39, 40, 41. "These things said *Esaias* when he saw his glory and spake of him."

It has been objected indeed, that the word Lord in the first and eighth verses, is not *Jehovah* in the *hebrew*, but *Adonai*; but it is evident, that the word in the fifth verse is *Jehovah*. When the prophet says, "Mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts, *Jehovah Tzebaoth*;" the person therefore whom *Isaiab* saw was *Jehovah*.

Ezekiel often had the sight of God or of *Jehovah*. In chapters i. iii. viii. and x. &c. But as it is expressly said in *Ezekiel* i. 1. "As I was by the river of *Cbebar*, the heavens were opened and I saw the visions of God;" so whether all these appearances were not purely visionary, may be questioned: however it may not be amiss to transcribe a few expressions of the sacred writer on this subject. *Ezek.* i. 26. "Above the firmament that was over the heads of the living creatures was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance as a man above upon it, from his loins upward and downward, as it were the appearance of fire, and the appearance of a rainbow round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord, or *Jehovah*. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake." *Ezek.* iii. 22. "And the hand of the Lord was upon me, and he said, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee: Then I arose and went forth into the plain, and behold the glory of the Lord stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river of *Cbebar*." *Ezek.* viii. 1. "As I sat in mine house and the elders of *Judab* sat before me, the hand of the Lord God fell upon me; then I beheld and lo, a likeness as the appearance of fire from his loins downward and upward, &c. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head, and the Spirit lift me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to *Jerusalem*: and behold the glory of the God of *Israel* was there according to that vision I saw in the plain." *Ezek.* x. 18. "Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims. Verse 20. This is the living creature that I saw under the God of *Israel* by the river *Cbebar*, &c."

Dan. iii. 25. *Nebuchadnezzar* when he had cast the three *jews* bound into the fiery furnace, 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." It is not to be supposed here that *Nebuchadnezzar* knew the *Messiah* or *Christ*, who was the Son of God, but he means to express a divine and God-like form*, which, verse 28. he calls

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* It is sufficiently known to the learned, that in the oriental ways of speaking, almost every thing may be called a father, a son or a daughter; the son of pride, for a proud man; the son of wickedness, for a wicked man; the sons of the mighty, for mighty men; and the word God is also used to aggrandize any idea; the trees of God for noble fair trees, &c. so that in *Nebuchadnezzar's* mouth this phrase, the Son of God, can only mean a very glorious person above the appearance of mankind.

the angel of the God of *Sbadrak*, &c. though probably it might be the peculiar angel of God's presence, in whom was the name of God, and who is the only begotten Son of God.

Daniel had several visions, and in some of them God appeared to him, or *Jesus Christ* in the form of man, *Dan.* vii. 9, 10, 13, 14. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him, thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Let it be observed here, that I do not number this among the proper, and real appearances of *Christ* or God; for it is called a dream which *Daniel* had, and the visions of his head upon his bed, as verses 7, 13. yet it was a dream divinely inspired. Here the ancient of days represents the divine being, or God himself, clothed in light or brightness white as snow or wool: one like the son of man coming with the clouds of heaven, seems to be the Son of God or *Jesus Christ*, who is also the son of man, ascending in the clouds of heaven, and he came to the ancient of days, that is, to God the Father, and received his dominion, glory and exaltation at his ascension into heaven in a bright cloud: and it is probable, that from the language of this dream or vision, *Christ* borrows his name, the son of man: and it is evident that our Saviour's description of his own future appearance as the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, *Matth.* xxvi. 64. is borrowed from this vision, and his real ascension to heaven and his exaltation there, is but an accomplishment of this prophetic scene.

Dan. viii. 15. *Daniel* had seen a vision just before, and while he was seeking for the meaning of it, "Behold, said he, there stood before me as the appearance of a man, and I heard a man's voice which called and said, *Gabriel* make this man to understand the vision." Surely this man who appeared seems to be *Jesus Christ*, who had command over *Gabriel*, one of the chief angels.

Dan. x. 5. "I lift up mine eyes and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linnen, whose loins were girded with fine gold, &c." Here is the description of an appearance very like the appearance of *Christ* to the apostle *John*, *Rev.* i. 13. but whether this was the angel of God's presence, viz. *Christ*, or another angel, is hard to determine. Verse 10. "Behold, an hand touched me, and set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands, and he said unto me, O *Daniel*, a man greatly beloved, — stand upright, for to thee am I now sent — Fear not, for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand and chasten thyself before God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of *Persia* withstood me one and twenty days: but lo, *Michael*, one, or the first, of the chief princes came to help me, and I remained there with the kings of *Persia*. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days. Verse 20. Then said he, Now will I return to fight with the prince of *Persia*: — there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but *Michael* your prince." Here it is very probable that the prince of the kingdom of *Persia* is one of those fallen angels, principalities and powers of darkness, who by divine permission governed the heathen nations, and

and were worshipped amongst them as gods, for the apostle tells the christians that the gentiles sacrificed to devils, 1 Cor. x. 20. all under *Satan* their sovereign, who is the god of this world, until *Christ* at his resurrection and ascension spoiled these principalities and powers, and dispossessed them of their dominions, Col. ii. 15. and led them captive, *Psal.* lxxviii. 18. and took the heathen world for his possession, and into his own government. It cannot be a good angel, because he withstood the good angel that was sent to *Daniel* with a divine commission twenty-one days; and because the angel who was sent to *Daniel* went afterwards to fight with this prince of *Persia*.

It is also very probable that *Michael* is *Jesus Christ*, because he is called your prince, that is, the prince of the *jews*, and one, or the first of the princes, that is, the prime archangel*. And in *Dan.* xii. 1. he is called "*Michael* the great prince, which standeth for the children of thy people," that is the prince or king of the *jews*, for such was *Jesus Christ* under the ancient dispensation; this was the known character of the *Messiah* among the *jews*; and as king of the *jews* he was sent into this world, then he came to his own, yet his own received him not, *John* i. 11.

What confirms this sentiment is that in *Rev.* xii. 7. when "there was war in heaven, *Michael* and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels," *Christ* as the head of the good angels, and *Satan* as the head of the evil angels maintained a war in heaven, that is, in the church, until the great dragon was cast out of the church, that old serpent called the devil and *Satan* which deceiveth the whole world. Then follows a loud voice in heaven, that is, the church, saying, "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God and the power of his *Christ*;" that is, the power of *Michael* prevailing over the dragon, "for the accuser of the brethren who accused them before God day and night is cast down" by the prevalent intercession of *Christ* pleading for them, and by his dominion over all things which God gave him at his ascension into heaven.

Amos vii. 7, 8. "Behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumb-line with a plumb-line in his hand, and the Lord *Jehovah* said unto me, *Amos*, what seest thou? And I said, a plumb-line. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people *Israel*, and I will not again pass by them any more." Here God appears evidently in a human figure to the prophet *Amos*, and the same human form seems to appear again to *Amos*, chapter ix. 1. "I saw the Lord, *Jehovah*, standing upon the altar, and he said, smite the lintel of the door that the posts may shake. Verse 2. Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring him down." And to make it appear that *Jehovah* is the peculiar name of the great God, he repeats, verse 6. what he had before said in chapter v. verse 8. "He that calleth the waters of the sea and poureth them out upon the face of the earth, the Lord or *Jehovah* is his name."

In many of the writings of the prophets it is said, "The Word of the Lord came unto them;" very frequently to *Ezekiel*, and sometimes to *Jeremiah* and others; when there is no evidence of any personal appearances to them at that time; though it is not improbable but at some of those seasons our blessed Saviour, who is called *Logos*, or the Word of God, might appear to them in a human form, and dictate a
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* Yet it has been observed that though some of the fathers and our later divines, speak of several archangels, the scripture uses the word but twice, viz. *Jude* 9. and 1 *Thess.* iv. 16. and both times in the singular number. Perhaps this *Michael*, that is, *Christ* the king of the *jews*, is the only archangel, or prince and head of all angels.

divine message. And some think those words of our Saviour, *John* x. 35. "If he called them gods unto whom the Word of God came," may have a reference to *Christ's* own appearance to the prophets, as this glorious person called the Word.

I do not remember any places which seem to favour this sentiment so much as these three, viz. 1. *Gen.* xv. 1. "The Word of the Lord came unto *Abraham* in a vision, saying, Fear not, *Abraham*, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." 2. *Gen.* xxxii. 24, 28. "There wrestled a man with *Jacob* till the breaking of the day; and he said, thy name shall be called no more *Jacob*, but *Israel*." Concerning which appearance, it is recorded, 1 *Kings* xviii. 31. "The Word of the Lord came to *Jacob*, saying, *Israel* shall be thy name." And 3. in the beginning of the book of *Jonah*, chapter i. verses 1, 2, 3. "Now the Word of the Lord came unto *Jonah* the son of *Amittai*, saying, Arise, go to *Nineveh* that great city and cry against it. But *Jonah* rose up to flee unto *Tarsibis* from the presence of the Lord, and he found a ship and went down into it to go unto *Tarsibis* from the presence of the Lord." Now if *Jonah* had only an inward inspiration and no vision, how could he imagine that he could flee from this inspiration by changing his place? And why should it be expressed that he fled from the presence of the Lord, unless God had manifested some visible presence to him?

Yet on the other hand when I read, *Micah* i. 1. "The Word of the Lord which came to *Micah*, which he saw concerning *Samaria* and *Jerusalem*;" and when I read also, *Amos* i. 1. "The Words of *Amos* which he saw concerning *Israel*;" I am a little inclined to think that this expression in *Jonah* might be an *hebrew* idiom of speech among the prophets, attributing a sort of visible presence metaphorically to the Word or Words of God which came to them by inward inspiration, or perhaps by a voice: or it may be, the things themselves which they foretold, were represented to their imagination, and on this account the Word or Words of God may be represented as visible. But I leave this matter as a point of difficulty not sufficiently determined.

Zech. i. 7. "In the second year of *Darius* came the Word of the Lord unto *Zabariab*, saying, verse 8. I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood amongst the myrtle trees, and behind him were red horses speckled and white. Verse 9. Then said I, O my Lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said, I will shew thee what these be. Verse 10. And the man that stood among the myrtle trees said, These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. Verse 11. And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest. Verse 12. Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on *Jerusalem*, and on the cities of *Judah* against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years? Verse 13. And the Lord, that is *Jehovah*, answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words. Verse 14. So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I am jealous for *Jerusalem*, &c." Here observe this angel of the Lord which stood among the myrtle trees had the form of a man, verse 8. and is not called *Jehovah*: He seems to be our blessed Saviour interceding for *Jerusalem*; for we do not find common angels introduced as intercessors in scripture; there is but one Mediator between God and man, the man *Christ Jesus*. And the Lord, or *Jehovah*, answered him comfortably. Perhaps this answer of the Lord, or *Jehovah*, was a voice without any figure or appearance, But after all, it is difficult precisely to represent this whole scene, and to adjust every part of these transactions: There seems to

us to be some confusion in it, for want of knowing the various ways and methods of God's discovery of himself and his mind to the prophets.

Zech. iii. 1. "And he, that is, one of the angels whom he spake of, chapter ii. 4. shewed me *Joshua* the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and *Satan* standing at his right hand to resist him. Verse 2. And the Lord, *Jehovab*, said to *Satan*, the Lord, *Jehovab*, rebuke thee, O *Satan*, even the Lord, *Jehovab*, that hath chose *Jerusalem*, rebuke thee. Verse 3. Now *Joshua* was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. Verse 4. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him; and unto *Joshua* he said, Behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of rayment, &c." Whether here was an appearance of *Jehovab*, or whether our Saviour appeared here only as a man or an angel, does not seem plainly determined by the words.

Having thus given a brief abridgment or historical narrative of the several appearances of God to men in the old testament, I proceed to make these few observations or remarks upon them, or rather to set forth in one short view the occasional observations which I made as I past along.

I. It is evident that the great and blessed God appeared several times of old in the form of a bright cloud or flame of fire, and from this cloud or fire proceeded a voice assuming the most glorious and awful names of God, viz. "the Lord, *Jehovab*, the God of *Abraham*, I am that I am, &c." whence all that saw and heard it must naturally infer that the great God dwelt in a most eminent manner and resided in that bright cloud of fire.

II. Sometimes this great and blessed God appeared in the form of a man or an angel. And indeed when the apparition is called an angel, in several places it was the real form of a man, because at first when the spectator saw it, he took it to be a man indeed: So *Abraham* saw three men, so *Jacob* wrestled with a man, so *Joshua* and *Gideon* and *Manoab* and his wife thought at first, that they saw and spoke with a man, who afterwards appeared to be an angel of the Lord. But it is evident that the true God resided or dwelt in this man or this angel, because sometimes he calls himself God, and assumes the highest names and characters of godhead; and sometimes the spectator calls him Lord or *Jehovab*, and God; and sometimes the sacred historian calls him *Jehovab* and God: And there are some instances wherein all these concur, as *Gen. xxviii.* and *Gen. xxxii.* compared with *Hof. xi.* and *Exod. iii.* Now if these things are a proof that the true God resided in the bright cloud or the fire, when he spoke from thence, it is at least as good a proof that the same great God resided in the angel to whom the same things are attributed.

III. There are several instances of the appearance of angels who do not assume to themselves any of the names or characters of God; so that it is evident that it was not the custom of common angels when sent by the great God to carry messages to men to assume divine titles, or speak with an air of divine authority in themselves, without the preface of—Thus saith the Lord—but there was one angel peculiarly distinguished from the rest "in whom the name of God was," as *Exod. xxiii.* and who is properly called the "angel of God's presence," *Isai. lxiii.* and "the presence of God," *Exod. xxiii.* and "the angel" emphatically, as in *Eccles. v. 6.* and who is very probably the same with the messenger or "angel of the covenant," *Mal. iii. 1.* And this also was the common opinion of the ancient *jews*, as is shewn in a dissertation on the Logos.

It may be further observed also under this head, that since our blessed Saviour, who is the angel of the covenant, came in the flesh, there have been many appearances of other

other angels, viz. to the shepherds, to *Joseph*, to *Christ* himself: to the disciples, viz. to women at the resurrection of *Christ*, and men at his ascension, to *St. Peter*, to *St. Paul*, to *St. John*, to *Cornelius*, and perhaps to others; but not one of them ever assumed the names, titles, characters, or worship belonging to God.

Thence we may confirm this inference, that the angel who under the old testament assumed divine titles, and accepted religious worship, was that peculiar angel of God's presence in whom God resided, or who was united to the godhead in a peculiar manner, even the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, who afterward took flesh and blood upon him, and was called *Jesus Christ* on earth.

And therefore since his incarnation no angel has ever appeared that durst call himself God, and assume divine titles, or accept of worship; but has rather expressly forbid the worship of him, as *Rev.* xix. 10. and xxii. 10.

IV. It is very plain and obvious to every reader, that one of the most glorious and illustrious apparitions of the great God, even that wherein the seraphs adore him as the Lord of the whole earth, and who filled the earth with his glory, and wherein *Isaiab* calls him, the king, the Lord of hosts, is expressly applied to our Lord *Jesus Christ* in the new testament, *John* xii. "These things said *Esaias*, when he saw his glory and spake of him." Now this may be a key to explain the rest, and makes it very probable that *Christ* was the person who thus often appeared.

V. It is generally agreed by all christian writers, even from the most primitive times, that God considered under the idea and character of paternity, and in the person of the Father, is always represented as invisible, whom no man hath seen nor can see: But *Jesus Christ* is described as the image of the invisible God, the brightness of his Father's glory, the express image of his person, he in whom the Father dwells, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." He is that Word of God by whom the great and blessed God manifests himself, and his mind and will, as a man manifests his mind or will by his word: He represents himself one with God the Father, "I and the Father are one." And *St. Paul* calls him God manifest in the flesh. Now as the prophet *Isaiab* and the apostle *John* compared together assure us that *Christ* was the person who appeared in one of these most glorious and illustrious appearances of God under the old testament, so there is the most abundant probability from all these things considered, that *Jesus Christ* was that angel who generally appeared in ancient times to the patriarchs and to the jews, assuming the peculiar and incommunicable names of God, and manifesting the invisible God to men.

That expression of *St. Paul*, *1 Cor.* x. 9. adds weight to this argument, "Neither let us tempt *Christ* as some of them tempted and were destroyed by serpents." *St. Paul* well knew that when God sent his angel to lead *Israel* in the wilderness, he bid them "Beware of him, provoke him not, he will not pardon your sins, for my name is in him:" And the apostle here seems plainly to refer to this same person, this angel, even *Christ*, whom they tempted or provoked, and he did not pardon them, but sent serpents to destroy them; and yet the person who was thus tempted and provoked, is also called the Lord God. *Deut.* vi. 16. "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as ye tempted him in *Massab*."

VI. Thence also I think we may infer, that there is such a peculiar union between the great God and the man *Jesus Christ* in his angelic, as well as in his incarnate state, as that he is properly represented as God-man in one complex person: he that was the angel of the presence of God, and in whom God dwelt under the ancient dispensations, has now took flesh and blood upon him, and is God manifest in the flesh; he that is of the seed of *David*, was and is God over all blessed for ever. Amen.

To

To all this let me subjoin some testimonies both of ancients and moderns as they are cited by bishop *Bull* in his "defence of the nicene faith," section i. chapter i. section xi.

Trypho the jew in his dialogue with *Justin Martyr* maintains, that there were two present in the appearance made to *Moses* in the burning bush, viz. "God and an angel; that the angel appeared in the flame of fire, and that God in the angel spake with *Moses*." To which *Justin* replies, that that may very well be granted according to the christian doctrine. And indeed *Trypho's* opinion seems to have been generally received and approved amongst the more ancient jews; for *Stephen* teaches us, it was an "angel who appeared to *Moses* in the bush," *Acts* vii. 30. and yet that God himself spake these words to *Moses*, verses 31, 32, 33. "I am the God of thy fathers, the God of *Abraham*, &c." compare *Exodus* iii. 2. with verses 4, 5, 6.

Athanasius, oratione quarta contra Arianos. "He that appeared was an angel, but God spake in him."

Clemens Alexandrinus. "The Son of God who led *Moses* was an angel, bringing with him the evangelical and principal power of the Word:" A little after he adds, "The Logos or Word was an angel;" and he calls the Son of God the mystical angel.

Austin contra *Maxim*: libro iii. says, "I ask who appeared to *Moses* in the fire? The scripture itself declares it was an angel appeared; but that God was in that angel, who can doubt?"

Gregory in his preface to *Job* the second, says, "The angel who appeared to *Moses* is sometimes called an angel, and sometimes God; when he that speaks outwardly is governed by him that is within, he is called an angel, to signify his obedience, and the Lord to denote the inspiration."

And *Grotius* himself on *Gal.* iii. 19. confesses that he who gave the law in *Sinai* was a singular or special angel, attended by other angels; yet not a mere angel, but one with whom the Logos was present. Now it is well known, that by the Logos *Grotius* means the divine Word or Wisdom.

S E C T I O N II.

The difficulties relating to this account of the appearances of God under the old Testament relieved and adjusted.

Objection I. **S**I N C E the true God appeared and resided in the fiery bush, in the flame on mount *Sinai*, in the pillar of cloud and fire that conducted the *Israelites*, and in the bright light that shone sometimes at the door of the tabernacle, and then dwelt on the mercy-seat between the cherubims; the *Socinians* say, Why may not any of these things be called the true God or *Jehovah*, as well as the angel in whom God dwelt? And especially since God spake out of the midst of this cloud or fire, as well as he spake by the angel, so that all these were representatives, symbols, or tokens of the presence of the true God.

And this objection of the *Socinians* may be further enforced, when we consider, that when this bright cloud moved, God is said to move; where this bright cloud dwelt or rested, God is said to dwell or rest. God himself is said to go before the *Israelites* in the wilderness when the cloud went before them. God dwelt in the bush when the fire was there. God is said to dwell between the cherubims; *Psal.* lxxx. 1. because the bright light was there. "God is gone up with a shout; the Lord, that is, *Jehovah*,

Jehovah, with the sound of a trumpet," *Psal.* xlviii. 5. when the ark where God dwelt was carried up to *Zion*: and upon this occasion *David* addresses God, *Psal.* lxxviii. 18. "Thou hast ascended on high, when the ark was carried up to the hill which God desired to dwell in," verse 16. What more than this can be said concerning the angel? Or what greater reasons can be given why this angel should be called God rather than the cloud or fire, which also might be called God in a figurative sense, because they were symbols of the divine presence?

Answer. In order to set this matter in a true light, we may consider the following things.

1. Whatsoever be our conception of the distinct personalities in the divine nature, yet the godhead has been generally allowed to be one and the same in all the three persons. If therefore *Christ* be God, he is the same one God as the Father, that is, he has the same, and not another godhead.

2. Whensoever this great God is said to appear in scripture, it is generally attributed to *Jesus Christ*, or the second person in the sacred three. This is agreed both by *arians* and *athanasians*: and there is this reason for it, that God under the personality of the Father may always maintain the character of the invisible God. The ancients of all parties were united in this sentiment.

3. God frequently manifested himself or appeared to man under the old testament in and by a corporal resemblance as inhabiting in a cloud, or light, or fire; and sometimes he manifested himself also to men as residing in or inhabiting a man or an angel under the old testament; for so he appeared to *Abraham*, to *Jacob*, &c. Whatsoever created being God resided in, this was called the *shekinah* or habitation of God. If it was a bright light or fire, it was a corporal *shekinah*. If it was a man or an angel, it might be called an intellectual *shekinah*, and most probably in a human form*.

4. Whatsoever habitation God assumed, that habitation itself, whether corporal or intellectual, is not called God merely upon the account that God resided there, unless you include also the divine inhabitant, that is, God himself; so that neither the cloud, nor the bush, nor the fire, nor the man, or angel, are ever represented as God, or called *Jehovah*, without including the idea of that godhead that resided or inhabited in them. So when it is said, "God is gone up with a shout," *Psal.* xlvii. it doth not mean merely the ark which was carried up to *Zion*, but God dwelling on the ark or the mercy-seat. And in the same manner the gestures, motions and appearances are ascribed to God, which were visible in that body in which God at that time resided, and which he made the symbol of his presence: but this body is never called God when taken alone, without including the present godhead or almighty Spirit, residing there.

5. Hence

* The hebrew word *shekinah* signifies a habitation or dwelling; and it was the name which the ancient jews gave to that bright cloud or fire wherein God dwelt upon the ark between the cherubims, and in which he often appeared to the patriarchs and to *Moses*. They also gave the same name of *shekinah* to the glorious Spirit in and by which God acted or manifested himself to men, whether in a visible or invisible manner; that is, whether he came with a cloud of light, or with a voice, or only by silent and secret influences; for they call this *shekinah* by the names of *Memra*, *Logos*, or the *Word of God*; and they not only suppose this *shekinah* to take possession of the tabernacle and the temple, and to reside there in the form of light, but it was a saying amongst them, that "where two or three are met together to read or study the law, the *shekinah* is with them," though in an invisible manner; which is parallel to the words of *Christ*, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the middle of them," *Matth.* xviii. 20. See *Dissertation iv.* on the *Logos*, section iii. page 958—169.

5. Hence it will follow, that the words God, Lord, Almighty, *Jehovah*, which are used in scripture on these occasions, are not sunk into a figurative or diminutive sense on purpose to be applied metaphorically to a cloud, a fire, or an angel, as a resemblance or emblem of the true God, or as a symbol of his presence; but these divine names and titles are preserved in their original and most sublime and divine sense, and applied to God himself considered in and together with these his habitations or places of residence.

6. It is very probable that the great God never resided, if I may so speak, immediately in any corporeal habitation without the medium of an angelic* or intellectual being by whom he spoke and acted, and by whom he moved this corporeal habitation as he pleased. We have good reason to suppose that the angel of God's presence, the angel of the covenant, the angel in whom was the name of God, was still the more immediate *soekinab* or residence of God, whether he dwelt mediately in a cloud, or light, or fire, or a human shape. And on this account in the narration of the same transaction it is expressed sometimes that the angel of the Lord appeared, and sometimes the Lord God himself appeared, for instance, to *Moses* in the bush, to *Abraham*, &c. The names God, or the Lord, or the angel, are used promiscuously in these narratives.

Thus it was not properly the cloud, light, or fire, but the angel who was intimately and immediately united to godhead; and it was this angel who assumed the names, titles and characters of God, Lord, and *Jehovah*; for we may reasonably suppose that the union between God and this glorious angel, that is, the pre-existent soul of *Jesus Christ* in its non-incarnate or angelic state, was incomparably more near and intimate than the union of the great God with a pillar of cloud or fire: and upon this account the angel may be called God in a more proper manner than the fire, cloud or bush could ever be, because of the intimacy of the union which made God and this angel one complex person.

7. None of the corporeal appearances, or habitations of God, viz. the cloud, the light, the fire, are said in scripture to speak to man, it is only said, that God spake out of them. The cloud, the fire, the bush, are never said to assume these names or titles, "I am the Lord, I am God almighty, I am the God of *Israel*." But now the angel who appeared speaks to men, and he assumes these divine names and titles in the old testament, as is abundantly evident in *Exodus* iii. and in other places; and so doth *Jesus Christ* in the new testament, *Rev.* i. and ii. and iii. "I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, &c." Thence we may justly infer, there was a nearer and more intimate union between the godhead and that angel than between God and the cloud, or fire, &c. even such an union as may be called personal, whereby God and the angel may be looked upon as one

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* Note, Though in several places I represent *Christ* in his pre-existent state as an angel according to scripture, yet I always suppose this pre-existent soul of *Christ* to be a proper human spirit, that is, such a spirit as by its own nature is suited to act in vital union with a human animal body. These things are proved at large in the last of these discourses. The reason why he is called an angel, is partly because he was then an unbodied spirit, and lived as angels do, not united to an animal body; and partly because he was sent as the Father's messenger, which is the meaning of the word angel in the original languages, *greek* and *hebrew*.

Note further, That this does not at all hinder the human soul of *Christ* from having intellectual capacities and powers vastly superior to any other human soul, or to any angel in heaven, even as the capacities and intellectual powers of one man are vastly superior to another, as the soul of *Milton* or *Sir Isaac Newton* to an idiot; and especially while we consider this human soul as constantly inhabited by, and personally united to the eternal godhead, we have abundant reason to suppose his human faculties superior to those of any other creature.

complex intelligent agent or person: and thus *Christ* may be called, as I remember one or more of those learned writers have called him, the God-angel before he was complete God-man.

8. None of these corporeal appearances or habitations of God, neither the cloud, nor the fire, nor the bright light, are expressly and directly called God by the holy writers in a categorical and express manner. He is *Emmanuel*, or God with us: He is *Jehovah* our righteousness: He is God over all, blessed for ever: which further shews a more intimate union between the godhead and the man *Jesus*, than there was between God and the cloud or fire, and it shews also that *Christ* is a complex person or God-man.

9. Observe also, that God did not always or constantly dwell in the same corporeal habitation, that is, cloud, or fire, but God constantly resided in this angel of the covenant, this angel of his presence, who was his own Son: He kept the same intellectual habitation always, though he frequently changed his corporeal habitation. God, who was always united to this unbodied human spirit or angel did also sometimes assume a cloud, a fire, a bush, or the figure of a man to appear in under the old testament, but it was only for a season; and these were only so many different pre-ludiums to his future incarnation or dwelling in flesh: So that the angel of God's presence or human soul of *Christ* in his angelic state, who was the constant *shekinah* or habitation of the godhead, was one with God, and might be much better called God than the cloud or fire which were but occasional habitations.

10. When this glorious angel, the human spirit or soul of *Christ*, together with his divine inhabitant the indwelling godhead, descended from his angelic state, and was made actual "partaker of flesh and blood, he was then made a little lower than the angels," *Heb. ii. 9.* He took human flesh into a constant partnership of his person, and became a man. "The Word, who was God, was made flesh," *John i. 1, 14.* This never was said, nor could it ever properly be said concerning the cloud or the fire. When God was manifest in the flesh, this flesh was united into one person with the angel, and became the human or bodily *shekinah*, or constant habitation of God. "In him dwelt all the fulness of the godhead bodily," *Col. ii.* Then *Jesus Christ*, who was in all former ages the God-angel in a proper and complete sense, became God-man.

Though the cloud or the fire could not properly be called God because they were not thus united into one person with God, nor in the angel in whom God dwelt, yet the man *Jesus* as united in a personal manner to the divine nature, might properly be called the true God. It could not be said concerning the cloud or fire, that they were assumed to be parts of the person of *Christ*, but it might be said concerning this angel, that is, the soul of *Christ*, and concerning his body, they were parts of his complex person: and thus *Christ* in his complex person hath the names of deity and humanity given him, he that is of "the seed of *David* after the flesh, is God over all, blessed for evermore. Amen." *Rom. ix. 3, 4, 5.*

Objection II. Doth not the apostle to the *Hebrews*, chapter i. verses 1, 2. sufficiently intimate, that this angel by whom God conversed with men was not his own Son *Jesus*, when he says, "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?" Does not this imply that God did not speak by his Son under the old testament?

Answer I. We may answer this difficulty thus: Though the angel who revealed the will of God to the patriarchs and prophets was really *Jesus Christ* the Son of God,

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yet he then spake by a corporeal medium and organs, which he assumed for that occasion to form a voice, which medium was not part of his person, or personally united to him; therefore the Son of God did not speak immediately to men by himself, that is, by his own person, but spake by the prophets, and by corporeal shapes, &c. Yet when he assumed flesh and blood actually into a personal union with himself, when he made this flesh a part of his person, and became a complete man by a miraculous conception, then he was more completely the Son of God both in soul and body, and then as the Son of God he spake immediately by himself, by his own complete person, that is, soul and body, to mankind; or God spake to mankind by the very person of his Son, which was never done in the same manner under the old testament.

Nor is this any strange exposition, for the ancient fathers are wont to speak to the same purpose: *Justin Martyr* speaks thus in his Apology, "The Word foretold things to come by the prophets heretofore, but when he was made like unto us, he taught us these things by himself." So *Clemens Alexandrinus* says, "The Lord was truly the instructor of the ancient people by *Moses*, but he is the guide of his new people by himself face to face." See bishop *Bull's* defence of the nicene faith, section i. chapter. i.

Answer II. But I give yet a further answer to this objection in the following manner, viz. Though the angel by whom God spake to the prophets and to the patriarchs was really *Jesus Christ* or the Son of God, yet he did not appear at that time under his filial character as God's own Son, but he appeared in his angelic character; or as a heavenly messenger, which was suited to the pre-existent state of the soul of *Christ*; whereas under the new testament God speaks to us by his Son *Jesus Christ* under the special and known character of his own Son, as being now revealed to have been the only begotten Son of God in his pre-existent state, *John* i. 14, 18. and as having a more conspicuous or sensible character of his divine sonship added to him, by his being born of a virgin without an earthly father by the immediate influence of the Spirit of God, *Luke* i. 35. and was named the Son of God on this account; and had also a further claim to this honourable title Son of God, when he was raised from the dead, as *St. Paul* explains that expression of the *Psalmist*, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," *Psal.* ii. 6. compared with *Acts* xiii. 33. and is therefore called by the same apostle, "the first-born from the dead," *Col* i. 15. It is plain therefore, that though *Christ* was the Son of God in his pre-existent state, yet he appeared and acted rather under the character of an angel of old, and not under the character of a Son till the days of the gospel.

It is the frequent custom of scripture to speak of things as they appear to men, and not always just as they are in themselves, for this is most suited to the bulk of mankind. Therefore the scripture speaks of the sun's rising and going down, and it's rejoicing to run a race, and of the heavens being fixed upon pillars, &c. which are all modes of expression according to appearance, and not according to the reality of things. So when the angel, who is called God, wrestled with *Jacob*, it is said a man wrestled with him, because he appeared as a man, *Gen.* iii. 24. So three men came to *Abraham*, *Gen.* xviii. 2. because they appeared as men, though one of them afterward evidently was known to be God, and the other two were angels. And so *Christ* never appearing to the patriarchs and prophets, and instructing them under the character of the Son of God in the old testament; and being much unknown to the world under that name, it was no wonder that the apostle should represent God

God as beginning to speak to us by his Son under the new testament * : This method of solving the difficulty will have an happy influence also to remove the following objection.

Objection III. Though this angel spake oftentimes in the name of God under the old testament, though he assumed the glorious titles of God, and spoke words which must properly belong to God, yet it does not follow, that this angel was the true God, or that there was any such personal union between the divine nature and this angel, because there are other instances wherein the titles and names of God are assumed, and words proper to God are spoken, wherein it is very evident from scripture that God was not the speaker. Consider what the scripture declares concerning the giving of the law at mount *Sinai* : It is expressly said, *Exod. xx. 1, 2.* "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, &c." Yet *St. Stephen* tells them, *Acts vii. 53.* "They received the law by the disposition of angels." And *St. Paul, Gal. iii. 19.* says, "the law was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." And *Heb. ii. 2, 3.* it is expressly called, "The word spoken by angels, and distinguished from the word spoken by *Christ*. If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which first began to be spoken by the Lord?" Now if the words at the giving of the law were spoken either by the person of the Father, or by the person of the Son of God, then the apostle's argument is lost, since it is built upon this supposition, that the gospel is published by a person superior to him, or them who published the law. But the apostle's argument is certainly strong, and thence it will follow, that the angel who spoke the law was neither God himself, nor *Jesus Christ*, and yet he assumes divine language, I am the Lord thy God, &c.

Answer. It was not only the sense of all the ancient writers, the most primitive fathers of the christian church, but it is allowed by most of the *arians* themselves who make this objection, that *Christ* himself was present at *Sinai* and was employed in giving the law, *Psal. lxxviii. 17.* "The Lord is among them as in *Sinai*, even he who ascended on high and led captivity captive;" *Eph. iv. 8.* Now the law may still be said to be given, declared or published by angels who attended by thousands as ministering Spirits on the Lord *Christ*, and yet the words might be spoken by *Christ* himself, the great God-man, or God-angel, or the angel in whom God dwelt, at the head of them; for he appeared there, not as the Son of God, for he was then utterly unknown under that filial name or character, but he appeared in his angelic character as the great, the peculiar, the extraordinary angel or messenger of the covenant, the angel of God's presence, the angel who spake to *Moses* in mount *Sinai*, *Acts vii. 38.* and spake to the people also, as the angel in whom God dwelt, or, which is much the same, as the great God dwelling in the angel.

Now in the new testament when this glorious person appeared amongst men as the Son of God, when he was discovered to be so in his body by his extraordinary conception, *Luke i. 35.* when he was further made the Son of God by his being begotten from the dead, as *St. Paul* explains *David*, *Acts xiii. 33. Col. i. 18.* and declared "with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead,"

Ram.

* The *arians* themselves in their schemes seem to be as much puzzled with this difficulty, how to suppose that *Christ* as an angel gave the law, and yet that God spake not by his Son till under the gospel: And some of them are forced to accept of this sort of solution. See "Modest plea, part I." So that they have no reason to object it against us.

Rom. i. 4. when he was preached by the apostles as the only begotten Son of God, both in his incarnate and in his pre-existent state, *John* i. 14, 18. he sustains hereby a superior character to that of an angel, a servant, or mere messenger of God, even that of God's own Son: and if the word spoken by angels, or by *Christ* himself in his angelic state and character, attended by ministering angels, if this word be steadfast, and if all transgressions against it were severely punished, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation which began to be spoken by the Lord? that is, by the same angel in his character of Lordship, since he appeared to be God's own Son, and the heir and Lord of all, not as an angel or messenger, but as sovereign Lord of his church. The very same person may have much greater authority and influence when he sustains a new and superior character.

Perhaps you will say then, Why did not the apostle represent it thus? If *Christ* was that angel, why does he so apparently distinguish him from the angels who spake the law? I answer, Because though the apostle might know he was the same person, yet the bulk of the people to whom he wrote might not know it, nor understand these distinct characters of the same person, and it would take up too much time and pains to prove that notion to them in that place, nor would it answer any valuable purpose at that time sufficient for such a digression.

That *Christ* himself was the speaker of the law at mount *Sinai* may be further evinced out of *Heb.* xii. 25, 26. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, that is *Christ*; for if they escaped not that refused him that spake on earth, that is *Moses*, for he that despised *Moses's* law died without mercy, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, that is, *Christ*;" for it was he who came personally down from heaven, which *Moses* did not, and it was he who after his death spake by an audible voice to *St. Paul* from heaven, and by his spirit to all the apostles. *Christ* therefore is he that speaketh from heaven*.

Now it follows, verse 26. "Whose voice then shook the earth," that is the voice of *Christ*, and not *Moses*, which shook mount *Sinai*, which "quaked greatly when the Lord, or *Jehovah*, descended upon it in the fire," *Exod.* xix. 18. And it is the same person who in *Haggai*, ii. 6. hath now promised, as the apostle cites him, saying, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also the heavens;" and the prophets tell us, this is the Lord of hosts. The person therefore who spake at mount *Sinai*, was both *Christ* and the Lord of hosts.

Thus we see that the author of the epistle to the *Hebrews* is so far from denying that *Christ* spake heretofore in giving the law, that he declares, "it was his voice that shook the earth at mount *Sinai*:" and by this view of things it appears that we have no need to allow common angels to assume the name, title and words of the great God to themselves. And thus the argument stands firm still, whereby we prove that this angel of the covenant *Christ Jesus*, is God himself, is intimately and personally united to godhead, and is one with God, because he assumes divine names and titles, and speaks the words which can belong only to God.

It:

* A great and ingenious writer has very lately in his "essay on the various dispensations of God," pages 135—141. asserted, that he who spoke on earth, means not *Moses*, but *Christ* himself, in his pre-existent state under the character of an angel; and that he who now speaks from heaven is the same person, even *Christ* under the exalted and superior character of a Son; this is very agreeable to the sentiments advanced under the answers to the second and third objection; and perhaps may be the very truth. But still it is *Christ* who is that *Jehovah* who spake in fire, and shook the earth at mount *Sinai*, and who now speaks from heaven. This that learned author maintains against *Mr. Peirce* with great evidence, pages 136—144. and against another considerable writer, pages 146—156.

It might be added also, that it is expressed so often and so strongly by the sacred historian, that God spake the words of the law, that the *Israelites* heard God speaking to them out of the fire, and that it was the voice of God; that out of heaven God made them to hear his voice, and that they might know that *Jehovab* he is God in heaven above, *Exod. xx. Deut. iv. 10, 12, 33—39.* that all things concur to persuade us that the angel who spake the words was also *Jehovab*, or the God of *Israel*.

Objection IV. Is there any necessity that we should suppose God himself to be thus personally united to this angel who appeared under the old testament? Is it not sufficient to suppose that a glorious angel might come as a representative and deputy of the great God? and being clothed with divine authority, and representing the sacred majesty of God, might he not assume the incommunicable names and titles and worship of God, as being God's representative or ambassador to the children of men?

And this objection is yet enforced from this consideration, that some persons have pretended, that in the eastern parts such as delivered messages from others, did use to speak in the same manner as those very persons would have done in whose name they came, for which some have cited one or two historical passages out of the bible.

Answer. See this sort of objection very well answered by the ingenious Mr. *John Hughes* of *Ware*, in his remarks on doctor *Bennet's* discourse on the trinity, page 47. And many other authors treating on this subject, have given some good solutions to this pretence. The substance of what I have to say at present is chiefly borrowed from others, and shall be disposed under the following heads, whereby I think this difficulty will be effectually removed.

1. The instances which have been brought from the scripture history of messengers speaking in the name of their principals, without any distinguishing preface, have been happily expounded in another manner by learned critics, so as to cut off all pretences of this kind and all foundation for this objection which would be too large to repeat at present. See Mr. *Hughes's* remarks.

2. Supposing that such a conduct might be customary between man and man in common affairs of life, yet when was it known that the ambassador of an earthly monarch ever took so much upon him, or spoke in this language? What ambassador ever said, I am the king of *France* or *Spain*, or I am the king of *Egypt* or of *Babylon*? What ambassador did ever receive such honours, as that his master could receive no higher if he were personally present? What prince would ever endure any thing like this to be done by or to his representative? When *Rabshakeb* was sent with a threatening commission from *Sennacherib*, he does not himself assume the words of his prince, *Isai. xxxvi. 4, 12, 13.* for *Rabshakeb* said, "Thus saith the great king, the king of *Assyria*, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? And again, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of *Assyria*: And again, My master hath sent me to speak these words." Thus neither in eastern nor western nations do we find ambassadors use the style, and assume the name and honour of their princes to themselves: and who can believe that the only ambassador that calls himself by his master's name, assumes his master's titles, and style to himself, and receives the homage that is due to him, should be the ambassador of the great God the Creator and Lord of the world? But this leads me to the third consideration.

3. If this were ever practised by the ambassadors of earthly princes, yet it would by no means follow, that a messenger from the great and eternal God, the king of heaven,

heaven, should personate this great God himself in delivering his errands, without any evident hints to distinguish the ambassador from God himself. There is an infinite distance between the great God and a mere creature, even the most excellent creature, and that when it is employed as an ambassador for God. There is some proportion between the highest prince and the lowest of mankind; and therefore though one man may personate another, yet no creature can with safety to God's honour or to man's duty personate the great God. There is a much greater danger in mistaking a creature for God, and paying that worship to a creature which is appropriated to God, than there is in mistaking the meanest man for the greatest monarch: One would be a misdemeanor between man and man, the other seems to be plain idolatry, and paying the peculiar honours of God to a creature.

And yet such a mistake seems to be unavoidable, if a creature might thus assume divine names and titles to himself; for it may readily be supposed that God himself might also assume a visible appearance like that of an angel, and by consequence without an express revelation, in such a case, it would be impossible to distinguish the one from the other, that is, to know which was God in the form of an angel, and which was the angel personating God. Now in this view of things, religious worship must have been either neglected to the real deity, or else must have been paid to an angel. Therefore it seems no way likely that the great God who is all-wise and all-good, should so little consult his own honour or the happiness and duty of mankind, as to indulge such a mistake, or to lay unavoidable foundations for it, and temptations to it.

4. If it were possible in the nature of things that the great God should depute a creature for his ambassador or representative, and give him a commission to assume divine titles, and to receive divine worship, yet God seems to have declared in his Word that he will not do it, for he hath declared himself to be a jealous God, jealous of his own name and honour, and to that degree, that he borrows one of his glorious titles from this his jealousy, *Exod. xxxiv. 14.* "Thou shalt worship no other God, for the Lord thy God whose name is JEALOUS, is a jealous God." See *Exod. xx. 5. Deut. iv. 24. and v. 9. and vi. 15.* And he is resolved he will not give away his name and glory, nor the glory of his name to any other being. *Isai. xlii. 8.* "I am *Jehovah*, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another." Mankind who are led by their senses are so prone to idolatry, that they have been always very ready to take occasion to idolize and worship any sensible appearances which have looked any thing like divine; and the great God our Creator knows our infirmity, and therefore he hath declared, that he would not give his name and glory to another, especially not to any sensible appearance, lest he should give too strong a temptation to men to practice idol-worship, and pay divine honours to a creature.

5. Mr. *Hughes* in his dispute with doctor *Bennet* on this subject, page 53. declares that, "after all that flourish the doctor had made upon this notion of his, that divine angels were wont to personate the deity, he hath not in reality furnished out one single proof thereof: his instances among men being mere oversights, and his instances among the angels are by himself declared to be meant only of *Cbrist*, the angel of the covenant, the angel of God's presence; he acknowledges it was *Cbrist* who personated the divine majesty at those times, which we do not find, saith he, that any other angel ever did, though so many of them have been employed as the very or true God's ambassadors to men."

6. The ancient *jews* would by no means allow of this notion of a mere angel's assuming the names and titles of God. It is plain by the opinion of *Trypho*, which

Justin Martyr relates, that the ancient *jews* supposed God himself to be present with this angel; for that they never dared to imagine that a mere angel would call himself the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and would admit such divine honours as *Moses* and *Abraham*, and *Joshua* paid to him in the name of God. "Such an opinion was too absurd and horrid for them to entertain," as bishop *Bull* expresses it; and he adds, "it is a sort of impiety to imagine that angels would ever assume such a dignity, or that God would communicate his incommunicable name to them, or any authority for such a representation of himself, in which a mere creature assumed to himself all those things which belonged to God."

The learned *Camero* in his annotations on the *hebrews*, chapter ii. verse 2. very well expresses it, "Though lawyers may put on the persons of their clients, yet it was never heard that an ambassador when he delivers the commands of his prince, ever spoke otherwise than in the third person, My prince speaks this. The prophets give us an illustrious testimony of this matter, who continually introduce this solemn form, Thus saith the Lord, And in visions angels profess themselves to be sent of God." *Grotius* himself confesses, that it "was not a mere angel gave the law in *Sinai*, but an angel with whom the Logos or divine Word was present."

This objection has been indeed carried on further by a late ingenious writer, by way of similitude. "Suppose we hear of king *George's* speech to the parliament, we know that king *George* doth not speak it himself, but gives the speech to my Lord Chancellor, and he reads it: Now if a man upon hearing my Lord Chancellor speak those words to the parliament, should conclude that he is king *George*, he would certainly be mistaken:" And therefore though an angel who represents God assumes divine titles, we cannot infer that he is God.

Answer I. It is sufficiently and publickly known that king *George* gives the speech to my Lord Chancellor, and that king *George* himself also is present there, and visible on the throne: And on both these accounts there is no manner of danger of our mistaking the one for the other. But if king *George* were invisible, or did not appear, and my Lord Chancellor, arrayed in royal robes, assumed the title and used the very words of the king, without any preface or intimation that king *George* sent him to speak thus, how should any strangers know, unless they were told, that this was not the king himself? And how could the people of *Israel* know, that it was not God who spoke the words of the law to them, when the bright array, and the title of God are assumed, and the language is properly the language of God.

But I add, secondly,

Answer II. If the Lord Chancellor not only spoke words belonging to the king without any such preface, as, Thus saith the king: If he not only assumed the proper name and the titles of king *George*, the king himself being absent or invisible, but if the historians also declared that it was king *George* that spoke these words, if they called it the voice of king *George*, and if the spectators called him king, addressed to him as king, and worshipped him as such, would there not be abundant ground for a most pernicious mistake among all those who in after-ages should read this history? Now this is the present case, *Jehovah* or God himself is invisible, and was not seen by eyes of flesh; and not only the angel who appeared in the old testament assumed the divine names and titles of *Jehovah* or God himself, without any distinguishing preface of, Thus saith the Lord, but the sacred historian declares to us, it was God appeared, and it was God spake, it was the voice of God, even of *Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*; and the persons also with whom he conversed, viz. *Abraham*, *Moses*, and the children of *Israel*, &c. called him God, and Lord, and worship-

worshipped him as such. Now let us put all these things together, and there seems to be an unavoidable occasion given for a very dangerous mistake to all the readers of this history, if God himself, even *Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*, did not appear; if the angel who appeared and spake was not so inhabited by God, so united to God and so intimately one with God, as to lay a foundation for all this representation of things.

All these considerations joined together in this view appear to me richly sufficient to answer the present objection, and to preclude the notion of a common angel sent in the name of God and assuming the peculiar titles of godhead. Surely this angel or spirit was God himself, that is, was intimately and personally united to the God of *Israel*, and thereby became one complex person in two distinct natures, one common principle of intelligent action, and had a right to those divine titles according to the forms of language in all nations.

Objection V. Though it should be allowed that God was present with this angel, and resided in him, and spake by him, yet is this sufficient to make a personal union between God and the angel? or is it ground enough to say that God and the angel were one complex person?

Answer. The most common and most familiar idea that we have of a complex person is human nature or man, who is made up of a soul and body. Let us now consider whether most of those mutual relations or communications between soul and body which render man a complex person are not found in this glorious person composed of the great God and this angel.

Has the body of a man a nearer relation to his soul than any other body in the world? So had this angel a nearer relation to God than any other creature whatsoever. Is the soul said to inhabit the body, or reside in it constantly during the whole term of life? So did God constantly reside in this glorious angel. Does the soul influence the body to its chief human actions? So did God influence this angel. Is the body the constant and immediate instrument of the soul, whereby it speaks and acts and conveys its mind to men? Such was this angel to the great God, who dwelt in him. Is the body obedient to the volitions of the indwelling soul? Much more is this angel to the indwelling God. Is the soul immediately conscious of many of the motions of the body? Much more is God immediately conscious of every motion, action and occurrence that relates to this angel. Are the properties and actions of the body sometimes attributed to the soul, and the properties and actions of the soul sometimes to the body, in the common language of men? So in the language of scripture the names, titles and properties of the great God are attributed to this angel; the appearances, speeches, voice, words, motions and actions of this angel are attributed to God. And if man upon these accounts be called a complex person, made up of soul and body, for the same reason we may suppose that the great God and this angel of his presence make up a complex person also; and this is properly called a personal union.

Objection VI. If it was *Christ* himself who spake to *Moses*, *Deut.* xviii. 18. when "the Lord said, I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee;" If it was *Christ* himself said in *Exod.* xxiii. 20. "Behold, I send an angel before thee, beware of him, provoke him not, for my name is in him;" If it was *Christ* who spake to the prophets, "Behold, saith the Lord, I will raise up to *David* a righteous branch," *Jer.* xxiii. 5. And if *Christ* be this very prophet, this angel, this righteous branch, then it must be interpreted that *Christ* says, "I will raise up myself a prophet, &c. I will send myself an angel before thee, and I will raise

up myself a righteous branch to *David* ;” which seem to be strange sort of interpretations.

Answer. If we consider that throughout all the old testament our blessed Saviour is supposed to be a complex person, and if we conceive of him as the soul of *Christ* in it's angelic state united to and inhabited by God himself, it is very easy to suppose this glorious person speaking in the name of the indwelling godhead, which is his superior nature, and foretelling futurities concerning himself in his inferior nature, and declaring what he should be in his inferior oeconomic characters. Or we may suppose the angel in whom godhead dwelt, speaks in the name of God the Father, as the great fountain and author of all ; and yet this angel may foretel his own future appearances and transactions as an angel, as a prophet, as a branch of righteousness, as the servant and messenger of God the Father, and the appointed Mediator between God and man. Here is no manner of darkness nor difficulty in these ideas, nor has this interpretation any thing strange or harsh in it.

Objection VII. If this angel who appeared and assumed divine names and titles, were so really and intimately united to the true God, as to become one complex person, and all this were so plain and so evident as you represent it to be, then the *jewish* church could not but have as clear a knowledge as we have of this doctrine, that the two persons, viz. the Father and the Son, were the one true God ; and then the knowledge of this article is not the peculiar privilege of christians.

Answer. I am persuaded that some of the ancient *jews* and the patriarchs did believe that this was an angel in whom the great God or *Jehovah* resided or inhabited in a peculiar manner ; particularly when *Jacob* said, I have seen God, when *Moses* was afraid to look upon God, when *Abraham* spoke to him as to the great God ; but there were several things wherein their light was deficient and very imperfect if compared with ours.

1. The patriarchs might not know that this angel in whom God dwelt, and who was thus united to God, was *Christ* the Son of God, or the *Messiah*, the great Mediator between God and men appointed for the reconciliation and salvation of the world.

2. They might not know whether this union between God and the angel was constant or only occasional. Though they might suppose him to be an angel of superior rank, by his being made such a glorious medium of God's conversing and transacting with men at special seasons, yet they might not know that he was assumed into so constant and everlasting an union, and withal so very near and so very intimate that this complex person should be called God over all blessed for evermore, and that there should be a constant and mutual communication of properties between the one and the other in speaking or writing of them.

3. The *jews* in the days of the prophets did not know half so many texts of the old testament to belong to *Christ* as the apostles have taught us.

4. I might add also, that the *jewish* writers in later ages by degrees came to obtain a confused notion of God's transacting his affairs with men, and manifesting himself to them, by his Logos or Word, which sometimes they interpreted as his own essential Wisdom, or the idea, scheme, degree of all things that was in God ; and sometimes they made it to signify a very glorious angel, the first-born of every creature, in whom God dwelt, and by whom he transacted his affairs with the children of men. And though they had not the same clear and distinct ideas of these matters as the new testament reveals to us concerning the union of God and man in one complex person, yet

in their writings there appear many hints and intimations of this kind, as I have proved in a dissertation on the Logos.

And indeed I know not any thing besides this supposition that can give so fair and reasonable an account how it comes to pass that both the gentiles and *jews*, in the first age of christianity, did not raise perpetual objections against the doctrine of *Christ's* deity, that is, his being sometimes represented under the characters and names of the true God; and why they did not always quarrel with the apostles for citing such texts of scripture as plainly refer to the true and essential God in the old testament, and apply them to *Christ* in the new testament; as in *Rom. x. Eph. iv. Heb. i. &c.* But this supposition gives a very fair solution of it, viz. that as God appeared and resided in an angel heretofore, so *Christ* or the *Messiah* was understood to be a glorious person or spirit incarnate, who was especially inhabited by God, or in whom godhead dwelt in a peculiar manner, and in and by whom God was to reveal himself to men in the latter times*.

As it was by degrees that the apostles preached up the peculiar presence and union of God with the man *Jesus Christ*, and afterward came to call *Christ* God more freely, and applied divine characters and descriptions to him, cited out of the old testament; so it was by degrees that the *jews* and gentiles received the doctrine of a peculiar union of godhead to the man *Jesus*, learned the idea of such a complex person as God with us, as God manifest in the flesh, and that he who was of the seed of *David* after the flesh was also God over all blessed for ever.

* It may not be improper in this place to repeat the paraphrase of one of the targumists, viz. *Jonathan Ben Uzziel* on *Gen. iv. 1.* where *Eve* said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord, אִישׁ אֶת יְהוָה" that is, a man the Lord: By which words our mother *Eve*, in the opinion of many commentators, expressed an apprehension that she had brought forth him who was the Man-God, the promised seed, who should break the serpent's head. The words of the targum are, "And *Adam* knew his wife, and she conceived and bore *Cain*, and said, I have obtained a man the angel of the Lord." See doctor *Owen* on the *Hebrews*, Vol. I. page 89. So that it was supposed from the beginning of the world that the *Messiah* was to be a man and an angel, who might be called God or the Lord, because of God's peculiar indwelling in him.

A P P E N D I X

To the FIRST DISCOURSE.

Some observations on the texts of the old testament applied to Christ by the christian fathers, and by the jews as well as by the sacred writers.

Observation I. **W**heresoever the writers of the new testament find the almighty God, the Creator and Lord of all, the only true God, *Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*, represented in the old testament as appearing to men in a visible manner; or wheresoever they find him described as bringing salvation to the *jews*, but especially to the gentiles, they seem to make no scruple to cite any of those texts upon a proper occasion, and apply them to our Lord *Jesus Christ*. Now it is worth our enquiry whether these citations will not prove *Christ* to be God incarnate, to be this *Jehovah*, this God appearing amongst men, and as the Saviour of mankind bringing the gentiles into his church. Let us take notice of a few instances.

Psalms lxxviii. 7, 8. "God went forth before his people, and marched through the wilderness, dwelling in the pillar of cloud and fire; the earth shook, the heavens dropped at the presence of God. *Sinai* itself was moved at the presence of the God of *Israel*, when he came down upon mount *Sinai* in fire, verses 16, 17. God hath desired to dwell in *Zion*, yea, the Lord, *Jehovah*, will dwell in it for ever: The Lord is there even as in *Sinai* in the holy place, that is, in the visible glory upon the mercy-seat, even as in fire upon mount *Sinai*, verse 18. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that is, probably for the heathen world, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them." This is plainly applied to *Christ*, *Ephes.* iv. "When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now he that ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" which most evidently intends our blessed Saviour.

Psalms xcvi. 1. "The Lord, *Jehovah*, reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of isles be glad." This evidently declares the Lord coming to bring salvation to the gentiles, and he is called, verse 5. "the Lord of the whole earth;" whereas, *Psalms* xcix. 1, 2. "The Lord who is great in *Zion*, and who sits between the cherubims,"

bims," is considered as the God of the *jews*: then it is said, "the Lord reigneth; let the people or gentile nations tremble." Well then, since the *xcviii Psalm* speaks of *Jehovah* as bringing salvation to the gentiles, it follows, verse 7. "Confounded be they that serve graven images; worship him all ye gods." The idolatry of the gentiles is now to be abolished, and even the angels of God as well as the princes of the earth, who are called gods, are required to worship him. This is directly applied to *Christ*, and interpreted of him, *Heb. i. 6.* "Let all the angels of God worship him." *Christ* is this *Jehovah*.

Psal. cii. 15. "The heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory;" and probably the recalling the *jews* follows, verse 16. "When the Lord shall build up *Zion*, he will appear in his glory: The Lord shall declare his name in *Zion*, and his praise in *Jerusalem*, when the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, that is, of the gentiles, to serve the Lord. Verse 25. Of old thou hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands; they shall perish, but thou art the same, &c." This is expressly attributed to *Christ*, *Heb. i. 10, 11.* The apostle introduces it to prove his dignity above angels, and shews that he is the *Jehovah*, that God who created the heavens and the earth, &c.

Isa. vi. 1. "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple, &c. Verse 5. Mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts, &c." which is a narrative of some visible appearance of God. And the holy evangelist interprets it concerning our Saviour, *John xii. 41.* "These things said *Isaias*, when he saw his glory and spake of him." Here is the great God appearing in a visible manner, and *Christ* is that God or Lord of hosts.

Isai. xxxv. 1, 2, &c. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. The glory of *Lebanon* shall be given to it, the excellency of *Carmel* and *Sharon*;" that is, the gentiles shall have the glory of being a church of God, even as the land of *Israel* had been: "They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Your God will come with a recompence, he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert, &c." Compare this with *Isai. xxxii. 1, 2, 3.* "A king shall reign in righteousness, a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind and a covert from the tempest, and the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken, &c." The same things are here foretold concerning the appearance of God, and the appearance of a man, which plainly refer to the miracles which were wrought when *Christ* appeared, who is God and man, or God dwelling in man, and it is applied to *Christ's* appearance on earth by himself, *Matth. xi. 4, 5.* where he sends word to *John*, that these evidences attended him, which are the characters of the *Messiah*, and which were foretold. Now there is no place in the old testament more plainly foretels them than the words I have cited.

Isai. xl. 3. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert an highway for our God; the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." Here the glory of God is foretold to become visible, and that all flesh shall see his glory. This is plainly applied to *Christ*, where *John* the baptist is said to "prepare the way for the Lord," *Matth. iii. 3. Mark i. 3. Luke i. 16, 17.* even
for

for the Lord, *Jehovah*, that all flesh might see him, that is, *jews* and gentiles who include all nations.

I might proceed to the 9th, 10th and 11th verses. "Say to the cities of *Judab*, Behold your God: Behold, the Lord God will come—and his reward is with him; and his work before him; he shall feed his flock like a shepherd:" Which words seem to refer to *Christ* who is *Immanuel*, God with us, whom the cities of *Judab* did behold, even God manifest in the flesh, and becoming visible, who assumes the character of a shepherd, *John* x. and of whom it is said, "Behold, he comes, and his reward is with him," *Rev.* xxii. 12. and who in the next verse calls himself the alpha and omega, &c.

Isai. xlv. 21, 22, &c. "There is no God else besides me, a just God and a Saviour: Look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none else." Here God is evidently represented as a Saviour of the gentiles: "Unto me shall every knee bow, and every tongue shall swear: Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength, in the Lord shall all the seed of *Israel* be justified and shall glory." Now, that this belongs to *Christ* eminently appears, 1. because this prophecy of *Christ* as *Jehovah* our righteousness, is repeated twice by the prophet *Jeremiah*, chapter xxiii. 6. and xxxiii. 16. And the doctrine of *Christ* as our righteousness is frequently taught us in the new testament, particularly *1 Cor.* i. 30, 31. "*Christ* is made unto us righteousness;" and, 2. it may be remarked that the same inference is made, viz. "that according as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord;" and, 3. this same prophecy of the exaltation of *Christ* that every knee should bow to him, is expressly explained, *Rom.* xiv. 9, 10, 11. and *Philip* ii. 9. and is applied to *Christ* in both places.

If it should be objected here, that *Christ* is represented in both those epistles as exalted to this honour by the Father, upon the account of his sufferings, and therefore it cannot belong to godhead, whose honour is originally and eternally due to the very nature of God: It is granted that the human nature is thus exalted by the Father, as a reward of his death, in *Phil.* ii. and in *Rom.* xiv. it is also granted, that "*Christ* died, and rose and revived, that he might be Lord of the dead and the living." But since the same words are used in both places, and this prophecy of *Isaiab* is expressly cited, *Rom.* xiv. 11. and applied to *Christ*, it may primarily signify the eternal glory of the godhead, as united to the man *Jesus*, or God manifest in the flesh; and in a secondary sense, it may imply all the share of these honours that the human nature of *Christ* which suffered and died, is capable of receiving, by it's personal union with the divine, which honour can belong to no other creature, because no other being is thus united to God, or one with God.

Joel ii. 28, 32. "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; &c. and whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, *Jehovah*, shall be delivered; for in mount *Zion* and in *Jerusalem* shall be deliverance, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call;" which probably means the gentile church. Now this text is expressly interpreted concerning *Christ*, *Rom.* x. 12, 13. "There is no difference between the *jew* and the *greek*; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him; for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," that is, upon the name of *Christ*; for this is the very scope of the place, and this the next verse proves: "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe on him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" All which plainly refers to our blessed Saviour.

Obfer-

Observation II. The primitive fathers of the christian church, even the earliest writers, such as *Justin Martyr*, *Ireneus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, &c. copy after the sacred writers of the new testament; and wheresoever they find the great God, the creator of all, *Jehovah*, the Lord God of *Israel*, represented, as becoming a Saviour to men, and especially where he is described as becoming visible, either in the ancient dispensations, or under the new testament, or in the day of judgment, they make no scruple at all to apply these texts to our Lord *Jesus Christ*. Instances of this kind are very numerous in the writings even of the three first centuries. *Justin Martyr* affords us several citations to this purpose; and while I have been reading him as well as *Ireneus*, I have wondered how it could be denied, that either of them professed *Christ* to be true God. *Justin* interprets the following scriptures with reference to *Christ*.

Gen. xviii. 1. "And the Lord appeared to *Abraham* in the plains of *Mamre*." *Gen.* xix. 27. "And *Abraham* stood before the Lord." *Gen.* xxviii. 13. "And behold the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of *Abraham* thy father, and the God of *Isaac*." *Gen.* xxxi. 13. "I am the God of *Bethel*, where thou appointedst the pillar." *Exod.* iii. 4, 8. "God called to him out of the midst of the bush,— he said, I am the God of *Abraham*, the God of *Isaac*, and the God of *Jacob*." *Exod.* vi. 30. "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." *Psal.* xxiv. 8, 10. "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle: The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory." In this *Psal*m God is described as residing in the ark, and ascending to *Zion*, to dwell there in a visible manner in the bright cloud. The same may be said concerning *Psal.* xlvii. 5. "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." All are interpreted concerning *Christ* by *Justin Martyr*.

Ireneus explains many of the same texts in the same manner, and several others, viz. *Gen.* iii. 9. "The Lord came to *Adam* in the evening and called him, and said, Where art thou? Because in the latter days this very same Word of God comes to call man." *Psal.* l. 1. "The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken," whom *Ireneus* calls, the God of gods. What God is this? Even he of whom he said, "God shall come visibly, even our God, and will not be silent. This is the Son." *Psal.* lxxvi. 1. "In *Judah* God is known, and his name is great in *Israel*." *Isa.* lxxv. 1. "I was made manifest to them that asked not after me," that is, to the gentiles. *Isa.* xxxv. 4. "Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and save you." All these places *Ireneus* applies to *Jesus Christ*, and a great many others may be found in several of the primitive fathers, some of which are cited by the learned doctor *Waterland* in his first defence of the queries concerning the divinity of *Christ*, query ii. page 28, &c. and in Mr. *Alexander's* essay on *Ireneus*, chapter vi.

Objection I. One pretence of the *arians* against these writers belief of the divinity of *Christ*, as expressed in these texts, is, that they suppose *Christ* in these places is introduced only in the person of the Father, and as his messenger and deputy.

Answer. This pretence doctor *Waterland* has sufficiently obviated in the following pages, 33—46. wherein he shews by some express citations that the fathers spake of *Christ* in his own person, though in some places he may be described as the Father's messenger, and as coming in his name.

Objection II. It may be objected further, that however this may be the most plain and most obvious meaning of the primitive fathers in some places of their writings, viz. That *Christ* or the *Logos* is *Jehovah* or the true God, the God of *Israel*, yet in other places they plainly describe the *Logos* as a derived being, and as having many characters of inferiority, both as to his original, his existence, and his actions; and therefore when those divine titles are ascribed to *Christ*, they must be interpreted into some inferior or diminutive sense, that they be reconciled to the inferior characters given to that *Logos*, and so may be attributed to an inferior being.

Answer I. Some great divines have attempted to reconcile these inferior characters of the *Logos* to true and eternal godhead, by supposing that both a real derivation and some natural as well as oeconomic inferiority may be allowed to belong to the *Logos*, even in his divine nature. But this I leave to those who can defend the doctrine of a derived God.

Answer II. These inferior characters of the *Logos* may belong to the human soul of *Christ*, supposing it to be the first of all creatures, and from it's earliest existence to be intimately united to eternal godhead: And thus the supreme and divine character may belong to this complex person *Jesus Christ*, who is both God and a creature; though I cannot say many of the fathers did profess this notion.

Answer III. Whether the different expressions of the fathers in different parts of their writings can be reconciled or no, yet this is plain, that in some places they do in the most evident and obvious manner interpret and ascribe the supreme scriptural titles of *Jehovah*, Lord of hosts, the God of *Israel*, &c. to the *Logos*, or to the Son of God; and this is all that I insist upon here.

Observation III. The ancient *jews* in their interpretations of scripture practised the same thing as the apostles and the christian fathers; and where God is represented in a visible manner conversing with men, or coming to save them, they make no manner of scruple to ascribe these expressions of scripture to the Word of God, the *Memra* or *Logos*, and sometimes to the *Messiah*. This may be seen abundantly in several parts of doctor *Allix's* judgment of the *jewish* church against the unitarians, chapters xiii, xiv, xv, xviii, xix, xxvi. And in doctor *Owen's* exercitations on the epistle to the *hebrews*, numbers ix, x, xi.

Now amongst the ancient *jews* the *Memra* or *Logos*, that is, the Word of God, often signifies God himself, or something in and of God, some divine principle belonging to the essence of God, whereby he transacts his affairs with creatures; and it also signifies sometimes in their writings a very glorious archangel, or a spirit superior to all angels, in whom God put his name, and in whom the true God resided in a peculiar manner, as in his house or his habitation, which they called the *Shekinah*. This I have shewn at large in my dissertation concerning the *Logos*; and I have there made it appear how both those ideas may be united in one *Messiah*. See page 553—594.

But however that matter stands, yet thus much is evident, that those scriptures where God is represented in a visible manner, or where he is represented eminently as a Saviour, or bringing salvation to his people both *jews* and gentiles, have been interpreted concerning *Christ* or the Word by the ancient *jewish* church, by the apostles, and by the primitive christian writers; whence I think we may infer these three things.

1. That *Jesus Christ* in the sense of all these writers has true and eternal godhead belonging to him, as part of his complex person; for the ancient *jews* and the primitive christians,

christians, and especially the sacred writers, had such an awful sense of the transcendent excellency of the great God, and of his jealousy for his own name and honour, that they would not dare to attribute his most sublime titles, characters and glories to a mere creature, or to any thing which had not true godhead.

2. That the godhead of *Christ* is the very same with the godhead of the Father; and that his divine nature is the same infinite and eternal being, the same *Jehovah* or God of *Israel* to whom all the highest titles in the old testament are ascribed, as *Christ* himself says, *John x.* "I and my Father are one." The Father and Son are not two infinite spirits, or two-gods, but one and the same God.

3. That the denying of these glorious and sublime titles of *Jehovah*, the Lord God, the God of *Israel*, &c. to belong to *Christ*, or the interpreting of them into such a diminished and inferior sense as may belong to a mere inferior spirit, a contingent or created being, without any such personal union to godhead, seems to run contrary to the most plain and obvious sense and meaning both of the sacred writers, of the ancient *jews*, and the primitive christians.

DISCOURSE II.

The GLORY of CHRIST as GOD-MAN displayed,

By an INQUIRY into the extensive powers of his human nature in it's present glorified state.

S E C T I O N I.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

GOD united to man, and dwelling in a human body, is one of the mysterious glories of our religion. It was so without controversy amongst the primitive christians, as St. *Paul* acquaints young *Timothy* the evangelist, *1 Tim.* iii. 16. "Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh." The union of the divine and human natures in the compleat person of *Christ* the Mediator, is one of those sublime wonders which could never have been found out by the reason of man, and which were revealed slowly to the church in successive ages. There were types and emblems and glimpses of it in ancient days; but the fuller discovery of this mystery is reserved to adorn the new testament. In these latter days we have a most evident and certain revelation made to us, that *Christ Jesus* the Mediator, who was "of the seed of *David* according to the flesh, is God over all, blessed for ever." *Rom.* ix. 5.

Yet the glories that spring from this sacred union are too bright to be all unveiled before us in the present state of infirmity. They are too vast and extensive to be received by the narrowness of our apprehensions, while our souls are confined in flesh and blood. The rays of godhead once broke through the human nature of *Christ* on the mount of transfiguration, but the disciples were not able to bear them. It is by degrees

degrees we must gain acquaintance with this divine person; and as his divinity is all light and splendor, so his human nature, which is a creature, has doubtless in itself many peculiar excellencies and prerogatives, that it might be fit to be so nearly allied to godhead with decency and honour. And doubtless also it has acquired most astonishing advancement both in power, capacity and glory by this sacred and admirable alliance, as well as by its present exaltation in heaven.

The most necessary and important doctrines of the gospel concerning the person of *Christ* are plainly written in the Word of God, that the weakest christians may read and learn them, and be saved. These have been known and acknowledged by all true christians in all ages of the church. But there are others also of some importance, which are contained in scripture, and yet may not have been universally received among christians. Some of these perhaps have not been observed in our reading the bible hitherto, because our education has given us no hint of them; these may become the subjects of our delightful search and profitable enquiry, when we meet with the first notices of them in the world. It is our duty to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord *Jesus Christ*," *2 Peter* iii. 18. and to seek what further acquaintance with him we may gain by an honest and impartial search into the Word of God. This will carry several advantages with it, viz.

1. This will be for the exaltation of *Christ* himself; for we shall pay him more just honour in every respect, when we know more of him, and are better acquainted with the various excellencies of his sacred person.

2. This will tend to the illustration of the gospel, and the confirmation of our faith; for the whole scheme of christianity, and particularly all that doctrine that relates to the person of *Christ*, is so harmoniously connected, that when we gain further light into any one part of it, it sheds some degrees of divine brightness over all the rest.

3. This will better furnish us with answers to the adversaries of our religion; for the more we know, the better we can defend our knowledge, support our profession, and vindicate the name and honour of our blessed Saviour.

4. This will render the Word of God itself more glorious, both in our own esteem, and in the eyes of the world, when we see the darker and more perplexed passages of it unfolded, when we find a way to solve those difficulties which have often puzzled us and our forefathers, and when we remove those incumbrances which have given our adversaries a handle to assault our faith, and to depreciate the Word of God as a volume of obscure and inconsistent things.

Our Lord *Jesus Christ* considered in his compleat person, has the divine nature joined to the human; this has been proved with abundant evidence in ancient and modern writings. Now as the divine nature is all over glorious, so there are some glories which are peculiar and proper to his human nature; some of these are native honours and excellencies that belong to the human soul and body of *Christ*, and there are other surprizing powers and dignities which are derived to the man *Jesus*, partly by his exaltation to the throne in heaven, and partly by virtue of his union with the godhead, as was hinted before.

In many instances it must be confessed, it is difficult, if not impossible, for us to say exactly how far the human nature is the immediate subject of some sublime honours and actions, and how far they must be ascribed to the indwelling deity; to find the precise limits of the agencies or honours of the two natures in *Christ* in every respect, is a mystery too deep for our present penetration. Yet since the scripture has
abundantly

abundantly manifested the exaltation of the man *Jesus* to the right-hand of God, to enjoy unconceivable degrees of power, authority and splendor, it is proper for us to do so much honour to the man whom God the Father delights to honour, as to read and understand as far as we can the peculiar glories of his special advancement.

It has been a common practice with us, because we know that *Jesus Christ* is true God, and that his human nature is united to the divine, therefore whensoever we read any glorious and sublime attributions to our blessed redeemer in scripture, we content ourselves immediately to refer them all to his divine nature, as being all-sufficient to support them; not considering that we may perhaps by this means swallow up and bury some of the most illustrious excellencies and honours of the man *Christ Jesus*, nor suffer his human nature to receive that due share of glory and dignity to which the Father has advanced it. We are sometimes afraid to exalt the man whom the Father has exalted, lest we should be thought to derogate from his godhead. We are afraid to read the human name of *Jesus* in some scriptures which highly exalt the Son of God, lest we should be thought to weaken the force of any of those texts which are usually amassed together to prove the deity of *Christ*, or lest we should withhold any of them from this service.

I grant that the sacred doctrine of the divinity united to the human nature in *Christ* ought to be supported by all just expositions of scripture. It is an article that we cannot part with out of our religion, without shaking the foundation. But *Jesus Christ*, our Lord and our God, never requires us to strain one line of his word, or turn it aside from the natural sense, in order to support his deity. There are many passages both of the old and new testament that declare and confirm this great article; and many of those scriptures also wherein the human nature of *Christ* is jointly honoured, do yet carry in them a plain proof of the united godhead. But since there are some scriptures which in their most natural and obvious sense speak chiefly of the honours of his godhead, and others chiefly describe the exaltation of his humanity, let us do so much justice to our blessed Saviour as to read the distinct honours of both his natures in those very places of scripture where he has written them, that so we may pay him the full glory due to his sacred and complex person as God-man.

Nor can it any way lessen the glory of our blessed Mediator, nor derogate from the honour of his divine nature, to shew what capacious powers and sublime dignities are derived to the man *Jesus* either by his present exalted state, or by the influence of that godhead which has assumed him into so near an union, since we still secure to the blessed godhead all it's own eminence and infinite superiority to the man.

S E C T I O N. II.

Scriptural proofs of the exaltation of the human nature of Christ, and the extensive capacities and powers of his soul in his glorified state.

THAT the great and blessed God condescended to assume any human soul and body into a personal union with himself, was a matter of free and sovereign favour; and that he should chuse this one human spirit, and this body which was born of the virgin *Mary*, to be the subjects of this privilege, was the effect of the same goodness and the same sovereignty; "God spake in vision to his holy one, and said, I have

I have exalted one chosen out of the people," *Psal.* lxxxix. 19. It is a favour at first altogether unmerited, and which the man *Jesus* could not claim. "It pleased the Father that in him all the fulness of the godhead should dwell bodily," *Col.* i. 19. and ii. 9. It was a matter of divine good pleasure that God should dwell in that particular spirit, and be manifest in that particular flesh and blood which was born at *Bethlehem*.

Thence it will follow, that the influences and privileges derived from this union are limited by the will and pleasure of God; and the honours and powers which accrue to the human nature on this account are suspended or bestowed, increased and diminished, according to the wise counsels and determinations of the divine will.

It seems to be one of the sacred laws of this ineffable union, that the man *Jesus* should have ideas and influences, knowledge and power, communicated to him by the indwelling godhead, in such measures and at such successive seasons as he stood in need of them, for his several offices and operations in the divine oeconomy. The human soul of *Christ* cannot receive and retain all possible ideas constantly and simultaneously: This would be to suppose the man really endowed with the properties of godhead. But as fast as the indwelling godhead sees it proper to furnish him with new and larger ideas and powers, so fast is he made capable of receiving and exerting them, both in his state of humiliation and exaltation.

This will appear if we consider that *Christ* was God-man in the days of his humiliation: He was *Emmanuel* or God with us: *Matth.* i. 23. He was God manifest in the flesh: *1 Tim.* iii. 16. He was that Word who was God, made flesh: *John* i. 1, 14. And our divines very justly affirm, it was the same godhead which is in the Father that dwelt in *Christ*: "I am in the Father, says our Lord, and the Father in me," *John* xiv. 10. "I and the Father are one," *John* x. 30. Yet while he lived upon earth, this divine union did not exert it's influences to the utmost, neither as to knowledge or power or authority; for the child *Jesus* grew in wisdom as well as stature, *Luke* ii. 52. and the day of judgment which was known to the Father was unknown to the Son at that time, *Mark* xiii. 32. "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, neither the Son, but the Father." His knowledge was imperfect; and his authority on earth, before his death, appeared rather the authority of a prophet than a king: In his younger years he was subject to the commands of his parents, *Luke* ii. 51. And when he appeared in the world, it was as a man, sent from God, to reveal his will and to obey or fulfil it. He declared he was no king on earth, that is, a temporal king, for "his kingdom was not of this world," *John* xviii. 36. He paid tribute to *Cæsar*; he would not be the "divider of an inheritance among contending brethren," *Luke* xii. 13, 14. "He had not where to lay his head," ix. 58. The man *Jesus* here on earth lived among men, and had not complete knowledge, nor could he have complete power.

It pleased the Father, and it was agreed in the covenant of redemption, that the man *Jesus* should arrive at his exaltation by degrees: It was agreed that he should practice the most profound instances of humility and submission to God, as well as the most astonishing act of pity and charity toward men, in becoming a sacrifice for their sins and dying upon the cross, before he was to receive his promised honours. The Father thought it proper to bestow the most sublime advancement upon him as a reward of his sufferings; and to suspend his rich reward till his work was done, that he might at once display his own grace, his equity and his truth in the glorification

of

of the human nature of his Son *Jesus*, and that he might be a more proper pattern for all his followers. This doctrine runs through many pages in the old testament and in the new.

But when *Christ* had finished his work, he then prayed for the promised glory. *John* xvii. 1—5. "Father, glorify thy Son; — I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And when he ascended to heaven, and was seated at the right hand of God, then he that was of the seed of *David* more eminently appeared to be "God over all, blessed for ever," as *Rom.* ix. 4, 5. Then the influences of this sacred union were exerted in an high degree, and honours and dignities were conferred upon him in abundance, with intellectual and operative powers suited to this advancement. "God manifest in the flesh was received up to heaven in glory," *1 Tim.* iii. 16. And there the human nature lives and acts, shines, and reigns, in a manner becoming it's high privilege of union to godhead.

In order to pursue my present design I shall do these two things;

First, I shall endeavour to prove from scripture that it is the human nature of *Christ* that was peculiarly exalted after his sufferings; and then

Secondly, Set before you a more particular detail of the instances wherein this exaltation consists.

First, The reasons to prove that it is the man *Christ* who is exalted by God the Father, are such as these.

1. *St. Peter* gives us an account in his first sermon, *Acts* ii. 33. of *Christ* exalted by the right-hand of God. If we inquire more particularly of the person who is thus exalted, the context assures us, it is "*Jesus of Nazareth*, a man approved of God, verse 22. It is that very man of the seed of *David*; according to the flesh, who was appointed to sit on his throne, verse 30. It was the man that was taken and crucified and slain, verse 23. The man whom God raised from the dead, verse 32. who was thus exalted by the right hand of God," verse 33.

2. It is a real exaltation of *Christ* by the will or good pleasure of God, which is expressed in many scriptures, and not merely a manifestative exaltation. It is an advancement to new degrees of knowledge, to a real increase of capacity, to new powers and advantages, which he had not on earth, as well as to new dignities. But the divine nature is eternal and self-sufficient, full in itself of all real and possible powers and dignities, nor can it receive any new powers, nor can it have any real advancement. Godhead cannot be any otherwise exalted, than by having it's own original and eternal powers or the exercise of them manifested or discovered to his creatures; it must be therefore a creature, even the man *Jesus*, who receives this real advancement.

3. It is the human nature of *Christ* which is properly exalted, because it is the man who is expressly called the Mediator in scripture, whereas he is never expressly called Mediator as God. *1 Tim.* ii. 5. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man *Christ Jesus*." Now it was for the most part mediatorial honours and powers which he received at his exaltation; and partly with this design, that he might better fulfil the remaining part of his work as Mediator, that the man *Jesus* might reign over the nations and judge this world. *Acts* xi. 36, 38. *Acts* xvii. 31.

4. His exaltation is represented as the reward of his sufferings and labours in many places of scripture. *Isai.* liii. 10, 12. "Therefore shall he divide the spoil with the great, because he poured out his soul unto death." *Phil.* ii. 8. "He humbled himself

self and became obedient to death, wherefore God hath also highly exalted him." *Rev. v. 9.* "Thou art worthy to take the book, &c. for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us." Now it is not so proper to say, the divine nature in *Christ*, or his indwelling godhead, is rewarded, because his human nature laboured and suffered and died. The godhead in *Christ* is properly incapable of receiving any rewards from God the Father, for it is one and the same godhead or divine nature in both persons; nor indeed can a God be properly rewarded at all.

This argument will be further enforced, if we consider, that his exaltation after his labours and sufferings, is represented and proposed to us as a pledge and pattern of our exaltation after we have laboured and suffered, on purpose to encourage us in our labours and sufferings. Now this must be the exaltation of his human nature or the man *Jesus*, who did both labour and suffer as well as we.

I will say no more in this place, because this doctrine will appear more evident all the way as we proceed: Yet if we had nothing further to say for it, I think upon the whole we might venture to conclude, that as the humiliation of *Christ* the Mediator has a more peculiar respect to his human nature, so it is the human nature is more especially exalted by the Father, but still considered in union with the divine, and under the character of Mediator.

My second general head of discourse is to give some special instances wherein the exaltation of *Christ* in his human nature consists; and this appears eminently in the following particulars.

I. The man *Christ Jesus* united to the divine nature is admitted to the knowledge of many of the decrees and the secret counsels of God. He that knew not the day of judgment here on earth, has now the scene of all futurities spread open before him; and he communicated them in visions and figures to *John* the apostle, that he might publish them to the churches. The book of the *Revelation* begins with this assertion, that "God gave to *Jesus Christ* the knowledge of things that must shortly come to pass:" And in *Rev. v. 5.* "The lion of the tribe of *Judab* hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. Verse 6. The lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne, and opened the seals thereof." Here is the human nature of *Christ*, the lamb, represented with unknown powers, viz. "seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God:" The seven horns might signify perfect might, and the seven eyes perfect knowledge; and by virtue of his union to the divine nature this may include his power to send the Spirit of God, or to give forth his gifts or graces. He opens the book or divine counsels, by which the church and the nations are to be governed to the end of the world.

Now the divine nature of *Christ* knew all that was written in this book while it was sealed; but after the sufferings of *Christ* on earth, his human nature was admitted to this privilege; and having power given him to rule the world, it was necessary he should know those counsels and decrees of the Father by which the world is to be ruled.

Observe also that he is made and declared "worthy to take this book and to open the seals of it, because he was slain and has redeemed his saints to God by his blood," verse 9. Surely it was not the godhead, but the man *Jesus* who was slain; and it is the man, not the godhead, who is become worthy on this account to read this book of divine counsels. "This is that revelation which God gave unto *Jesus Christ*, to

shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant *John*," *Rev.* i. 1.

II. The human nature of *Christ* as united to God is exalted to the government of heaven and earth. *Matth.* xxviii. 18. *Jesus* just before his ascension spake unto them, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." And *Ephes.* i. 20. *St. Paul* tells us it was God's "mighty power, which he wrought in *Christ* when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power, might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come, and hath put all things under his feet."

I know this sort of expression in scripture is wont to be applied expressly to the character of *Christ* as Mediator, for it is usually said, Though his divine nature absolutely considered had all this dominion before, yet as Mediator it was now given to him.

But let us consider these three things.

1. Since the human nature of *Christ* at least must be allowed in some sense to complete the person of the Mediator, and it is his human nature that is thus raised from the dead by the mighty power of God, and set at the right hand of God in heavenly places, it is but reasonable to conceive that the human nature receives this exaltation, this power and dominion over all things, though I grant it must be considered in union with the divine: But if we do not suppose it to be the human nature which is thus dignified and endued with authority, then we shall be forced to interpret this text thus, viz. that God raised his human nature from the dead, and set his human nature at his own right hand, that is, on high above the clouds: But has put all things under the feet of his divine nature considered as Mediator; which seems to be but a shifting and evasive exposition, if the words will admit a sense that is plainer and easier: And no man who reads it with an unbiassed mind would put this strained interpretation upon it.

2. Of what use is the frequent declaration of this power and government conferred upon *Christ* after his ascension, if it be not conferred on his human nature, and if his human nature does not exercise it? The divine nature of *Christ* had this power, and exercised this government before: As God he always did, and always will govern the world, though there had not been a word spoken in scripture of any exaltation of *Christ* to this government: And since godhead is united to the man *Jesus*, godhead in this united state would continue to govern the world as before, and that even during all the humiliation of *Christ*: What alteration then does arise from this declared exaltation of *Christ*, after his labours and sufferings?

And besides,

3. What new advantage, what benefit, what gift or reward can it be to the human nature of *Christ*, that his divine nature should be made governor of all things? Or that the divine nature should exert that authority, dominion and power which it had inherent in itself, originally, necessarily and without any gift? This government of *Christ* is frequently represented as a gift and a reward, and therefore must belong eminently to the inferior nature, which alone is capable of rewards and gifts from God.

The same argument may be drawn from *Rom.* xiv. 9. "To this end *Christ* both died and rose and revived, or lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living." His death and resurrection belong to his human nature; he died as man, he rose as man, that he might as man rule over the dead and the living;

living; for it is hardly to be supposed that St. Paul could mean, "He died and rose as man, that his godhead might obtain this dominion, when his godhead had this dominion eternal and unalienable in itself, and needed no such new title to dominion:" For his coming into flesh could never divest him of it, nor could his human sufferings repurchase such a divine claim and power if he had divested himself.

Yet here I would give notice once for all, that I do not exclude this sort of scriptures from an œconomical sense: I mean thus, they may have a respect to *Christ* in his complete person as God-man, and as Mediator; or as a man united to godhead, and they may and must signify his exaltation in his mediatorial character to these honours and authorities; without the indwelling godhead several of them seem to be too sublime for a man: But still the most natural, obvious, and primary meaning of them, refers to that human nature, which alone can be the proper subject of real abasement and advancement, which alone could really suffer, and which alone could receive real exaltation; for the divine nature in itself is utterly incapable of either. It is the man who is exalted, even the man *Jesus* who is called the Mediator, but it is the man who is one with God. He obeyed and suffered and died as man, but united to God: He rose and was exalted as man, but still united to God. I beg pardon if I have dwelt too long on this point, or repeated any thing which I had said before. The doctrine itself seems to require it of me, that if possible I might leave no scruple on the minds of pious readers who are honestly searching out the truth, and would secure the honours of their blessed redeemer.

It may be enquired here, "What acts can the man *Jesus* put forth in his human nature toward the government of heaven and earth?"

I answer, As he is now let into the counsels and decrees of God, and by his immediate union with the divine nature he now receives perpetual notice of all the affairs in the upper and lower worlds, so he can give his orders to the millions of attending angels to execute works of judgment and mercy; they are all ministering spirits to him. He can manage the affairs of providence by angels as his instruments for the government of the nations and the good of his saints. And he that has led captivity captive, and subdued the prince of darkness, with all the armies of hell into slavery to himself, he can give them permission to exercise their rage amongst mankind under such limitations and restraints as he sees proper: Thus he may govern all things by the angels or devils, as his mediums, or instruments; and he may do it also by himself in a more immediate manner.

Let me ask, May not *Christ* keep the wheels of nature in their courses, and administer the providential kingdom by virtue derived from the indwelling godhead? May he not exert his dominion amongst all the material elements, and the inhabitants of air, earth and water, as well as amongst the spirits of the invisible world? Shall prophets and apostles and captains have a resemblance of such power given them on earth, and shall not *Jesus* the Son of God have the substance and plenitude of it, especially now in heaven? Could a *Moses* divide the sea with his rod, and turn flints into rivers of water? Could a *Joshua* say to the sun, Stand thou still, and forbid the moon to move? Could a *Paul* make fevers and drophies depart at his word, and flee at the appearance of his handkerchief, *Acts* xix. 12? Could *Peter* heal the sick with his shadow passing over them, *Acts* xv. 15. and command *Tabitha* to arise from the dead? And shall we not suppose the man *Christ* *Jesus* in his exalted state, with all the power and glory of indwelling and united godhead; I say, shall we not suppose

him able to rule time and nature as he pleases, and to manage all things in heaven and earth, all things mortal and immortal?

Or if we lift our thoughts to the angelic legions and survey their powers, must we not suppose the power communicated to our exalted Saviour to be far superior to theirs? Shall it be within the power of a single angel, when sent with a pestilence, to destroy seventy thousands of *Israel* in order to punish *David's* sin, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 15, 16? or to slay a hundred and fourscore and five thousand *assyrian* soldiers in the camp of *Sennacherib* in one night, 2 *Kings* xix. 35? or shall it be within the reach of *Satan's* power and commission, as he is the "prince of the powers of the air" to raise storms and hurricanes and to send lightning from heaven, *Job* i. 16, 19? and shall not the blessed soul of our exalted redeemer have more transcendent power than angels or devils? Why should it not be within the reach of his human will by methods of unknown influence to govern the winds and the waters, the earthly and the heavenly bodies, to subserve the counsels of his Father and his own gracious purposes towards his people?

Or if it should be doubted at present by any of my readers, whether *Christ's* own human power reaches to an immediate management of all these affairs at so prodigious distances, yet we may be assured, as I hinted before, it is not above the power of human nature, so exalted and so nearly united to God, to give orders of this kind to the standing or fallen angels, which the divine nature has taken care shall be punctually and exactly fulfilled: and thus "he shall reign till he has brought all his enemies under his feet," 1 *Cor.* xv. 24, 25. But a farther pursuit of this subject is reserved to the following section.

I proceed now to the third instance of power and dignity to which the human nature of *Christ* is exalted.

III. "*Christ* as a man united to God is exalted to become a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to *Israel* and forgiveness of sins," *Acts* v. 31. This scripture must certainly include and chiefly regard the manhood of *Christ*, for it is that same *Jesus*, saith *St. Peter* to the *jews*, "whom ye slew and hanged on a tree, that the God of our fathers hath raised up," and exalted to this dignity.

Besides, it is impossible that the divine nature should be really and properly "exalted to be a prince and a Saviour, &c." for it would be humiliation and not exaltation for the pure divine nature to accept of these titles and perform these offices even by way of deputation and vicegerency to the Father, when it had supreme authority originally and eternally in itself without any donation or deputation.

It will be said here, "What can the man *Jesus* do toward the giving repentance and forgiveness?"

I would humbly enquire whether it were not his human nature sent forth his apostles when he was here on earth? And is it not the man *Jesus* who sends his ministers abroad into the nations in his present exaltation in heaven? Is it not still the man in whom godhead dwells? Is it not he who gives apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to publish this doctrine of repentance and forgiveness in his name? "He that ascended on high after he had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that received gifts for men, *Psal.* lxxviii. 18. and gave these gifts unto men for the perfecting the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying his body," *Eph.* iv. 8, 12?

And though we may reasonably suppose the man *Jesus* considered alone has not now, nor could ever have sufficient power in himself abstracted from deity, to change the hearts of men, make obstinate sinners become penitent, and seal the

for-

forgiveness of sins with comfort to their consciences; yet the man *Jesus* may say, "Father, I will that this and the other obdurate sinner be reclaimed, softened and sanctified: Father, I will that his sins be forgiven him:" And hereupon the blessed Spirit of God works this divine change in the sinner, and seals this forgiveness to the soul. Why may not *Jesus* work wonders of grace on the souls of men, in the same way as he wrought miracles of healing on their bodies?

I add further, The man *Jesus* may exert a volition that such and such a rebellious sinner be converted, softened and pardoned; and according to the sacred and unsearchable laws of the union between his divine and human nature, the effect may be wrought and the blessing given by the omnipotence and authority of the indwelling godhead: And in this sense the exalted human nature exerting such a volition becomes a conscious instrument or agent in bestowing these divine favours. You will say perhaps, Was it not so in his state of humiliation as well as now? And what advantage then has *Christ* exalted? Did not the godhead work the miracle by the intervening act of *Christ's* human will?

I answer, Yes certainly: But the difference between his agency in his exalted and in his humbled state, seems to be this; while our redeemer was on earth in his humbled state, he seems to live by more apparent, constant, immediate and actual addresses to and dependence on the godhead for every single miracle he wrought than perhaps he does now. This dependence was sometimes manifested to the spectators, by praying to his Father when he was to work a miracle, as in raising *Lazarus* from the dead. *John xi. 41.* "He said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, and yet then he spake his will with authority, verse 43. *Lazarus* come forth." At other times this actual dependence was constantly practised, though he did not manifest it to the spectators: So when *Christ* healed the leper, *Matth. viii.* the man *Jesus* said, "I will, be thou clean," and immediately the miracle was wrought. By the intervening volition of *Christ* as man the dead was raised and the leper was cleansed; but it was the power of God was present with the will of the man to heal the sick and to raise the dead, as it is expressed in *Luke v. 17.*

And thus the man *Jesus* being now exalted to a more sovereign sort of agency, to "quicken whom he will," *John v. 21.* hath a special interest in those titles, a prince and a saviour, and in bestowing repentance and forgiveness, *Acts ii. 31, 32, 33.* because his will is made as it were the agent. He ascended to heaven, he received the promise of the spirit, he poured down those gifts of the spirit on his apostles and the primitive christians, for the ordinary and extraordinary works of grace, for it is by his will these things were done.

IV. "The human nature of our Lord *Jesus Christ* has some influence in the succour and support of tempted christians," *Heb. iv. 15.* The apostle assures us, "We have an high-priest who was tempted in all points as we are, but without sin; and he can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," that is, he has a human sympathy arising from his human sufferings, and therefore we are encouraged to "come to the throne of grace to find help." And chapter ii. verse 18. "In that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Now since his ability to succour tempted souls does arise in part from his human sympathy, and from his own experience of sufferings and temptations in his human nature, it leads us naturally to conceive that even his human soul has some hand in the succour of tempted saints.

1. Because the divine nature is not rendered more able to succour them by all the temptations that the human nature sustained. The divine nature is infinitely and eternally

eternally able to succour without any regard at all to the human nature, whether that had been tempted or no.

2. It is the design of this chapter to speak of the human nature, or rather the incarnation of *Christ*, verse 17. He must become like us in "flesh and blood, that he might be a merciful high-priest to make reconciliation:" Now here the human nature is the chief agent, or rather patient in making atonement and reconciliation, though the dignity and complete merit ariseth from its union to the divine nature. Then in the next verse his human soul having been tempted, is fitted and enabled to succour them that are tempted, by its own sympathy with them, as he was man, but still supposing him united to deity. This is the most natural and necessary sense of the words.

Observe further, that *Christ* is represented as the head of the church in many scriptures, and the saints as his members: now this headship must be referred specially to his human nature, though not excluding the divine, because the members and head must be of the same nature. The second chapter to the *Hebrews*, seems to be written with this design, to shew the necessity of *Christ's* incarnation, in order to sustain the proper and appointed relations to his own people, viz. "Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, therefore he took part of the same, that he might be a brother, a priest, a father, a succourer of the tempted, &c." Nor can any relation seem more necessarily to require his having a human nature, than that of head and members. Now in what sense can the man *Jesus* bear the relation of such a vital or sympathizing head united to his body, the church, if he has no particular knowledge of the wants, sorrows and sufferings of his particular members; if he has only a mere general confused knowledge that he has members on earth who endure sorrow and suffering, though he knows not how many, nor which they be, nor is he able as man to do any thing for their particular relief? Would it not be strange to say, He has the most near and intimate relation of headship to his members, as he is man and of the same nature with them, and yet he cannot do any thing for the support or succour of any of them, by the powers of the very nature whereby he sustains this relation, and whereby chiefly he becomes their head? It is granted that the indwelling godhead capacitates him for the supply of the wants of his members, by furnishing him with all grace; but I think that human nature by which he eminently sustains this relation and becomes a head, may be allowed to be an intelligent and conscious medium of conveying these supplies.

V. If it should not be allowed that *Jesus Christ*, as man, can bestow effectual succour and relief on his tempted saints, yet surely he is able to make particular intercession for them. It is upon this account he is declared "able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him, because he ever lives to make intercession for them," *Heb. vii. 25*. Now we cannot suppose it is the divine nature which properly and directly intercedes or pleads for us in heaven, but the man *Jesus*, who gave us a pattern of that intercession here on earth, *John xvii*. Though it may be the divine nature united that renders this intercession so universally powerful and prevalent.

Nor can we suppose that *Christ* intercedes merely in general for all his saints without knowledge of their particular persons, or their present particular circumstances; for this is no more than every christian on earth does or should do: we should all intercede or plead in that manner for all the saints, *Ephes. vi. 18*. though our pleadings have not the same efficacy as his, nor are we supposed to have the same knowledge of their wants.

When

When we are told that our great high-priest, whose special work and office in heaven is to make intercession for us, "is passed into the heavens, and that he can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having himself been tempted as we are;" can we ever imagine that this does not refer to the human nature of *Christ*, since none of these expressions are applicable to his deity? And can we think that the scripture would represent our encouragements to apply ourselves to him as an intercessor in such tender and sympathetic language, if he knew only in general that there were thousands of tempted saints on earth, but had no particular knowledge of their persons, their special kinds of temptation and present distress, which might awaken this sympathy, and engage his special representation of their cases to the Father.

VI. "The human nature of *Christ* united to his godhead is exalted to receive honours from men and angels in the upper and lower worlds, upon the account of its obedience, sorrows and sufferings." It is one part of the reward promised to men of piety, that they shall enjoy glory and honour as well as immortality and peace, *Rom. ii. 7, 10.* And surely our blessed Saviour has at least a right to share in the general promise made to men, and to have his transcendent and perfect piety rewarded with transcendent honours and glories.

Therefore when the apostle had described him as man, or the son of man, or the second *Adam*, in *Heb. ii. 9.* he adds, "We see him for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour:" For these sufferings and this death he voluntarily sustained, as a piece of the most submissive obedience to his heavenly Father and most amazing charity to mankind, therefore, he was intitled to the glorious recompence.

You find these honours paid to him in heaven, according to the Father's promise and appointment. Not only the saints who were redeemed by the blood of *Christ*, but the "angels round about the throne say with a loud voice, Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing, *Rev. v. 11, 12.* and every creature in heaven, on earth, and in the sea, join their honours and their blessings to him that sits upon the throne, and to the lamb for ever," verse 13. As the man is assumed into union with the godhead, so the whole person of *Christ* the mediator or God-man becomes the object of adoration, as our best divines generally agree.

Read what the apostle declares, *Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11.* "*Christ* humbled himself and became obedient to the death of the cross, wherefore God also 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 that every tongue should confess that *Jesus Christ* is Lord, to the glory of the Father." Surely it is the human nature that seems to be exalted here to this dignity, as it stands united to the divine; and this is manifest, not only because the divine nature could not receive this exaltation, having an original and undervived right to worship, but also because his human sufferings are the reason of his exaltation.

I am ready to believe that the human nature of *Christ* knows and beholds all the knees bowing to him, and hears all the tongues confessing him, or else how can this be a proper recompence for the sufferings of *Christ* in his human nature? Does the godhead derive recompences from the sufferings of the man? Or can God be said thus to exalt the pure divine nature to be the object of adoration? Has the human nature of *Christ* no share in this reward? Or is the human nature of *Christ* recompensed some other way, that is, by making a luminous figure in heaven, arrayed in bright ornaments above the clouds or stars, but ignorant of the honours done

done him by the church on earth, while yet these very honours done him on earth are declared to be his appointed recompense? How unreasonable and absurd is such a supposition!

It will be objected here indeed, "How can any thing that is not pure God be made any part of the object of religious worship? Is not this contrary to the first command, and to the general law of worship in the old and new testament which directs it to be paid to God only?"

Answer. I think the human nature of *Christ* is no otherwise capable of religious worship, according to the statutes of heaven, but by being thus gloriously united to the divine: but when it is thus united, the whole complex person may be made the object of religious worship if God see fit, since the person who is worshipped is really one with God, and has personal communion with the divine nature: But for the further removal of these objections and all the difficulties of this kind, see my dissertation of the "worship of *Christ* as God-man and mediator," dissertation III. proposition viii. ix. where I have not only proved it from scripture, but cited the testimony of some of our greatest writers to support it, such as *Turretine* and doctor *Owen*.

VII. "*Christ* as man, but in union with God, is constituted judge of the world." This is often repeated in scripture; *Acts* xvii. 31. "God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." This is part of St. *Paul's* sermon to the *Athenians*: and St. *Peter* in his sermon to *Cornelius*, *Acts* x. 38, &c. says concerning *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, who was anointed with the holy Ghost, and whom God raised from the dead, he has commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who was ordained of God to be the judge of the quick and the dead." It is he, even the man *Jesus* who lived at *Nazareth*, shall be the judge: It is the man *Christ Jesus*, who "descends from heaven with a shout and with the sound of a trumpet, shall send his angels, and gather his elect from every quarter of the earth;" he shall call to the dead, and they that are "in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live, for all judgment is committed to him, *John* v. 27. because he is the son of man," that is, the man the *Messiah*.

I cannot think that the manhood of *Christ* would have been so expressly and peculiarly represented under this character and office of the final judge of the world, if the affairs of that awful and solemn day, were not committed to him, and if the cognizance of the hearts and actions of men, so far as to decide their eternal states justly, were not communicated to the man *Jesus* by his personal union with the divine nature. Surely he shall not sit upon that tribunal like a glorious or shining cipher, or make a bright unactive figure there; No, by no means: The business of the judgment must pass through his hands and his head, as doctor *Goodwin* expresses it, concerning the government of the world, when he explains that text, *Matth.* xxviii. 18. And when he speaks of the judgment of mankind by *Jesus Christ*, he speaks more highly and honourably of the influence that the human nature of *Christ* will have in it, than I dare venture to do here. See vol. II. book iii. chapter the last. And indeed I may support the boldest language I use in any part of this discourse concerning the most extensive powers of the man *Jesus* in his glorified state, by such a venerable precedent: The authority of that great and excellent man will abundantly excuse and defend me among all those who have an esteem for his valuable writings.

VIII. It

VIII. It might be added in the last place, that our blessed Saviour considered as man, "has some unknown and most extensive ways of communicating his presence, his influence and his glory to all the millions of saints in the heavenly world;" for the heaven of each of them consists partly in "being present with *Christ*, 2 *Cor.* v. 8, and beholding his glory which the Father gave him;" that is, the glory of his human nature, or at least as God-man, *John* xiv. 3. and xvii. 24. Now it is but a poor, low, and carnal idea of the heavenly state and blessedness, if we conceive the common rank of saints to have no nearer access to *Christ*, and no more participation of his presence, or views of his glory than merely to dwell in the same spacious regions of heaven, and to behold a man afar off raised on a high throne and arrayed in light at a great distance. Surely the immediate presence of the man *Christ*, and immediate communion with him, shall be something more near, more intimate, and more blissful than such a distant sight of him.

Shall it be said, That the powers of every glorified saint shall be vastly enlarged; to take in the blessed prospect and enjoyment, though the object may be afar off? And may it not be said also with more reason, that the powers of our glorified Saviour shall be much more enlarged to communicate himself and his glories to the meanest and most distant inhabitants of heaven? May he not make himself, even in his human nature as well as his divine, immediately present with them all by a most extensive diffusion of his human as well as his divine glories?

S E C T I O N III.

A rational account how the man Jesus Christ may be vested with such extensive powers.

THE great difficulty of receiving this doctrine, still lies here, "How is it possible that a human spirit should be endued with powers of so vast an extent?" Can it ever be supposed that a human soul, a man, should know all things that are done in this earth? That he should be acquainted with the hearts and thoughts of all men? And should take a sufficient cognizance of every minute affair that passes through the hands and the hearts of all human creatures, in order to govern and judge so large a part of the creation?

Answer I. Perhaps it may not be absolutely necessary that every single thought, word, or action of every particular creature should be known to the human soul of *Christ*, in order to fulfil his part or province in governing and judging mankind: but all the greater, more general, and more considerable affairs and transactions of nations, churches and particular persons, may be made known to the man *Jesus*, so far, that in union with the godhead he may be properly called the governor and the judge, and may execute and fulfil those glorious offices: and if he should not in an immediate manner be actually conscious of or actually influence the minutest circumstances and actions of men, yet he may have sufficient powers to know and influence all those greater affairs, in which the lesser and more minute circumstances are also involved.

An earthly king may be properly said to govern and judge his people, who are spread through many large provinces, without the particular knowledge of all the minuter concerns of his subjects; yet if he apply himself with diligence to fulfil his office, he may obtain a particular acquaintance with ten thousand affairs that relate to

the various provinces of his dominion; and he may employ proper agents to execute all his orders in the several towns and villages of his government, which his own eyes or his own hands perhaps cannot reach. Now surely we may justly believe that the intellectual powers of our glorified Saviour in heaven, extend vastly beyond the natural or acquired capacities of the greatest prince on earth; it is not impossible but that the man *Jesus* may not only know every saint around him in the heavenly regions, but that every saint and sinner also in this world, with all their biggest turns of life and concerns of mind, may come within his notice. Did king *Cyrus* know the face and the name of every soldier in his large army, and shall not *Jesus* the king of kings be supposed to have understanding large enough to take in all the most important affairs of this lower world, and perhaps every person that is under his government, though his knowledge should not reach all lesser circumstances?

Why may not the human soul of *Christ* be as well appointed to govern the world as the soul of man is appointed to govern his body, when it is evident that the soul of man does not know one thousandth part of the fine branchings of the muscles and nerves, and the more refined vapour or animal spirits, which are parts of this body? When the soul of man gives order to the grosser limbs to move; all these minute and subtil parts and powers exert their regular operations by an original divine influence and appointment, though the soul has not a particular consciousness of these minute parts or their subtil operations. So our blessed Saviour's humanity may be vested with the proper title and real powers of a governor of the world, without an explicit knowledge of every single atom of it; all which infinite number of atoms, may only be under the eye and influence of godhead.

The human soul of *Christ* is the brightest image or copy of the divine nature that is found among mere creatures; and though it may not receive all the infinite variety of particular ideas of human affairs, which are in the divine mind, yet it may receive as a transcript from the divine mind, so many of the largest and strongest of those ideas which relate to human affairs, as may be sufficient to qualify him for the judge of all, under the immediate influence of indwelling deity. So a man may transcribe a copy of the *hebrew* bible, viz. all the letters or consonants of it, sufficient for himself to read and understand it, though he leave out every point, vowel and accent, which sometimes may be more in number than the letters themselves.

It will be objected further, that every thought, word and action of human life may some way or other have influence on the particularities of the final judgment to diversity, enlarge or diminish the rewards and punishments of men in the future state; and if *Christ* as man knows not the minutest turns of thought in every heart, he cannot be a sufficient judge, nor award proper recompenses to every one according to their works.

I answer, If this be so, yet since the human soul of *Christ* can do so much as I have mentioned toward the cognizance and judgment of mankind, he may justly have this work assigned to him, considering it's union to godhead; and where the faculties of the human soul of *Christ* are exerted to their utmost, and yet fall short, the divine nature which is always present, abundantly supplies all that defect by a constant immediate and unknown motion and influence. "God has ordained a man to judge the world," *Acts* xvii. 31. and yet God is judge himself. *Selah. Psal.* l. 6.

And here let it be observed once for all, that I can hardly give myself leave to think that any created spirit whatsoever should know every individual circumstance of every being, and every action both in the world of bodies and the world of souls. Though doctor *Goodwin* supposes the man *Jesus* capable of all this, I rather suppose it
belongs

belongs only to the omniscience of God himself to take in with one infinite, simultaneous and extensive view all the shapes, sizes, situations and motions of every single atom of which this whole globe of earth is composed, with all it's animal and vegetable productions, and all the other planetary worlds, the sun, moon and stars, with every action and circumstance of all their inhabitants. I content myself rather to think it is a prerogative only of God the Creator, the infinite spirit, to be perfectly acquainted with every motion of the mind, every inward thought and manner of action that belongs to all the innumerable inhabitants of the intellectual world, both men and angels. Should it be granted that any creature could oversee and overrule every minute affair that relates to the worlds of mind and matter, and every thought and atom that belongs to them all, sometimes I think this would approach so near to the distinguishing properties and prerogatives which God hath assumed and peculiarized to himself in this world, that it would seem to take away that plain and obvious distinction between God and the creature which ought to be maintained sacred and inviolable. Scripture seems to limit my thoughts about a creature's power in this manner.

Whatsoever therefore I may speak in this treatise according to the most raised apprehensions I have of the "extent of the human intellectual powers of *Christ*," I can hardly suppose them to reach any farther than to take a just cognizance of all those greater and more important motions and actions, circumstances and relations of the material and immaterial worlds on which the government of them chiefly depends; and perhaps also even this may be impossible without his peculiar union to the divine nature. He may thus have a simultaneous and comprehensive view of all the greater affairs of every inhabitant of the upper and lower worlds, and may also have a successive and particular knowledge of any minuter circumstances that attend them, whenever the indwelling deity sees it necessary to communicate it to him for any special occasions. As the general of an army standing on a hill surveys the troops engaged in battel, he can distinguish perhaps every regiment, and their changes of ground, when they charge, and when they retreat, but cannot know every sword that is drawn, nor hear every groan; yet some particulars of this kind which relate to the single soldiers may be distinctly told him. Where that great author doctor *Goodwin*, whose opinions I cite at the end of this book, indulges his imagination to fly beyond these limits, I am constrained to leave him, lest I should seem to deify a creature, and in trench upon the supreme majesty of God.

Answer II. To make it appear that our blessed Lord in his human nature may possibly be capable of knowing all the most considerable affairs and circumstances of mankind, let us consider how far the mere native capacities of a human spirit may extend. We must not judge of the innate powers and natural capacities of the soul of the *Messiah* by the scanty measures of our own souls and their native powers. The soul of *Christ* may be reasonably supposed in it's own nature to transcend the powers of all other souls as far as an angel exceeds an ideot, and yet be but a human soul still; for "gradus non mutant speciem," different degrees do not change the kind or nature.

When we narrow and limit our conceptions of the extensive powers of the soul of *Jesus*, and bring them down too near to our own, it is because we have too high a conceit of ourselves, and too low an idea of the great and glorious God. We are ready to fancy the difference between God and ourselves so small, as that a mind so vastly superior to our own, as I have described, must be raised immediately to godhead: whereas by the view of the powers of angels, which I have hinted before, it is possible

there may be endowment and excellencies equal to all the millions of men on earth united in one spirit, which may be yet but a created being, and infinitely inferior to the great God. And surely if there be such a spirit of such extensive excellencies and endowments, it is divinely proper that this spirit should be the soul of *Jesus* who is so intimately united to God, and who "in all things must have the pre-eminence," *Col. i. 18.*

But let us proceed in this argument to raise our enquiries how great and glorious a creature may be formed by the almighty creator.

If I might venture to speak here in the language of philosophy, it is exceeding hard for us to determine what is the maximum or minimum, the greatest or the least thing in nature. That matter is infinitely divisible is a doctrine now universally received and maintained without controversy. Now if we cannot limit the possible smallness of corporeal beings, how can we limit the possible greatness of them? Even in the animal world there are creatures whose particular limbs escape the nicest microscope, and are perhaps a thousand times less than the smallest visible grain of sand. What amazing difference is betwixt the bulk of these diminutive animals, and the bulk of an elephant or a whale? And yet the almighty Creator may form animals as much superior in bulk to a whale or an elephant, as these huge creatures exceed those invisible mites, when he had formed a world of air, earth and water fit for them. And why may not the same God perform the same wonders in the world of spirits? Can he not form a spirit of such extensive capacities as may be equal to a million of common human souls?

Let us think again, what strange difference there is between the life and activity of an eagle and an oyster, or between a grey-hound and a snail, and yet both are animals. May not therefore the soul of our Lord *Jesus Christ* exceed common souls both in the activity and extent of it's powers as much as the most sprightly animal exceeds the dullest and most stupid? As far as sun beams exceed smoke and ashes, or as far as the sun exceeds our common fires? "For in all things he must have the pre-eminence." *Col. i. 18.*

Again, Cannot the maker of all things create a new world of material beings vastly superior both in bulk and in powers to this our earth, and the inhabitants of it? Cannot an architect build a royal palace larger and more exquisitely adorned than his own little model of it? May he not form the model at the proportion of an inch to a thousand yards? And why may not the Creator of all things as much exceed our usual ideas also in forming a spirit of most extensive and surprising capacities above all other spirits? It is too assuming for us to measure all possibilities by our common conceptions.

But even our common conceptions will furnish us with some examples fit to persuade us of the vast and extensive power of a creature. Could we ever think of the pupil of the eye, that it should take in a whole hemisphere of stars, each of which is bigger than the globe of our earth, if every night's experience did not convince us: And yet this hemisphere, so vast as it is, is but one of the ideas of a human soul. There are millions of ideas besides this which are contained in the soul or memory of every modern philosopher or ingenious mechanic. Many of these our ideas indeed are successive: But why may not the soul of *Christ* be large enough in it's native capacity to take in all at once what we take in by a long succession, or what would cost us the labour of ages?

Such a glorious created mind as belongs to the Son of God may be capable, for ought we know, of extending it's thoughts backward to far distant ages, and forward beyond time, and reach far into eternity, and may also spread them abroad over the nations

nations of mankind, and all their chief affairs, and yet not be perfectly infinite as the knowledge of God is *; for divine knowledge extends at once infinitely backward and forward through both eternities, and reaches to all possibles, as well as to what is actually past and future.

How do we know to what prodigious distances the presence, the consciousness and agency of the human soul of *Christ* may be extended? We are sure this presence is not infinite; but while we suppose it to be short of infinity, what other limits can our reason certainly set to it? How can we tell to what amazing lengths, and heights, and breadths, and depths, his immediate consciousness and immediate agency may reach? Wheresoever scripture sets limits to a creature's power, let our inquiring thoughts stop short and lie silent; but reason hardly knows where to stop, while it enquires how powerful and knowing a creature the great God can make.

Surely we have good reason to believe that the soul of *Christ* is the most intelligent, the most knowing and active creature that God ever made, and has the largest native powers; and it seems divinely agreeable that it should be so, that he might be a proper subject for the favour of a personal union with the godhead, and a proper medium whereby the great God might with honour transact his affairs among the children of men, as well as that he might be a most suitable mirror to display the divine perfections in their fairest and strongest light. Surely there is no created nature which in itself comes nearer to the perfections of God than the man *Christ Jesus*. No creature is a fairer image of God than the soul of *Christ* is, and thereby it becomes the fittest instrument for an indwelling God to act by, and yet it is infinitely inferior to godhead.

Answer III. But if the native powers of the soul of *Christ* in it's first formation, or during it's abode on earth in a humbled estate, were not sufficient for these purposes of government and judgment, yet may they not be sufficient in it's present glorified state? The powers of a soul confined in flesh and blood may be but of a narrow extent in comparison of those extensive powers which are ascribed to the man *Jesus Christ* now in heaven.

Who knows what "amazing enlargement may attend all the natural powers of man when advanced to a state of glory?" Perhaps a common spirit released from flesh and blood, and exalted to a glorified state, may extend it's powers a thousand times farther than the greatest spirit dwelling in flesh can do.

And we may suppose also that when this spirit is again united to a glorified body, it's own powers of activity, knowledge and influence may be yet farther enlarged abundantly, rather than confined, by having such a glorious instrument to assist it's operations. So a loadstone naked will draw iron; but when it is armed with steel, it will draw a hundred times as much as before, though the steel without the loadstone has no attractive power at all. Thus may the soul be in a glorified body; and indeed were it not so in some measure, why should the glorified spirits of the saints ever be united to bodies again? The resurrection of the body would be no blessing, if it did not add some new powers and advantages to the saints beyond those of a separate spirit.

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* It is worthy of our observation how Mr. *Locke* in the "essay on the human understanding" describes the largeness of a man or an angel's memory, book II. chapter x. section 9. "It is reported of that prodigy of parts, monsieur *Pascal*, that till the decay of his health had impaired his memory, he forgot nothing of what he had done, read or thought in any part of his rational age. The several degrees of angels may probably have larger views, and some of them be endowed with capacities able to retain together, and constantly set before them as in one picture all their past knowledge at once."

Our Saviour who once dwelt in flesh and blood is now in a glorified state, united to the most perfect glorified body; and what vast additions may be made to his knowledge and power beyond what he enjoyed in the days of his humiliation and confinement to a mortal body, it is hard for us to determine. When such a capacious soul is united to a glorified body, the extent of it's native powers may receive an additional crease beyond what common souls even in glory can ever arrive at, as much as it's ennative excellencies are superior to their's.

The very extent of the power and presence of a glorified body itself may be prodigiously large in comparison of our bodies of flesh and blood. A drop of oil may be contained in a pepper corn, and not extend it's influence beyond it: But place this drop on a burning lamp, and the blaze will diffuse it's particles of light, when it is thus kindled, perhaps to two miles distance in a dark night; thence it is evident, that these diffusive particles of oil will fill a sphere of four miles diameter: A most amazing enlargement of a single drop! And why may not a glorified body, especially when it shall be called a spiritual body, as much exceed flesh and blood in it's extent of powers as a drop of oil kindled into a blaze stretches itself beyond it's own first or native dimensions?

Behold our blessed Lord after his resurrection, even before he was fully glorified, comes with his body twice "into the midst of his disciples when the doors were shut*," *John* xx. 19, 26. Much less doth a glorified body seem to be subject to the present laws, restraints and limitations of corporeal motion.

What if we should suppose a glorified soul to have as sovereign and immediate an influence over every atom of it's own glorified body as our souls at present have over our grosser limbs? What if it be made capable of ranging and disposing the atoms, of which the body is compounded, in what form it please, and of diffusing them through unknown spaces? Hence would evidently result the safety and immortality of that body, and it's prodigious vital activity on the material world. Our safety would be in our own power, and our influence amazing, if we could place every atom of our bodies in what form we chuse, and keep it there during our pleasure.

And then surely we may allow the glorified soul of our blessed Saviour to be possessed of this power in a much superior degree, and to exert it in a far more transcendent manner: And thus the sun of righteousness, even in the operations of his human nature, may answer all the parallels of this illustrious metaphor.

The natural powers of his body thus sublimated and refined may move, for ought we know, as swift as sun-beams, which may travel many thousands of miles in a minute: It may diffuse it's influences like the sun in a most extensive sphere: It may reach our world, and the moon almost in the same moment, and penetrate earth to the center.

If the face of our Lord on the mount of transfiguration did "shine as the sun, and his raiment as the light," *Matth.* xvii. 2. If his body appearing to *St. Paul* was dressed in such a "light from heaven as exceeded the brightness of the sun at mid-day," *Acts* xxvi. 13. What diffusive and distant influences may such a glorified body be capable of on the elementary world of air, earth and water, under the command of such a glorified soul as that of our Saviour?

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* Whatever other senses may be put upon these words, I think our common translation is the most natural, and the text seems to intimate that it was miraculous.

I cannot deny myself in this place the pleasure of publishing to the world a very beautiful resemblance, the first hints and notices whereof I received formerly in conversation from my reverend and worthy friend Mr. *Robert Bragge*, whereby the person of *Christ* as God-man in his exalted state may be happily represented. The sun in the heavens is the most glorious of all visible beings: His sovereign influence has a most astonishing extent through all the planetary globes, and bestows light and heat upon all of them. It is the sun that gives life and motion to all the infinite varieties of the animal world in the earth, air and water: It draws out the vegetable juices from the earth, and covers the surface of it with trees, herbs and flowers: It is the sun that gives beauty and colour to all the millions of bodies round the globe, and by it's pervading power perhaps it forms minerals and metals under the earth. It's happy effects are innumerable; they reach certainly to every thing that has life and motion, or that gives life, support or pleasure to mankind.

Now suppose God should create a most illustrious spirit, and unite it to the body of the sun, as a human soul is united to a human body: Suppose this spirit had a preceptive power capacious enough to become conscious of every sun-beam, and all the influences and effects of this vast shining globe, both in it's light, heat and motion even to the remotest region: And suppose at the same time it was able by an act of it's will to send out or withhold every sun beam as it pleased, and thereby to give light and darkness, life and death in a sovereign manner to all the animal inhabitants of this our earth, or even of all the planetary worlds. Such may be the "glorified human soul of our blessed redeemer united to his glorified body;" and perhaps his knowledge and his power may be as extensive as this similitude represents; especially when we consider this soul and body as personally united to the divine nature, and as one with God.

Now this noble thought may be supported by such considerations as these.

As our souls are conscious of the light, shape, motions, &c. of such distant bodies as the planet *Saturn* or the fixed stars, because our eyes receive rays from thence; so may not a human soul united to a body as easily be supposed to have a consciousness of any thing wheresoever it can send out rays or emit either fluids or atoms from it's own body? May not the sun, for instance, if a soul were united to it, become thereby so glorious a complex being, as to send out every ray with knowledge, and have a consciousness of every thing wheresoever it sends it's direct or reflected rays? And may not the human soul of our Lord *Jesus Christ* have a consciousness of every thing wheresoever it can send direct or reflected rays from his own shining and glorified body?

To add yet to the wonder, we may suppose, that these rays may be subtle as magnetic beams which penetrate brass and stone as easily as light doth glass; and at the same time they may be as swift as light, which reaches the most amazing distance of several millions of miles in a minute. By this means, since the light of the sun pervades all secret chambers in our hemisphere at once, and fills all places with direct and reflected beams, if consciousness belonged to all those beams, what a sort of omniscient being would the sun be? I mean omniscient in it's own sphere. And why may not the human soul and body of our glorified Saviour be thus furnished with such an amazing extent of knowledge and power, and yet not be truly infinite?

Let us dwell a little longer upon these delightful contemplations.

If a soul had but a full knowledge and command of all the atoms of one solid foot of matter, which according to modern philosophy is infinitely divisible, what strange
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and astonishing influences would it have over this world of our's? What confusions might it raise in distant nations, sending pestilential steams into a thousand bodies, and destroying armies at once? And it might scatter benign or healing and vital influences to as large a circumference. If our blessed Lord in the days of his humiliation could send "virtue out of him to heal a poor diseased woman who touched the hem of his garment" with a finger, who knows what healing atoms or what killing influences he may send from his dwelling in glory to the remotest distances of our world, to execute his Father's counsels of judgment or mercy? It is not impossible, so far as I can judge, that the soul of *Christ* in it's glorified state may have as much command over our heavens and our earth and all things contained in them, as our souls in the present state have over our own limbs and muscles to move them at pleasure.

Let us remember that it is now found out and agreed in the new philosophy of *Sir Isaac Newton*, that the distances are prodigious to which the powerful influence of the sun reaches in the center of our planetary system. It is the sun who holds and restrains all the planets in their several orbits, and keeps in those vast bodies of *Jupiter* and *Saturn* in their constant revolutions; one at the distance of 424 millions, and the other at the distance of 777 millions of miles; besides all the other influences it has upon every thing that may live and grow in those planetary worlds.

It is the sun who reduces the long wanderings of the comets back again near to himself from distances more immensely great than those of *Saturn* and *Jupiter*: And why may not the human nature of our Lord *Jesus Christ* both in soul and body have a dominion given him by the Father, larger than the sun in the firmament? Why may not the Son of God be endued with an immediate consciousness and agency to a far greater distance?

Thus if we conceive of the human soul of *Christ*, either in the amazing extent of it's own native powers or in the additional acquirements of a glorified state, we see reason to believe that it's capacities are far above our old usual conceptions, and may be raised and exalted to a degree of knowledge, power and glory suitable and equal to his operations and offices, so far as they are attributed to his human nature in the word of God? But I proceed further.

Answer IV. But if the soul of *Christ* considered singly in it's native powers, or even in it's glorified state, be not capable of such extensive knowledge and influence, yet considered in it's personal union with the divine nature, it's capacities must be enlarged to an unknown degree. And though it is my judgment, that abstracted from his godhead the man *Jesus* could not fulfil and sustain all the sacred offices and honours of the *Messiah*, yet united to his divine nature he may thereby become in a sense sufficient for all this work.

It may be inquired here, what influence this personal union with the godhead can have upon a human mind, to enlarge it's knowledge and intellectual faculties and it's effective powers to so amazing an extent?

In answer to this, we must all confess that the doctrine of unions is one of the most unknown and unsearchable difficulties in natural philosophy. Our understandings are nonplussed when we consider but the union of the parts of matter among themselves, which no philosophy has ever yet fully accounted for; and much more are we puzzled when we think of the union of matter and mind in every human person, and the strange amazing influences which the one hath upon the other by means of this union. But when we attempt to conceive of the most intimate union, into which the

the great and blessed God may assume a creature, and join it to himself, our thoughts are lost and overwhelmed with this mystery: and that not only as to the mode or manner of it, which is unsearchable, but as to the extent of the influences and effects of it, which are astonishing, and beyond all our present powers to determine.

Yet since we are thus far assured by the word of God that there is a glorious union between the man *Christ*, and the divine nature, we may attempt to explain our best conceptions about the effects of it, first as to the communications of knowledge, and then of effective power.

I. "As to the communication of knowledge to the man *Christ* by his union with the deity." We may try to illustrate this matter by the similitude of the union of a human soul to a body. Suppose a learned philosopher be also a skilful divine, and a great linguist; we may reasonably conclude that there are some millions of words and phrases, if taken together with all the various senses of them, which are deposited in his brain as in a repository, by means of some correspondent traces or signatures; we may suppose also millions of ideas of things, human and divine, treasured up in various traces or signatures in the same brain. Nay, each organ of sense may impress on the brain millions of traces belonging to the particular objects of that sense; especially the two senses of discipline, the eye and the ear: The pictures, the images, the colours, and the sounds that are reserved in this repository of the brain, by some correspondent impressions or traces are little less than infinite: Now the human soul of the philosopher, by being united to this brain, this well-furnished repository, knows all these names, words, sounds, images, lines, figures, colours, notions and sensations. It receives all these ideas, and is, as it were, mistress of them all. The very opening of the eye impresses thousands of ideas at once upon such a soul united to a human brain; and what unknown millions of ideas may be impressed on it or conveyed to it in successive seasons, whensoever she stands in need of them, and that by the means of this union to the brain, is beyond our capacity to think or number.

Let us now conceive the divine mind or wisdom as a repository stored with infinite ideas of things past, present and future; suppose a created spirit of most extensive capacity intimately united to this divine mind or wisdom: May it not by this means, by divine appointment become capable of receiving so many of those ideas, and so much knowledge as are necessary for the government and the judgment of all nations? And this may be done two ways, viz. either by the immediate application of itself, as it were by enquiry, to the divine mind, to which it is thus united, or by the immediate actual influences and impressions which the divine mind may make of these ideas on the human soul, as fast as ever it can stand in need of them for these glorious purposes.

Since a human brain, which is mere matter, and which contains only some strokes and traces and corporeal signatures of ideas, can convey to a human soul united to it, many millions of ideas, as fast as it needs them for any purposes of human life; how much more may the infinite God or divine mind or wisdom, which hath actually all real and possible ideas in it, in the most perfect manner, communicate to a human soul united to this divine wisdom, a far greater number of ideas than a human brain can receive; even as many as the affairs of governing and judging this world may require.

This may be represented and illustrated by another similitude thus: Suppose there were a spherical looking-glass or mirror vast as this earth is; on which mil-

lions of corporeal objects appeared in miniature on all sides of it impressed or represented there, by a thousand planetary and starry worlds surrounding this vast mirror; suppose a capacious human spirit united to this mirror, as the soul is to the body: What an unknown multitude of ideas would this mirror convey to that human spirit in successive seasons? Or perhaps this spirit might receive all these ideas at once, and be conscious of the millions of things represented all round the mirror. This mirror may represent the deity: The human spirit taking in these ideas successively, or conscious of them all at once, may represent to us the soul of *Christ* receiving, either in a simultaneous view, or in a successive way, unknown myriads of ideas by it's union to godhead: though it must be owned it can never receive all the ideas which are in the divine mind.

II. Having shewn how the human soul of *Christ*, by virtue of it's union with the divine nature, may be furnished with most amazing treasures of knowledge, I proceed now to enquire how the human nature of *Christ* may attain vast effective powers, and may be said to have a hand in bringing about the various revolutions of providence, in managing the affairs of the government of the world, and forming the wonderous scenes of the last judgment; and all this by virtue of it's union to the divine nature.

Let us consider what power or influence the human nature of *Christ* might have upon the miracles which he wrought whilst he was here on earth. It is very probable and almost certain, that it was a part of his divine furniture and commission from the Father, that whensoever he prayed for, and then willed or commanded any such sort of supernatural event, the effect should as certainly follow his volition or his command as the human limbs obey the soul when it wills to move them. The case of the apostles was not so; they had not a personal union with indwelling godhead; they tried once, or perhaps oftener, to cast out devils, and could not do it. But as where our soul wills, our limbs always move at it's command, so whensoever *Christ* the man willed to work a miracle, the supernatural effect followed, if not by human, yet by divine agency. Observe this in a few instances.

When he cleansed the leper, *Mattb. viii. 3.* his soul willed that leprosy should depart, and his tongue pronounced these words, "I will; be thou clean:" and immediately the effect followed, the leper was healed. Whether the human soul of *Christ* had in that day sufficient knowledge and power given it to change the crasis of the blood, to remove the tainted atoms from the body of the man, and to place all the fibres of the diseased flesh in a proper and healthy form, this may be matter of doubtful enquiry: But if the divine power united to the manhood made this sovereign and healing change, and was pleased to make use of the intermediate volition of the human will, and language of the human tongue for this purpose, still the man *Christ Jesus* has his share of agency in this work; and therefore he is said to go about "working wonders and healing diseases, for God was with him," *Acts x. 38.*

Again, In the midst of a storm when he bid the winds be silent, and commanded the waves to be still, it is probable that his human soul and body might not in themselves at that time have direct and proper sufficient influence on the winds and the waves, to produce such a miraculous calm and silence; but the divine nature or indwelling godhead, by it's infinite power suppressed these tumultuous elements at the will and word of *Christ*, which rebuked the storm: And since the man *Jesus* was made the intelligent medium or instrument of this command, the winds and the seas are said to pay obedience to him, *Mark iv. 41.* "What manner of man is this, that the winds and seas obey him?"

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It was much the same thing when he cast out devils, and commanded them to depart from the bodies which they possessed. Whether it was the terror of his known character that fell upon them and frightened them, or the compulsive power of his deity drove them out, this may perhaps be doubted. But suppose the demoniacs were dispossessed by divine agency, yet the man *Jesus* has the honour of this miracle, as being the conscious instrument of his godhead therein. It was "*Jesus of Nazareth* who healed those who were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him," *Acts* x. 38.

Yet we should take notice that in the days of his humiliation on earth, his power was limited; for he had not the knowledge of all God's counsels, "he knew not the day of judgment," and therefore could not govern the world till his resurrection and ascension, when the Father "delivered all things into his hands," *Matth.* xxviii. 18. and gave him the book of his decrees, *Rev.* v. 7—9. We may observe also that when he raised *Lazarus*, he prayed to the Father for that miracle, *John* xi. 41. as acknowledging publicly a particular dependence for each miraculous operation; "I know that thou hearest me always, and I thank thee that thou hast now heard me."

But perhaps it is otherwise in his glorified state. Imagine our Saviour in heaven, as having received full and absolute "powers over all things in heaven and earth," *Matth.* xxviii. 18. suppose him now residing in the upper world, and by his own most extensive capacity of mind and by the indwelling deity, suppose him constantly acquainted with the various counsels of God for the government of the world and the church, as particularly as he was acquainted with each single occasion of working a miracle here on earth; suppose also his commission in his exalted state to be so general and extensive, and that according to every emergency, he gives commands to the angels or devils, to the earth, air and seas, to perform such peculiar services for his people, and to bring distress upon his adversaries: Now if all the infinite variety of effects presently appear and answer his command, though really performed by divine power, he may properly be said to have "all power in heaven and in earth put into his hands," and to govern all things in the upper and lower regions; for as much as the indwelling godhead makes use of the human nature as it's glorious and conscious medium, to exert it's sovereign authority and divine power: and the man *Jesus* considered in union with godhead gives forth the commands, sees them all executed, and receives the honours and adorations of saints and angels, as their governor and their judge.

Thus if the exalted powers of the man *Jesus* in glory are not conceived to be sufficient in themselves for the complete execution of those great offices to which he is advanced, yet his human soul being united to his godhead, and always under the infallible influence of divine wisdom and counsel, and having such a most extensive acquaintance with the affairs of the upper and lower worlds, the man *Christ* may give forth all the commands of God whereby the world is governed, "and every knee may bow to him, and every tongue confess that *Christ* is Lord to the glory of the Father," *Phil.* ii. 10, 11.

If any person should enquire here, "May not any of our souls be thus assumed into union with the divine nature, and by this union be made capable of the same powers and dignities?" I answer, By no means: for though the capacity of our souls may be largely extended in a future world, yet I am verily persuaded they can never be dilated or enlarged to the amazing comprehension which the soul of our blessed Saviour possesses. Our souls in their native constitution are vastly inferior to his. As a vessel of clay can never be enlarged by all the art of man, to such a prodigious

digious capacity as a vessel of gold, so nor the soul of an idiot to contain the ideas of a *Milton* or a *Newton*; nor any other created spirit to know and do what the blessed soul of *Jesus* knows and does.

Perhaps the powers of any other human soul would be dissolved and destroyed under such impressions from indwelling godhead as the soul of *Christ* constantly receives, and by which he is fitted for his high post of mediation and government. Were it possible that the divine power should continually condescend to effect whatsoever a common human soul willed, yet this human soul perhaps has not natural powers sufficiently large to be made a conscious instrument of one thousandth part of what the soul of *Jesus* knows and wills, and does by virtue of the indwelling godhead. "In all things he must have the pre-eminence," *Col. i. 15—18*.

Upon this representation of things, the various language of scripture appears to be true, and is made very intelligible. *Christ* says, "he can do nothing of himself, he knew not the day of judgment" when he was here on earth, &c. and yet he is said to "know the hearts of men, and to know all things;" for as fast as the divine mind united to him was pleased to communicate all these ideas, so fast was his human nature capable of receiving them. "The Father, in succession of seasons, shews the Son all things that himself doth," *John v. 20*. But God had shewn him but some lesser things comparatively at the time when *Christ* spake this; for at that time he assures the *Jews*, that "the Father would afterwards shew him greater works than these." Thus, as I have shewn before, the union of the human nature to the divinity, being purely arbitrary, or owing to the will of God, the seasons and measures of divine communications made to the man *Jesus* must be arbitrary also, and limited or enlarged according to divine will and appointment.

Upon this same representation of things also it may be justly said in scripture, that "God governs the world, God only knows the hearts of all men, and God himself is the judge, and yet *Christ* is the searcher of hearts, the judge and Lord of all;" because though the man *Jesus* may have these titles and characters attributed to him, yet it is not merely the man considered abstractly in himself, but it is the man united to God, it is the person of God-man: or you may say, the divine nature, or the godhead acting in and by the man *Jesus*, who performs all these wonders, and which makes the man *Jesus* the conscious and intelligent medium of these performances; and thus he gives him the honour of being the agent.

By this account of things, there is a fair answer given to the objection that might be started against the first part of this section, viz. "If the human soul of *Christ*, which is but a creature, may have such a vast and astonishing extent of knowledge and power, does not this represent a creature approaching too near to the idea of God?" Does it not invest a creature with some of those prerogatives which are mentioned in scripture, as peculiar and appropriate to deity? And does it not thus take away the distinction which God has given between himself and creatures, as well as enervate several of our scripture proofs of the divinity of *Christ*?

I have indeed, in some measure anticipated this objection, when I limited the knowledge and power of the man *Jesus*, only to the greater and more important concerns and actions of the material and intellectual worlds, on which the government of them chiefly depends: And even this must be a very amazing and comprehensive knowledge and power for a creature to possess: But every thought, and every motion, and every atom of the worlds of souls and bodies, in my opinion is known only to God, and belongs to infinite omniscience alone.

But

But to remove this difficulty and danger yet farther, let us always remember, that the human nature of *Christ*, which is so exalted has the fulness of the godhead dwelling in it, or is personally united to deity. Thence it follows, that when these most extensive powers are attributed to the man *Jesus*, it is by virtue of the divine nature that dwells in him: And therefore the complex person of our blessed Saviour may justly have these divine prerogatives of knowledge and power ascribed to him. They being given us to distinguish God from a mere creature, cannot be applied by the word of a true and faithful God to any person who has not godhead in him; and upon this account they continue their assistance to prove the deity of *Christ*.

If it were possible that a mere creature could be framed by divine power, capable in itself of some of those operations which God has assumed to himself, as his own prerogatives, such as governing and judging the world, searching and sanctifying the hearts of men, &c. yet since the great God, who is jealous of his own honour, has appropriated these characters and operations to himself alone, I think we may be assured that he would never form such a creature with these characters and operations; or at least, that he would never discover such a creature to us in our world, lest he should thereby take away the inviolable criteria or signs which himself has given us to distinguish between God and creatures. Or if ever such a glorious creature were formed and discovered to us, he would certainly be intimately and personally united to the divine nature; and thus have proper godhead dwelling in him, lest we should be unavoidably exposed to the danger of taking one for God who was not God, and paying divine honours to a person who was not divine.

Perhaps while we dwell on earth, there will always remain some difficulty in adjusting several particulars that relate to the person, the offices and the operations of our blessed Saviour: but since we firmly believe that his name is *Emmanuel*, or God with us, and that God and man are united to constitute the complete person of our mediator; since we are persuaded also that the characters and offices which he sustains, require powers superior to all created nature for the most complete execution of them; therefore where we are at a loss in determining how far the divine nature operates, and how far the human, in any special part of his offices, we may refer it in general to the complex person of the mediator as God-man. In this person we are sure there are powers abundantly sufficient to answer all the necessities and demands of every office which he sustains. When we consider him as God, it is as God united to man: When we consider him as man, it is as man united to God; and his person as God-man, our governor and our judge demands our adoration, and faith and love.

To conclude this subject, though such speculations as I have indulged in this discourse, are by no means necessary to our salvation, yet they may be applied to several excellent purposes in christianity. They may cure us of our old narrow conceptions of the glories of the exalted human nature of *Christ*, and raise in us nobler ideas of that illustrious person, whom God the Father hath advanced to so sublime a degree of power and majesty at his own right hand.

These speculations may give us a much higher esteem of our blessed Saviour, and and a more affecting sense of his sorrows and sufferings in the value and dignity of them, when we observe how glorious a person he is in himself, and what a rich and surprizing recompence God the Father has made him upon this account. They may teach

teach us to pay more just and agreeable honours to the person of our redeemer God-man, and excite us to a nobler practice of gratitude, to do and suffer any thing for his sake, who has done and suffered so much for us on earth, and who continues to do so much for us in heaven. Sure it must be a culpable defect in us, willingly to withhold any part of that esteem, affection and love from the man *Christ Jesus*, which he has so richly merited at our hands by his amazing condescension, by his former mortal agonies, and by his present extensive benefits. We would not willingly treat any of our fellow-creatures at so low and unworthy a rate, as too often we treat the Son of God, who died for us and is exalted to the Father's throne, *Rev. iii. 27. and iv. 21.*

“It has pleased the Father that all the fulness of godhead should dwell bodily in the man *Jesus*,” that there should be a personal union between God and man, that so the human nature being a part of the complex person of the mediator, it might be assumed into the complex object of worship: and indeed if we do not include the human nature of *Christ* in the honours which we pay him, I think we can be hardly said to give him any of that special honour in a proper sense, to which the Father has advanced him by this union: And we seem to deprive his sacred person also of that peculiar glory which he received from the Father by way of gift or reward for his sufferings. For it is not the divine nature properly, but the human which endured the sufferings, and is intitled to the reward. Whatsoever sublime honours therefore we pay to the pure godhead of *Christ*, while we have no actual regard to the man *Jesus* who is united to the deity, we seem to neglect that peculiar honour due to him, for which we have perhaps the most frequent precepts and examples in the new testament, that is, the honour due to him as God-man and mediator.

I grant that we must not separate the divine nature of *Christ* from the human, while we address him with religious worship; for the mere man abstracted from godhead doth not seem a proper object, nor justly capable of it, according to the rules of scripture: Yet while we direct our devotions to his whole sacred person, our forms of address may and ought to have frequent respect to the past sorrows and the present glories and powers of his human nature: This is to worship him, according to the patterns of worship paid to him, which stand recorded in scripture for our imitation. See *Rev. i. 5, 6. and v. 9. and vii. 9, 10.*

All the honour which we pay to the man *Jesus*, must redound to the glory of the indwelling godhead, and to the honour of the Father; yet we should look upon ourselves under special obligations, to pay particular honour and love to whom honour and love are due, and not forget the interest of the human nature of *Christ* in the smart of his sufferings, and in the glory of his exaltation, when we pay religious worship to our *Emmanuel*, or God with us. See these things more discoursed at large in my “third dissertation on the trinity,” pages 518—544.

Such raised sentiments as these concerning the power and dignity of our exalted redeemer, may discover to us the sense and beauty of several expressions of scripture which before were unobserved or unknown; and may make it appear with what propriety the scripture speaks concerning the rewards and recompences which *Christ* received, on the account of his sufferings: It discovers also the distinct capacities with which he is furnished to fulfil those glorious offices of government and judgment, that the Father has invested him with.

While we give a sacred freedom to our meditations on this subject, we may feel ourselves inspired with holy breathings toward the upper world, where the person of our

our great redeemer dwells at the right-hand of God. Such an elevation of thought may awaken in us yet further degrees of humble and sacred curiosity to arrive at a better acquaintance with the great "Theanthropos," or God in our nature, whom having not seen we love, and in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice, 1 *Pet.* i. 8. This should make us long until the time comes, when our doubtful and imperfect guesses at his glory shall vanish; when we shall view him no longer through the darkness of a glass, but see him as he is, and behold him face to face. Then shall it appear, that eternal life in our possession of it, as well as in our way to it, consists in the "knowledge of the one true God, and *Jesus Christ* whom he has sent," *John* xvii. 3. Then shall the Son of God himself, and all his saints together, rejoice in the accomplishment of that glorious language of his intercession; *John* xvii. 24. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me:" and this will be a great part of our heaven. Amen.

S E C T I O N. IV.

Testimonies from other writers.

SINCE I have finished this discourse, I have met with several authors who were zealous and hearty friends of the doctrine of the deity of *Christ*, and yet have raised their meditations to a sublime degree concerning the "extensive powers and capacities of his human nature now glorified." Perhaps it will allure some readers into a more favourable sentiment of this doctrine, when they shall find that it is not a loose and wild flight of imagination, but the settled and sedate judgment of former writers of worth and eminency; and for this reason I have made the following citations.

If we were to consult the writings of ancient fathers, doctor *Whitby** assures us in his annotations on *Philip.* ii. 9. that "they refer this high exaltation of *Christ*, not to his divine but human nature; and that the apostle speaks not here of the exaltation of his divine nature by the manifestation of his concealed glory and power, but of the exaltation of that nature which had suffered, for this is represented in scripture as the reward of his passion. *Heb.* ii. 9. "We see him, saith the apostle, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour." And again, "The elders about the throne said, Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, *Rev.* v. 12. Though it was given to the man *Christ Jesus*, because the fulness of the godhead dwelt in him." *Col.* ii. 9.

He adds also, at verse 11. "Seeing the Father thus exalted the humanity of *Christ*, since he united the Logos to the human nature; what hinders that this exaltation should be said, to be to the glory of the Father, from whom he received even the divine nature?"

I might cite several other testimonies from doctor *Whitby's* annotations, and every learned reader knows that in those annotations he is zealous upon all occasions to oppose the *arian* doctrine.

As

* However, doctor *Whitby* in his latter days fell in pretty much with doctor *Samuel Clarke's* opinion; yet when he wrote his annotations, he was zealous against *arianism*, and a fervent defender of the proper deity of *Christ*, so that his sense on this point cannot be suspected here.

As the fathers suppose this exaltation to the government and judgment of the world to belong to the human nature of *Christ*, so the school-men are zealous for the communication of such a most extensive knowledge to the man *Christ Jesus*, as renders him capable of these offices; and yet the school-men are well known to be as zealous defenders of the divinity of our blessed Saviour as any christian writers whatsoever.

The *lutherans* are as hearty believers that *Christ* is true God, and that they suppose his human nature to be advanced now in glory to an universal knowledge of all things in heaven and in earth, and that by union with his deity; so that he has a sort of omnipresence and omniscience.

If you consult the remonstrant divines, they have the same opinion of the matter; see *Limborch's Theology in latin*, book v. chapter xviii. "Though we have excluded all creatures from being the object of divine worship, yet this must not exclude our Lord *Jesus Christ* the mediator; for though as he is man he is a creature, yet by means of his mediatory office he is so highly exalted above all creatures, that religious honour must be given him as Lord of all. And in section xiii. If it be objected, that omniscience and omnipotence are required in order to render any being adorable, I answer, not essential and absolute omnipotence and omniscience, but so much as is necessary to know all the thoughts and prayers of the worshippers, and to supply all their necessities; but we have shewn that both these belong to *Jesus Christ* as mediator." Yet this author is a hearty defender of the blessed doctrine of the trinity according to the common sentiments of christianity, as appears in book iii. chapter xvii.

A very ingenious gentleman of the church of *England*, who has discoursed of the "future state, and the progressive knowledge of the saints there," page 46, writes thus; "Our Lord *Jesus Christ* remains a true man in his glorified state, and yet certainly his presence is much more extensive than when he dwelt on earth. He may perhaps as easily inspect the whole globe of this earth, and the heavens that encompass and surround it, as any of us can view a globe or circumference of an inch diameter; for he is the sovereign of mankind. He is the prince of the kings of the earth. He is the governor of the world. The laws by which they ought to live, and by which they must be judged are his laws.

"Besides, he is our great intercessor with God almighty; but how can he intercede for what he knows not, or know what he does not hear? How can all the prayers of his people come before him, unless his presence be very diffusive, and extend with the fabric of earth and heaven? I am not about to affirm the ubiquity of *Christ's* bodily presence, nor to determine the manner how he is present; but that *Jesus Christ*, even in his human nature, does view and take cognizance of the affairs of man, I think cannot be doubted. Page 49. *Christ* is the head of his church even in his human nature: How can he know the usefulness and the necessity of special communications to the several and single members of his body, without a largeness of presence?"

"In brief, *Christ Jesus* considered as man and mediator is the great and general administrator of all the affairs of this human world; whatever is done in it, he does it, for all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him. Great is the mystery of godliness; and certainly, even the man *Christ Jesus* is a far more glorious person than the most of christians, yea, or of christian divines, do conceive or apprehend. He is called the sun of righteousness, and compared to light, and doth enlighten all the intellectual world. He is the express image of his Father's person; that is, perhaps the

the most lively character and expression of the deity, that is, among created beings. He is sat down on the right-hand of the majesty on high; that is, he is, next the pure godhead, the most illustrious essence in the world.

“Let no man misunderstand me in what I have said concerning the human nature of *Christ Jesus*. I do not deny his divine nature, nor the union thereof to the human: I extend the presence of his human nature no farther than the nature of his mediatory office doth require it. And touching the doctrine of the trinity, and the union of the eternal word with the human nature, I esteem it the great essential, as well as the great mystery of the christian religion, and do very heartily believe it.”

Doctor *Thomas Goodwin* in his treatise of “the heart of *Christ* in heaven,” part iii. says, “The understanding of the human nature of *Christ* hath notice and cognizance of all the occurrences that befall his members here. And for this the text is clear; for the apostle speaks this for our encouragement, that *Christ* is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Which could not be a relief to us, if it supposed not this, that he particularly and distinctly knew them; and if not all as well as some, we should want relief in all, as not knowing which he knew, and which he knew not. And the apostle affirms this of his human nature, as was said, for he speaks of that nature that was tempted here below. As all power in heaven and earth is committed unto him as son of man, as the scripture speaks, so all knowledge is given him of all things done in heaven and earth, and this as son of man too, his knowledge and power being of equal extent. He is the sun as well in respect of knowledge, as of righteousness, and there is nothing hid from his light and beams, which do pierce the darkest corners of the hearts of the sons of men; he knows the sores and distresses of their hearts. Like as a looking-glass made into the form of a round globe, and hung in the midst of a room takes in all the species of things done, or that are therein at once; so doth the enlarged understanding of *Christ*’s human nature take in the affairs of this world, which he is appointed to govern, especially the miseries of his members, and this at once.”

The same author in his second volume in folio, book iii. page 95. has a large treatise upon the “extensive glories and powers of *Christ* considered as God-man,” wherein he exalts his human nature to a most amazing degree.

Mr. *Baxter* in his annotations on *Phil.* ii. 9. affirms, “God highly exalted him in the manhood in which he suffered, and hath given him greater dignity and honour and renown than any creature ever had; that to his dignity and power all creatures should be subject, and angels and men and devils should by their submission respectively honour his name.” And in his paraphrase on *Heb.* ii. 9. “As his death was suffered in the common nature of man, so he died to bring man to glory with himself, and therefore this text may be well understood of the advancement of man both in *Christ* and in his church.”

Thus we find there are some learned writers of most of the sects and parties in the christian world who have declared themselves freely to embrace this opinion, and to believe the most extensive knowledge and power of the human nature of *Christ* in his present glorified state.

DISCOURSE III.

The GLORIES of CHRIST as GOD-MAN displayed,

By tracing out the early existence of his human nature as the first-born of GOD, or as the first of all creatures, before the formation of this world.

SECTION I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE various glories of our blessed Lord are the subject of our holy meditation and our joy. There are wonders enough in his person, his characters and offices, to raise our sacred curiosity, and to entertain our delightful inquiries in time and eternity. Many of these are displayed by the gospel in an open and illustrious light; others are yet unrevealed and reserved till we shall see him face to face: And there are also some which are revealed but with less glaring evidence, and are contained like hidden treasures in the mines of scripture, to awaken our diligence in the pursuit of this divine knowledge; and there is reason to hope, that every spark of new discovered glory will richly recompense the labour of our enquiries.

The foregoing discourse hath led us to find some surprizing powers and excellencies in the man *Christ Jesus*, which perhaps have not been much known or commonly observed. It is pleasant and astonishing to think how far the human soul of our exalted Lord under the conduct of his divine nature may have a hand in the government of the

the nations and the judgment of the world. This invites our faith to look forward to the great resurrection-day with holy pleasure and expectation. And if we turn our eyes backward to the beginning of all things, and read the scripture with studious search, perhaps we may spy some early glories attending his sacred person, which we never thought of before.

Now if by a more careful inspection into the word of God, we shall find it revealed there with unexpected evidence, that the "human soul of our Lord *Jesus Christ* had an existence, and was personally united to the divine nature, long before it came to dwell in flesh and blood;" and that by this glorious person, God the Father managed the affairs of his ancient church as his own supreme minister and as the great mediator and king of his people, and that at a certain appointed period of time God sent down this blessed soul, willingly divested of primitive joys and glories, to take flesh in the womb of the virgin, to dwell in the body of an infant, and grow up by degrees to the perfection of a man, and in this body to suffer a thousand indignities and injuries from men and devils, and to sustain intense pains or agonies from some unknown manifestations of the wrath of God against sin, and at last submit to death and the grave; I say, if we should find such a doctrine contained in the scripture, will not such thoughts as these spread a new lustre over all our former ideas of the glory of *Christ*, even in his human nature, and add to the condescensions of our blessed Saviour considered as God and man in one person? How happily will it make the whole scheme of our religion, and the book of God which reveals it, more intelligible and delightful to all those who love christianity? And it will render this sacred volume much more defensible against the men who doubt or deny the blessed doctrines of it.

But that I may not anticipate my design, let us proceed to unfold this doctrine by degrees, according to the following propositions.

S E C T I O N II.

Some propositions leading to the proof of the doctrine proposed.

Proposition I. "IT is evident from many places of scripture, that *Christ* had an existence before he took flesh upon him, and came into this world."

John i. 1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Verse 3. "All things were made by him."

Verse 14. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

John xii. 41. "These things said *Isaias* when he saw his glory, and spake of him:" Wherein the apostle *John* attributes to our Lord *Jesus Christ* that actual glorious appearance which *Isaiab* saw of the Lord of hosts, chapter vi. 1—4.

John iii. 13. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, which is in heaven, and which is in heaven, for both senses are agreeable to the greek." ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, or, which was in heaven, for both senses are agreeable to the greek.

John viii. 58. "Before *Abraham* was, I am."

John i. 15. "He that cometh after me is preferred before me, says *John* the baptist, because he was before me: ἔμπροσθεν μὲ γέγονεν ὅτι πρῶτος μου ἦν." One of these words which we render "before me," seems necessarily to signify a priority of time, and it is hard to say which of both of them cannot do so, but the same thing cannot be

proved by itself. The verse may be construed thus, "This is he of whom I said, he that comes after me had a being before me, for indeed he was before me, that is, he is more excellent than I; or thus, he was preferred before me, because he had his being before I had mine, though as to his natural birth as man, *Christ* was six months younger than *John*. So doctor *Goodwin* and many others interpret this text. But I proceed to other scriptures, which prove the existence of *Christ* before his incarnation.

John iii. 30, 31. "He that cometh from above, is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh from above, is above all."

1 *Cor.* xv. 47. "The first man was of the earth earthy; the second man was the Lord from heaven."

John vi. 33. "The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."

Verse 38. "I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me."

Verse 51. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven."

Verse 62. "What and if ye shall see the son of man ascend where he was before?"

John xvi. 28. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."

John xvii. 5. "Glorify thou me, O Father, with thy own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

1 *Cor.* x. 9. "Neither let us tempt *Christ* as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents."

2 *Cor.* viii. 9. "Ye know the grace of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor."

Philipp. ii. 6, 7. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, — and was made in the likeness of man."

Colos. i. 15. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, for by him were all things created, — and he is before all things."

Heb. i. 2. "His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

1 *John* iv. 2, 3. "Every spirit which confesseth that *Jesus Christ* is come in the flesh, is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that *Jesus Christ* is come in the flesh, is not of God."

Rev. iii. 14. "*Christ* is called the beginning of the creation of God. Ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τῆς οὐρᾶς."

I might also cite other scriptures from the old testament, where *Christ* is represented sometimes as *Jehovah*, or God almighty; and sometimes as the angel of the Lord, and as the captain of the Lord's host, appearing to the patriarchs, conversing with *Abraham*, wrestling with *Jacob*, giving orders to *Moses*, encouraging *Josua* and *Gideon*, &c. But I shall have occasion to mention them immediately, and therefore I omit the citations here.

Proposition II. "Among those expressions of scripture which discover the pre-existence of *Christ*, there are several from whence we may derive a certain proof that he has the divine nature in him, and is true God."

Such

Such are those places of the old testament where the angel that appeared to the ancients is called God, the almighty God, *Jehovah*, the Lord of hosts, I am that I am, &c.

Such are those places in scripture in the old and new testament where he is called God, or *Jehovah*, and is said expressly to "create the world," *John* i. 1, 2, 3. *Rom.* ix. 5. *Heb.* i. 10, 11. &c. with some others.

It appears probable to me also, that when our Lord says, *John* viii. 58. "Before *Abraham* was I am," he does not only mean to express his pre-existence, but his divine nature also, I AM being the name of God, *Exod.* iii. 14. And the great modern refiner of the *arian* scheme, doctor *Samuel Clarke* allows so much as this, viz. That from our Saviour's using the words "I am" instead of "I was," he might possibly intend to insinuate that he was the person in whom the name of God was, viz. *Jehovah*, or "I am:" And he adds, "This indeed cannot be denied;" though he will not allow him here to describe himself as the self-existent being. See doctor *Clarke's* "scripture doctrine, chapter II. section iii. number 591."

But there are many proofs of the divinity of *Christ* which are cited, and confirmed under the eighth and ninth propositions of the discourse on the "christian doctrine of the trinity," and which are needless to be repeated here. See pages 420—452.

Proposition III. "There are other scriptures which denote the pre-existence of *Christ*, and may also perhaps include a reference to his divine nature, but carry not with them such a full and convincing evidence of his godhead as utterly to exclude all other interpretations."

Such are these, *John* iii. 31. "He that cometh from above is above all, &c." *1 Cor.* xv. 47. "The first man is of the earth earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven." *John* iii. 13. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven. *"

Proposition IV. "But there are some texts which insinuate the existence of *Christ* before he came into the flesh, which in their most natural, obvious and evident sense seem to refer to some intelligent nature belonging to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, which is inferior to godhead."

This will be made evident under the following proposition.

Proposition V. "Whatsoever scriptures represent *Christ* as existent before his incarnation in a nature inferior to godhead, do most naturally lead us to the belief of the pre-existence of his human soul."

If there be any such scriptures, they must refer either to the human soul of *Christ*, which was afterward united to his human body, or to some other super-angelical nature,

* I confess I have cited this text in a former treatise to prove the omnipresence of *Christ* as God, and perhaps that may be part of the true meaning of it: but I have lately found two or three writers of name who heartily believed the godhead of *Christ*, and yet suppose this text may refer to his pre-existent soul, because *ὁ ὢν ἐν οὐρανῷ*, which we render "who is in heaven," may be as well rendered "who was in heaven," the participle *ὢν* being equally capable of the past as well as of the present tense or time. So St. *John* himself expresseth the time past, "he was," by *ἦν*, chapter ix. 25. Where the blind man cured by our Lord, says, "I was blind," *τεταλθῃ ἦν*. And St. *Paul* expresseth, "who was," in the same manner twice, *ὕπαις ὄντας νεκροῖς*, *Eph.* ii. 1. and verse 5. "You who were dead." *Beza* himself inclines to construe this word, "who was in heaven" in this text. Upon the whole, I doubt whether this text will certainly prove *Christ's* divinity, and whether it may not more directly refer to his pre-existent soul. For since there are proofs enough of the divinity of *Christ*, which are strong in my opinion and unanswerable, I would not constrain such passages of scripture into this service whose force and sense are rendered doubtful by any just rules of criticism.

nature, as some call it, which might belong to our Saviour, besides his human soul.

And this is evident, that this very notion of some persons concerning a super-angelic spirit belonging to him * beside his human soul, arose from those many expressions concerning him before his incarnation which seem inferior to deity. Some writers saw these sort of expressions so strong in scripture, that they would venture to introduce three intellectual beings in the person of *Christ*, rather than not yield to the apparent force of these expressions.

But surely it is not worthy of a philosopher, or a divine to multiply natures in our Lord *Jesus* without reason, and to ascribe to him any such third intellectual nature, if the expressions of scripture on this head may be most evidently explained without it, and may be better applied to his human soul.

Now that there are such expressions that seem to intimate a nature inferior to God, belonging to *Christ* before he came in the flesh, will appear by the following considerations: And they may all be explained in the easiest manner, by applying them to the human soul of *Christ*.

S E C T I O N III.

Arguments for the pre-existence of Christ's human soul, drawn from various considerations of something inferior to godhead ascribed to him before and at his incarnation.

THE first set of arguments I shall use arises from several things ascribed to *Christ* before and at his incarnation, which seem to be of too low a nature for pure godhead.

Consideration I. "*Christ* is represented as his Father's messenger, minister, or angel, that was a distinct being from his Father, sent by his Father to perform such actions and such services for his people long before his incarnation, some of which seem too low for the dignity of pure godhead."

The appearances of *Christ* to the patriarchs are described like the appearances of an angel, or a man, a glorious man really distinct from God, and yet such a one in whom God or *Jehovah* had a peculiar indwelling, or with whom the divine nature had a personal union. When the angel of the Lord visited *Abraham*, and talked with him, when the man wrestled with *Jacob* till break of day, when the angel conversed with *Moses* and with *Joshua*, and yet calls himself, or is by the holy writers called *Jehovah*, the almighty, the Lord, the God of *Abraham*, &c. the most natural and obvious idea which they could have of the person appearing to them, was the idea of some glorious being or spirit that belonged to the other world, and in whom the great God had

* Note, If in this or any other of my writings I speak of the soul of *Christ* as being an angel or an angelic spirit, or in an angelic state, I mean nothing else but his existing without a body as angels do, or his being a messenger of God the Father as they are: and in this sense the scripture calls him an angel several times. Or if I speak of him as a super-angelic spirit, I intend no more than his having both natural and deputed powers far superior to angels: for I always suppose this soul to be truly and properly a human spirit in it's own nature, that is, a spirit suited to the state of union with a human body, and to all the natural acts and effects, appetites and passions derived from such an union.

had a peculiar dwelling, and by whom the great God, pronounced those words, or conversed with them.

That text, *Exod. xxiii. 20, 21.* very naturally leads us to this sense; God says to *Moses*, "Behold I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way, &c. obey his voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him." Here is an angel or messenger sent by God the Father; that is certainly an inferior character, yet he is to be obeyed with reverence, for he can punish, or pardon sins, this is a divine prerogative; and how does this angel come by it? It is not as he is an angel, or in his angelic nature, but it is because God's name is in him, that is, his divine power, his godhead is in him; this is given as the reason of this high prerogative: God is united to this glorious spirit or this human soul of *Christ*: Now it is plain that *Christ* is called an angel in other places. He is the messenger or angel of the covenant, he is the angel of God's presence, so he is called *Mal. iii. 1.* and *Isai. lxiii. 9.*

Let us argue a little further on these appearances of *Christ* to the patriarchs: Does it not seem more congruous that a human soul should animate that human body which eat and drank with *Abraham* under a tree, and should actuate those human limbs, when a man wrestled with *Jacob*? Is it not beneath the grandeur, decency and dignity of the supreme majesty of heaven, to supply the place of such a human soul for the purposes or actions of animal nature? And that the great and eternal God himself in an immediate manner should converse in so humane and familiar a way as this angel did with several of the patriarchs? That the glorious and almighty godhead should itself animate a human body to visit *Abraham*, and tarry with him some hours under a tree, while his wife made cakes, and dressed the flesh of a calf for God to eat? That the eternal God animating a body should eat of the calf which was dressed with milk and butter, *Gen. xviii. 1, 2, &c.*? That the almighty and ever-blessed God himself should immediately wrestle with *Jacob* in human limbs, which he assumed, and that a good part of the night should be spent thus wrestling until break of day, *Gen. xxxii. 24, &c.*? That the eternal godhead itself should talk so familiarly with *Gideon*, and let *Gideon* use such a familiar way of talking with God, as is recorded *Judges vi. 1 — 11*? Doth this suit with the supreme glory and dignity of eternal godhead and pure divinity? Doth it not seem more agreeable that God should do all this by the intermediation of a human soul, appearing in a visible shape, than that the infinite majesty of God should immediately abase itself in such a manner?

Is it not much more natural and easy, and more condecant in itself, as well as more agreeable to the words of scripture, to suppose that it was the human soul of *Christ*, assuming a body at that time for those human purposes? And thus he might be called the angel or messenger of God, because God sent him; for the word angel doth not signify originally the name of a nature, but of an office.

He might also upon this supposition, with more justness and propriety of speech, be called a man, when he appears in the form of a man, and with the appetites, passions, and actions of a man: *Gen. xviii. 2, 4, 5, 8, 17.* and *xxxii. 24.* for the soul is the chief part of a man, and especially when that soul appeared in a human body.

And yet at the same time he might be properly called God, the Lord, and *Jebovab*; for this man or angel, this human soul in an assumed body was personally united to God, or had the fulness of the godhead dwelling in him by a personal union;

union; though the more immediate agent in these animal and common actions of life was the human soul, rather than the eternal and blessed God.

The same things may be said concerning the visions which the prophets *Amos* and *Zechariab* had of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, when he "stood upon the wall with a plumb-line in his hand," *Amos* vii. 7. And when he "stood on the altar," *Amos* ix. 1. Or when "*Joshua* the high-priest stood before him, and *Satan* at his right hand to resist him," *Zech.* iii. 1. These corporeal scenes seem better to besit the human soul of *Christ* than pure godhead, though in these appearances he is sometimes called the angel of the Lord, and sometimes the Lord, or *Jehovah*, for the reason before given, viz. because he is one with God by so intimate an union.

Consideration II. "*Christ*, when he came into this world, is said to empty and divest himself of some glory which he had before his incarnation, in several places of scripture. Now if nothing but his divine nature existed before this time, this divine nature could not properly empty or divest itself of any glory: Therefore it must be his inferior nature, or his human soul, which did then exist and divest itself of it's antient glory for a season."

The first text I shall mention, is that famous one in the prayer of *Christ*, *John* xvii. 4, 5. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thy own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." It seems very plain from these words that *Christ* parted with some glory which he had in heaven, when he came down to finish the work which God gave him to do on earth, and he prays to be restored to it again. I appeal to every reader, whether this is not the most obvious and natural sense.

Now the glory which belongs to God, is either essential or manifestative. The divine nature of *Christ* could not lose or part with any essential glories; for they are the very nature and essence of God: nor had the divine nature any manifestative glories before the world was, which it lost at the incarnation: for,

1. It had no manifestative glories at all, if there were no angels, no creatures to which they could be manifested. Or,
2. If it be supposed that angels were before "this lower world was, and that the godhead of our Lord *Jesus Christ* might then be known and glorified by angels," it may be justly replied, that suppose this be true, yet he did not part with that glory at his coming into our world, for the angels did not forget his dignity, they continued to know and glorify *Christ*; they worshipped him on earth, *Heb.* i. 6. and ministered unto him as their sovereign, on various occasions.

Since therefore it cannot be the divine nature that parted with this glory, nor can the divine nature pray for the restoration of it, then it follows that the human nature had such an early existence, and such glory; for we cannot suppose the human nature in this place prays for a glory which it never had. This seems contrary to the most obvious sense of the text.

Or, shall we say as the *socinians* do, that the human nature prays for a glory which it had in the eternal counsels and decrees of God? But all the elect of God had also glory before the world was, in this sense, viz. in the eternal decrees and counsels: And how very forced and unnatural an interpretation is this? Yet it is such as the *socinians* are constrained to take up with, though without any reason: Besides, how unhap-

happily would such an exposition tend to support the antinomian language of our justification from eternity, &c*.

But how easy, plain, and obvious is the sense of these words, if we suppose the soul of our Lord *Jesus Christ* to be the first born of every creature, as *Col.* i. 15. and thus to enjoy real glory and dignity in the Father's presence before the world was, as well as in all the following ages, until he emptied himself of it at his incarnation? And then he prays thus, "Father I have finished the work on earth, which thou gavest me to do in my state of humiliation here; and now, O Father, take me to thyself in heaven, where I once was, and glorify me with the real glory which I had there before the creation: My days of appointed abasement are past, therefore let the power, splendor and dignity which I have possessed in thy presence before the world was, be restored to me."

The words, "with thy ownself," in our Saviour's prayer, seem to determine it to be a real glory which he once had in God's own presence. This seems so evidently to be the sense and meaning of our Lord in his prayer, that if persons were not unacquainted with this doctrine, of the pre-existence of the soul of *Christ*; or if they had not some prejudice against it, one would think that every reader should naturally, and necessarily take it in this sense.

That it is the human nature of *Christ* that was thus glorified in it's pre-existent state, may be confirmed from verse 24. "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Now this would be a very small thing for *Christ* to say, as to his divine nature, or godhead, that the Father loved him before the creation; but it is great and glorious, and every way suitable to his purpose, to be spoken by him as a man, referring to his pre-existent state and nature, for it gives a grand idea of him as the early and antient object of his Father's love.

Nor can this antient love be referred only to the decree of God, for this decretal love of God may be spoken of the saints also; the Father loved them as foreseen in his eternal decrees: Whereas the plain design of *Christ* is, to request that enjoyment of divine love for the saints in their measure, which he himself actually tasted and enjoyed before the foundation of the world.

Note further; he does not pray for the disciples, that they may enjoy such love as is supposed to be peculiar to the internal distinctions in the godhead, but such sort of love in their degree, as he himself enjoyed in his pre-existent soul; which exposition

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also

* Since this treatise was written, I have met with another explication of this text, in opposition to the sense I have given, and which I confess may seem something more plausible than the rest, viz. That the human nature or person of *Christ*, does not here pray for any glory to be restored which was lost, but for the present manifestation of the glory of his godhead to mankind, which glory was really eternal, and before the creation: or he prays, that the human nature may have it's due share of honour, upon the account of it's union to the divine nature, which had a glory before the world was; which honour was withheld from the human nature in a great measure till his sufferings were finished: so that with regard to his divine nature, he prays only for the manifestation of the glory; but in respect of his human nature, he prays for the real communication of that glory which might belong to such a sublime union with the eternal godhead.

All that I shall reply to this at present is, That it is so much more difficult and intricate for any reader to find out this exposition than that which I have given, that I leave any impartial person to judge which is the most natural and easy sense, and which must the apostles most naturally receive and understand when these words were spoken in their hearing. Indeed all other explications, besides this which I here support, are forced and strained, and distant from the natural ideas which occur to every reader. And all divines who believe not the doctrine of *Christ*'s pre-existent soul, have been always puzzled to find any tolerable sense to put upon these words.

also renders all the latter verses of this chapter more intelligible: Verse 21, 22, &c. "that they may be one as we are one, and — thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." The love which the great God bears to *Christ* as man, and the union of *Christ* as man, to the godhead, is made a pattern of the union of the saints to God, and the love of God to them: But we can hardly suppose the ineffable, eternal and essential, and necessary union and love between the sacred distinctions in the godhead itself, can be a pattern of the unnecessary, unessential, and voluntary union and love between God and his saints. Yet the union and love between *Christ* as man, and God his Father, may be made a pattern of the love and union between God and believers; though we must always maintain a high sense of the unknown and sublime difference between the union of the man *Christ* to the divine nature, or to any particular distinction in it, and the union of the saints to God: The one is so near, as that what God himself speaks and does, is attributed to *Christ*; but it would be blasphemy to attribute this to the best of saints.

It is a certain and excellent rule for the interpretation of scripture, laid down by all judicious men, and particularly by a great adversary of this doctrine, doctor *Sherlock*, "that we should never have recourse to a strained and metaphorical sense, but when we know that either the nature of the thing, or some other revelation of scripture will not admit of a proper one; and that we must understand words in a proper and natural sense, where there is no apparent reason of a figure." Now there is nothing either in nature or in scripture that forbids this literal exposition, as will more abundantly appear in the following part of this discourse.

The second scripture I shall cite for this purpose, to shew that some things inferior to godhead are ascribed to *Christ*, before and at his incarnation, is in *Philip*. ii. 5, 6, 7. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in *Christ Jesus*, verse 6. who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; verse 7. but made himself of no reputation." *ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε*, which is more exactly translated, he emptied himself*, and took upon him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, as it is in the *greek*, ἐν ὁμοιωματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος.

Here the apostle's design is to set *Christ* before them as a pattern of humility; and this he doth by aggrandizing his former state and circumstances, and representing how he emptied himself of them, and appeared on earth in a very mean and low estate. Therefore he saith, "Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God;" that is, his human soul, which is the chief part of the man, being in union with his godhead, was vested with a god-like form and glory in all former ages; thus he oftentimes appeared to the patriarchs, as the angel of the Lord, and as God or *Jehovah*, with a heavenly brightness about him, or clothed with the divine *Shekinah*, the robe of light, and spake and acted like God himself. This seems to be the form of God, which the apostle speaks of; nor did he think it any robbery or sinful presumption so to do, that is, to appear and act as God, since he was united to the divine nature, and was in that sense one with God †: Yet he emptied himself, that is, he divested himself of this god-like form or appearance, this divine *Shekinah*,
and

* See doctor *Goodwin's* exposition of this text in a few pages following. See pages 812, 813.

† I might have omitted the paraphrase of these words, "who thought it not robbery to be equal with God," since I am constrained to confess that I am not fully satisfied in the true meaning of them. Those who will read with an impartial eye what doctor *Whitby* has written in his annotations on this text, even while he was zealous against the *arian* doctrines, and took all opportunities in his comments to refute them,

and coming into the flesh, he consented to be made in the likeness of other men; nay, he took upon him the form of a servant instead of the form of a God, that is, instead of the glorious vestment of light, in which he once appeared and acted as God; he now came in a mean servile form, and humbled himself even to death, &c. as it follows.

Now that this text is most naturally interpreted, concerning the pre-existent soul of *Christ* and it's humiliation, and not concerning the abasement of his human nature, will appear, if we attend to these things.

1. It is the chief design of this scripture to propose to the *Philippians* a wonderful example of humility and self-denial. Now a great and pious writer of this age has observed, that we never find the divine nature, or godhead, propounded to us, as an example of self denial or humility in all the bible; though God commands our conformity to himself, in holiness, love and beneficence. Therefore it must be some inferior nature, or *Christ's* human soul is proposed as an example of humility, and self-denial; and a glorious example it was, when it divested itself of such a god-like form, and such a pre-existent glory.

2. *Christ's* being in the form of God cannot here necessarily signify his godhead, because it is represented as inconsistent with the state of his humiliation; for he seems to put off this form of God, or he emptied himself of it, and put on the opposite form, viz. the form of a servant, when he became incarnate, or was made in the likeness of men. But it is plain that he could not put off his godhead when he became incarnate: Therefore it must refer to his human soul which was in the form of God, or which made these godlike appearances before his incarnation, and he put off this divine form, when he took on him the fashion of a man, and the form of a servant.

Besides, the form of God can never be proved to signify his divine nature in this place; for there is no expression like it in scripture, that signifies proper divinity. Nor indeed does *μορφῆ* properly signify nature or essence any where in the bible, that I can find, but only appearance, shape, or likeness. See the large citation out of doctor *Thomas Goodwin*, within a few pages following, pages 812, 813.

Observe also that the form of God stands here expressly opposed to the form of a servant: Now *Christ* was not directly and expressly in the condition of a servant in the civil life here on earth, though he "condescend to perform servile offices upon some occasions; but at the same time he claimed the authority of a master, over those very persons for, or towards whom he performed servile offices: The condition of our

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Saviour

them, and who consider at the same time what sense the ancient greek writer *Heliodorus* in several places, and the greek fathers generally put upon this phrase, will be ready to believe they signify, that *Christ* did not think equality with God to be *ἀρπαγμα*, a thing to be seized, a thing to be assumed by him, he did not think proper to appear like God, or assume equality to God in his humbled estate: and so this sentence expresses one part of his humility. On the other hand, he that peruses what the learned doctor *Waterland* has written in his sermon on this text, may be inclined to doubt of this exposition of doctor *Whitby* and the fathers, and to construe these words as part of the most exalted dignity of *Christ*, according to our english translation: though doctor *Waterland* himself does not deny that the ancient greek writer *Heliodorus*, and most of the ancient fathers, expounded it in the sense which doctor *Whitby* gives of it.

However I have here followed our english translation, and paraphrased it as expressive of *Christ's* most exalted character and godhead, that it may evidently appear that the other parts of this verse are most happily applied to the pre-existence and the incarnation of the human soul of *Christ*, even though these controverted words should be referred to his divine nature; and that this doctrine of *Christ's* pre-existent soul does not want any change in the common english translation, nor the sense of this phrase to be altered in order to support it.

Saviour therefore, whilst on earth, though it was always mean, yet was not properly that of a servant; and consequently, since his being in the form of a servant, cannot possibly signify more than his acting sometimes as a servant, though he was not such by condition of life, it is plain that his being in the form of God cannot possibly signify his being by nature the very God." But rather his appearing sometimes heretofore and acting as God. So doctor *Bennet*, on the trinity, chapter VII. page 45 — 50. who is a zealous defender of the deity of *Christ* against doctor *Clarke*.

3. Consider further, it seems to be that same nature emptied itself which was afterwards filled with glory as a recompence: And it is the same nature that is said to humble itself, which was afterwards highly exalted by God: Now this was not the divine nature of *Christ*, but the human; therefore it must be the human nature of *Christ* that emptied itself in this text; because it appears very incongruous for the apostle to say, that the divine nature emptied and abased itself, and that the human nature was exalted as a recompence of this abasement.

I grant it was great condescension in the divine nature of *Christ* to unite itself to a creature, such as the human soul of *Christ* was, how glorious so ever that creature might be; and it is yet greater condescension in the godhead of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, thus united to the human soul to take human flesh upon it, or flesh in union with that soul, and for God himself to be thus manifested in the flesh: And in my judgment the infinite merit of his sufferings arises from the union of his divine nature to the soul, and thereby to the body of the man *Jesus*: But this does not seem to be the precise meaning of the apostle in this place; for he rather sets before us an example of the humility of the man *Jesus Christ*, who existed as a spirit personally united to God, or one with God in all former ages, and was dressed in glories suitable to this union; yet he laid aside those glories, and waved the resplendence of his character, and person, when he joined himself to flesh and blood; he laid aside the god-like forms and appearances, which perhaps he had worn both in heaven and on earth in times past, and emptied himself when he came now into the world to be incarnate, that is, when he came into the complete likeness and fashion of a man; for he appeared in a mean form, like a servant, and humbled himself even to the cursed death of the cross.

Lest any of my readers should be offended with my exposition of this text, I will here add doctor *Thomas Goodwin's* interpretation of it, volume III. book iii. chapter vii. page 106. "That nature or creature which the Son of God shall assume, be it man or angel, must by inheritance exist in the form of God, *Philip*. ii. 6, 7. which form of God I here take not to be put for the essence of God, neither is the form of a servant taken for the nature of a man. The form of God here is that god-like glory, and that manifestation of the godhead which was, and must needs be due, to appear in the nature assumed; for form is put for outward appearance and manifestation in respect of which, *Christ* as God-man is called the "brightness of his Father's glory," *Heb*. i. 2. Brightness, you know, is not the substance of the light, but the appearance of it. — And in this respect *Christ*, God-man, may be said in a safe sense to be equal with God, as here in the text; not in essence, but in a communication of privileges, that as God hath life in himself, alone, which is a royalty incommunicable to any mere creature, so this son of man when once united unto the godhead, is also said "to have life in himself," *John* v. 26. this equality, or *iosis*, not being to be understood of equality in proportion, but of likeness; his privileges were such

such by the union with the second person, that he had a true kind of partnership with God the Father in his privileges, and such as did arise to a likeness, though not to an essential equality." And chapter viii. page 110. he adds, "The first ingredient into the satisfaction of *Christ* lies in the laying aside the glory due to the second person, when he should dwell in a human nature, and instead thereof taking on him the form of a servant. — God will have him emptied, the *Messiah* shall have nothing left, not a grain or mite of the riches of his glory." And in volume II. "Of the knowledge of God," book iii. page 201. he adds, "He that had all fulness had nothing left, no comfort in God or in any creature: He might say as *Naomi* saith, "The Lord hath dealt bitterly with me, I came from heaven full, but he brought me to earth empty, and emptied of all." Thus far that eminent and pious writer.

But after all, if any humble christians should, be afraid to admit my exposition of this text, which is so plain and natural, lest they should seem to weaken one supposed proof of the divinity of *Christ*, — yet the next scripture is as plain for my purpose, and will lead into no such danger.

And that is, 2 *Cor.* viii. 9. "Ye know the grace of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might be made rich."

I know not how this can be well interpreted any other way than by supposing our Lord *Jesus Christ* as man, or his human soul to pre-exist in a former state, wherein he was rich indeed, and endowed with many real glories and privileges; and yet he divested himself of them, and became poor for our sakes, when he became incarnate, a helpless infant who lay in a manger, and was the son of a carpenter.

It cannot be said of God, or the divine nature, that he became poor, who is infinitely self-sufficient, and who is necessarily and eternally rich in perfections and glories, and in the indefeasible possession of all things: Nor can it be said of *Christ* as man, that he ever was rich, if he were never in a richer state before than while he was here on earth; for during that time he was always extremely poor, the son of man had not where to lay his head: And he could not be in a richer state as man before, if nothing of this manhood existed before his incarnation.

But if to evade this, any one will say, that he was rich as God, and became poor as man: Bishop *Fowler* answers, that this is "such a strain and force upon the words of scripture, that it looks like laying hold upon any thing to help at a dead lift."

It appears then that our Lord *Jesus Christ* really emptied himself of some peculiar glories that belonged to him, and which he possessed in a pre-existent state before he came to dwell in our world, and to take flesh upon him.

But I know and lament the unhappy force of prejudice. I have felt and feel it too often, and therefore wonder not at other men. A mind pre-engaged cannot easily yield to the force of plain expressions and the literal sense of scripture; therefore some will say, that *Christ*, as God-man, in the beginning of the union of the two natures, emptied or divested itself of the riches and glory which he should have had, and which were his "de jure," though not "de facto;" that is, which he might justly have assumed and possessed, though he did not actually assume and possess them. But I reply, why should this scripture be so strained, since this cannot be the sense of other scrip-

Scriptures which are parallel to this? particularly *John* xvii. 5. which speaks expressly of "glory which *Christ* had with the Father before the world was." And as for the other texts, viz. *Philip*. ii. 6, 7. and *2 Cor.* viii. 9. they intimate more than a mere right to glorious riches, and plainly refer to a former actual possession of those riches and glories of which he actually dispossessed himself. This is the most literal and obvious sense of the apostle, nor should we strain it to a tropical meaning without evident necessity.

The whole current of scripture, as well as these particular texts, seems to lead us so naturally into this sentiment, that divines are frequently ready to describe God the Father as parting with his only Son out of his bosom, when he took flesh upon him; and they represent *Christ*, or the Son of God when he became incarnate, as "leaving the bosom of his Father, quitting the felicities of the upper world, laying by his glorious estate, and parting with heaven for a season," &c. which language cannot be true nor proper when it is applied to the godhead of *Christ*; but would most appositely denote and express the real humiliation of his pre-existent soul.

Consideration III. "That very being which came down from heaven and was sent of God into the world, is represented as capable of having a will different from the will of God the Father, and therefore it must be inferior to godhead: Now this could be no other but the will of his human soul."

Our Lord *Jesus* declares, that he "came down from heaven not to do his own, but his Father's will," *John* vi. 38. It is manifest here that the very same being which came down from heaven, fought not by his descent to fulfil his own will, but his Father's.

Now it is evident that at his agonies and passion he had such a will different from the will of his Father, when he manifests an innocent reluctance of human nature at first, but afterward says, *Luke* xxii. 42. "Father, not my will, but thy will be done;" and you see he uses the same sort of language to express his incarnation and mission, though without any reluctance. *John* vi. 38. "I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." Now would it not sound very harsh to suppose the godhead of *Christ*, saying, "I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me," when it is utterly and eternally impossible that the godhead of *Christ* should have any will different from God the Father?

It is in the same manner that our Lord speaks in prophecy concerning himself, *Psal.* xl. 8. "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea thy law is within my heart. Now that this refers to his incarnation in an especial manner, we may learn from the epistle to the *Hebrews*, where this prophecy is cited and explained, chapter x. 5, 7. "When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and burnt-offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me; ——— to I come to do thy will, O God." This seems to be the proper language of his human soul, and not of pure godhead.

Those who refuse to expound this concerning *Christ*'s pre-existent soul, apply it to his inferior and delegated character as mediator, and as the Father's servant employed in this great errand. But I appeal to every one who reads the words, whether this language does not naturally seem much rather to belong to an inferior being, than to the eternal godhead assuming an inferior character.

Consideration IV. "*Christ* represents his own coming into the world, and being sent hither by the Father, in such a manner as naturally leads one to suppose he had a real

a real and proper dwelling in another place*, and in another manner before he came into this world, and that he then changed his place and company and manner of life; all which seem more agreeable to a human spirit, than to a divine person."

The mere repetition of our Saviour's own language in several scriptures would naturally lead one to these ideas. *John* vi. 38. "I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. Verse 51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven," in imitation of the manna which came from the clouds. Verse 62. "What and if ye shall see the son of man ascend up where he was before †?" *John* viii. 14. "I know whence I came, and whither I go."

John xvi. 28. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: Again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." In which words his being with the Father, and his being in the world, seem to be two opposite states, and are represented as inconsistent with each other in that sense in which *Christ* speaks of his Father's company and absence; but the pure divine nature can hardly be represented as absent from the Father, even while it resides in this world, nor as returning to him afterwards.

Let it be noted also, that as soon as *Christ* had spoke these words, his disciples answer, "Lo, now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no parable;" that is, there is no difficulty or obscurity in these words. No enigmatical or allegorical speech, saith *Beza*. But surely there is difficulty and obscurity in them, if we must construe them by figures, and not in the obvious sense; especially if his coming from the Father, that is, as God, must be taken in a figurative sense, and his going to the Father, that is, as man, in a literal.

There are other expressions of scripture to the same purpose, *John* iii. 13. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, who is, or was, in heaven," as the *greek* participle *ἦν* may be properly interpreted in the time past or present; and thus it may be construed to signify either the divinity of *Christ*, or rather his pre-existent soul ||.

John.

* I do not here enter into that philosophical question, whether separate souls have proper places or no, or any local motion, but I speak after the common manner of speech, and the language of scripture.

† Some may object against this text, and say, That it cannot mean that the human soul ascended where it was before, for the human soul in it's pre-existent state cannot be called the son of man. I answer, 1. That the name son of man ordinarily signifies no more than man, or some considerable man, and when applied to *Christ* it means the *Messiah*. 2. It is at least a more proper term to signify *Christ's* human soul, than it is to signify his divine nature, and to say, "What if ye shall see the son of man, that is, the human nature ascend where the son of man, that is, the divine nature, was before?" And yet this must be the exposition of the place, if *Christ* had no pre-existent soul, and I am sure this is much harder, and more catachretical than the sense I have given.

‡ This text is seized by the *socinians*, and pressed by them to support their invention of *Christ's* ascending locally to heaven after his baptism, there to receive more complete instructions from God. But the learned *Mr. Fleming* replies thus, "There can be no just inference from his denying the *jews* to have ascended into heaven, that he had ascended thither himself, any more than if a native of *Japan* should come now to *England*; and speak to us after this manner; "Ye have reason to believe what I say of my own country, for I speak what I have seen there, and do exactly know it. And none of you did ever go to *Japan*, excepting me only, who have my, original, residence there, and am a native of the place, and am come from thence hither." Would these words necessarily infer, that he must have gone from *England* to *Japan* before he came from thence, because perhaps the connexion of the words does not run in our usual mode of speaking?" Thus that author.

I might

John iii. 31. "He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth. He that cometh from heaven is above all." *John* xiii. 3. "Jesus knowing that he was come from God, and was going to God." *Eph.* iv. 9, 10. "Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" This perhaps may be better interpreted concerning his descent into the womb of the virgin, than into the grave, for *David* uses the same expression, *Psal.* cxxxix. 15, where he says, "His substance was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." Besides, it was the soul of *Christ* that descended from heaven, but not into the grave. Now, saith the apostle, "he that descended thus, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens;" that is, the soul descended to assume a body, and then being embodied, it ascended above the heavens.

Objection. There are expressions in the old testament which represent God as coming down upon earth to visit the affairs of men; and in this analogical sense the godhead of *Christ* may be said to ascend and descend, so that these words need not to be applied to any pre-existent soul of *Christ*.

Answer I. When this manner of speech is used concerning God, it must be interpreted figuratively or analogically, because the literal sense cannot be true: but where the literal sense is just and plain and easy, there is no need to run to figures.

Answer II. Let it be noted also, that when God is said to descend from heaven, or ascend thither in the old testament, perhaps it is so expressed to shew that this God is *Jesus Christ*, or the human soul of *Christ*, united to the godhead in the pre-existent state, as shall be shewn hereafter, by whose service God the Father managed a thousand affairs of the antient ages, and more especially such as had any relation to the welfare of the church, or the holy seed.

Answer III. But besides, when we consider the frequency of these expressions, *Christ's* coming down from heaven, coming from the Father, and coming into this world, they seem to bear a plain and just antithesis to his departing from the world, his returning to the Father, his ascending into heaven, which are mentioned at the same time: Now all these latter expressions are plainly understood by every reader concerning the human nature of *Christ*, and give us good ground to infer that the former expressions concerning his descent from heaven should be attributed to his human nature too; that is, to his human soul, which is the chief part of it.

Under this head, bishop *Fowler* adds for a further proof of it, *1 Cor.* xv. 47. "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven;" "Which, says he, the apostle speaks of *Christ's* original in opposition to *Adam's* thus; his soul was created on earth, a body being made out of the earth for it; but the soul of *Christ* was created in heaven, and therefore he is called the Lord from heaven. This is abundantly more intelligible, to me at least, than how the eternal word should come down from heaven, otherwise than as in union with the soul of *Christ*; since the eternal word ever filled all things with his presence, and therefore could never for a moment leave heaven," that is, really and properly, but only in an analogical sense.

I add

I might subjoin also, that the exaltation of *Christ's* human soul to the heavenly world immediately upon it's first existence may be well enough called an ascent into heaven, when it is evident that the scripture uses many expressions as distant as this is from their grammatical meaning, in order to form a "paronomasia" or chime of words, with an antithesis of sense, which were eastern beauties of speech.

I add also, that the following words confirm this sense. Verse 49. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly;" that is, our souls are made now on earth and joined to bodies, to frail and feeble bodies, capable of disease and corruption, as was the soul of *Adam*, which was made on earth after his body was formed: But as the soul of *Christ* came down from heaven, and assumed a body upon earth, so the souls of the saints at the resurrection shall come down from heaven, and assume their immortal bodies upon earth: And in this sense *Christ* the second *Adam*, the Lord from heaven, is the pattern of the saints resurrection much rather than the first; and the parallel which the apostle represents of our bearing the image of the earthy and the heavenly *Adam*, is much more just, perfect and natural, if we take in this part of the resemblance as well as others.

Some would construe these words, "The Lord from heaven," to signify the divine nature of *Christ*. But let it be observed, that the apostle's design here is only to shew how the man *Christ Jesus* shall be the pattern of saints raised in glory; and it is no part of his purpose here to represent saints as bearing the image of God, or his divine nature, but only the image of his glorified human nature, and therefore these glorious expressions rather refer to his human soul.

Now put all these things together, and we can hardly suppose our blessed Lord or his apostles should express his real and proper human descent from heaven in plainer words than those which have been cited, or in words more fitted to lead every common reader into this plain and easy sense.

To conclude this section, if the most natural and obvious sense of scripture leads us to believe, that there was a glorious being who is sometimes called an angel, and sometimes a man under the old testament, who was clothed with peculiar rays of glory, and assumed divine prerogatives, and yet in other parts of his character and conduct appears much inferior to the majesty of pure godhead, and that this illustrious being emptied and divested himself of his peculiar riches and glory when he came to dwell in flesh, that he was capable of having a will different from the will of his Father, as appears in those words of his, "Father, not my will, but thy will be done;" *Luke xxii. 42.* and that he did really leave his dwelling with the Father, and come down into our world, I know not to what subject all this can be so well applied as to the human soul of *Christ*, and its existence before his incarnation.

S E C T I O N IV.

Miscellaneous arguments to prove the same doctrine.

THOUGH the considerations already offered carry with them a good force of argument, yet all the reasons which support the doctrine of *Christ's* pre-existent soul cannot be reduced to one general head. There are several others which are not so easily ranged under any head, that can give their assistance to this work; and therefore I call them miscellaneous, and propose them thus.

Argument I. "It seems needful that the soul of *Christ* should be pre-existent, that it might have opportunity to give its previous actual consent to the great and painful undertaking of atonement for our sins."

It was the human soul of *Christ* that endured all the weakness, poverty and pain of his infant state, that sustained all the labours and fatigues of life, that felt the bitter reproaches of men, and the sufferings of a shameful and bloody death, as well as the buffetings of devils, and the painful inflictions of the justice of God. This is evident, for neither the divine nature, nor the mere flesh or body abstractly considered, are capable of pain nor shame without the human soul. Surely then it seems to be requisite that the soul of *Christ* should give it's actual free consent to this undertaking before his labours, pains or sorrows began, which was as soon as ever he was born.

One cannot but think it very congruous and highly reasonable, that he who was to undergo so much for our sakes should not be taken from his childhood in a mere passive manner into this difficult and tremendous work. And afterwards only give his consent to it when he was grown up a man, upon a secret divine intimation that he was born for this purpose. It looks most likely and condecant in respect of the nature of things, and the justice of God, that *Christ's* human soul which endured all the pains, should well know before hand what the glorious work of mediation would cost him, and that he should voluntarily accept the proposal from the Father: Otherwise it rather seems a task imposed upon him, than an original and voluntary engagement of his own; whereas such an imposition would seem to diminish the merit and glory of this noble undertaking, and is also contrary to scripture in itself.

But if we suppose the human soul, united to the divine nature at it's first creation, and being thereby fully capacitated for this amazing work, receiving the proposal with cheerfulness from God his Father from the foundation of the world, and then from an inward delight to glorify his Father, and from a compassionate principle to the children of men, undertaking this difficult and bloody service, and coming down into a human body to fulfil it: this highly exalts the merit of his love, and the condescending glory of his labours and his sufferings.

And indeed this voluntary consent of his to become incarnate and to suffer, is plainly represented in several places of scripture; *Psal.* xl. 6, 7. *Heb.* x. 5. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, these were not sufficient to expiate the sin of man; thou hast prepared a body for me; then said I, lo I come, that is, to dwell in this body, to undertake this work; I delight to do thy will, O my God." "And these two expressions, *Psal.* xl. 6, 8. My ears hast thou bored, and thy law is in my heart, are more proper, saith doctor *Goodwin*, vol. III. book iv. pages 142, 143. to apply to the soul of this human nature, and to be understood to be the voice of his human nature, rather than of the divine: He was willing and obedient to do God's will, as a servant to do his master's." And this great author thought this consent so necessary, that he rather ventures to introduce a most miraculous scene, than to have this early consent of *Christ* as man omitted; and therefore he supposes that in a miraculous way the human soul of *Christ* did give itself up to this work from his very birth.

His own free consent appears plainly in these words, "He humbled himself," *Phil.* ii. 7. He emptied himself of glory when he became man, and died for sinners. And he himself took part of flesh and blood with this design, that he might die, "that he might through his death destroy the works of the devil," *Heb.* ii. 14. He declares further his own free consent, *John* vi. 38. "I came down from heaven to do my Father's will." And *John* x. 17, 18. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." No man taketh my life from me,
that

that is, against my free consent; but I lay it down of myself, that is, of my own choice and voluntary ingagement. "This thought I propose, says the defender of bishop *Fowler's* discourse, to be well considered by all free and ingenious minds, and by all those who would not in the least derogate from the honour of their blessed mediator *Christ Jesus*," and the amazing love that appears in his mighty undertaking.

Argument II. "The covenant betwixt God the Father and his Son *Jesus Christ* for the redemption of mankind, is represented in scripture as being made and agreed upon from or before the foundation of the world. Is it not then most proper that both real parties should be actually present, and that this should not be transacted merely within the divine essence by such sort of distinct personalities as have no distinct mind and will? The essence of God is generally agreed by our protestant divines to be the same single numerical essence in all three personalities, and therefore it can be but one conscious mind or spirit. Now can one single understanding and will make such a covenant as scripture represents?"

I grant the divine nature which is in *Christ* from eternity contrived and agreed all the parts of this covenant. But does it not add a lustre and glory, and more conspicuous equity, to this covenant, to suppose the man *Christ Jesus*, who is most properly the mediator according to 1 *Tim. ii. 5.* to be also present before the world was made, to be chosen and appointed as the redeemer or reconciler of mankind, to be then ordained the head of his future people, to receive promises, grace and blessings in their name, and to accept the solemn and weighty trust from the hand of his Father, that is, to take care of millions of souls? Read the following scriptures, and see whether they do not imply thus much: 1 *Tim. ii. 5.* "There is one mediator between God and man, even the man *Christ Jesus*." *Eph. i. 3, 4.* "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in *Christ*; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." 2 *Tim. i. 8, 9, 10.* "God hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in *Christ Jesus* before the world began." *Tit. i. 2.*—"Eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Now to whom could this promise be made but to *Jesus Christ*, and to us in him, as the great patron and representative of believers? *Rev. xiii. 6.* "All that dwell on earth shall worship the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Whether these words, "from the foundation of the world," refer to the slaying of the lamb by way of anticipation, or rather to writing of the book of life, yet they certainly refer to the transaction of this important affair with the lamb, and therefore this expression is used several times in the book of the *Revelation*.

It was by virtue of this covenant, and the sacrifice of his own blood which *Christ* was to offer in due time, that all the benefits of this covenant were derived upon mankind in the various ages of it ever since the fall of man; therefore *Christ* was a Saviour from the beginning of the world; and those who apply all these things merely to the divine nature of *Christ*, as consenting to this covenant upon the proposal of the Father, yet they suppose the human nature of *Christ* to be included in it, in the view of God the Father, by way of "prolepsis" or anticipation. But surely it seems much more proper to explain these things concerning the human soul of *Christ* as actually united to the divine nature, and actually consenting to this covenant, since the human nature was to endure the sufferings; and then we need not be constrained to

recur to such proleptical figures of speech to interpret the language of scripture, since the literal sense is just and true.

Thus it appears, if we consider this covenant as made betwixt God the Father and his Son, and as it is usually called the covenant of redemption, it seems to require the pre-existence of the soul of *Christ*. Or if we consider the covenant of grace as it has been proposed to men in all ages since the fall, the existence of *Christ* as God-man appears requisite also to constitute him a proper mediator. It does not seem to be so agreeable a supposition to make this covenant for the salvation of men from the vengeance of God to run on for the space of four thousand years together, that is, from the creation and fall of man to the incarnation of *Christ*, without any proper or suitable mediator or undertaker on the part of man. This covenant of the gospel, or of God in *Christ*, includes in the very nature and theory of it two real distinct parties, God and man; so that the title of mediator seems to require that man should be represented by the mediator as well as God, and that the complete person of the mediator should have some affinity to both parties, and actually agree to this covenant in that whole person before the communication of the benefits of it to the earliest ages of mankind.

Observe also, what was intimated before, that this one mediator is particularly called the man *Christ Jesus*, 1 Tim. ii. 5. that the human nature may appear to be signally concerned in the mediation: and for the same reason, the book of life is said to belong to the lamb, which name is applied to the human nature of *Christ*, in union with the divine, with much more propriety than it can be applied merely to the divine nature without such an union.

Argument III. Another argument for this doctrine of the existence of the soul of *Christ* before his incarnation may be derived from the "scriptural descriptions of *Christ*'s coming into the world. This is always expressed in some corporeal language, such as denotes his taking on him animal nature, or body, or flesh, without the least mention of taking a soul." Read the following scriptures; *John* i. 14. "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." *Rom.* i. 3. "He was made of the seed of *David*, according to the flesh." *Rom.* viii. 3. "God sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." *Gal* iv. 3. "God sent forth his Son made of a woman." This word cannot necessarily imply the soul, for his soul could not be made of the soul or body of the virgin *Mary*, but his flesh or blood was made out of her's.

Phil. ii. 7, 8. "He was made in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion as a man." Now shape or fashion peculiarly refer to the body rather than the soul.

And in the second chapter to the *Hebrews*, where the apostle treats professedly of the incarnation of *Christ*, he seems to suppose that his soul existed before, and that he was like the children of God already in that respect; but verse 14. "For as much as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that he might in all things be made like his brethren," as verse 17. And if he be said to "take on him the seed of *Abraham*," verse 16. yet it is certain that the human body of *Christ* has a very proper and literal right to that name, rather than the soul, though the word seed may more frequently include both.

Again, it is said by the same apostle in *Heb.* v. 7. "In the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears," that is, when he had taken flesh upon him, and dwelt in it. And *Heb.* x. when God the Father sends his Son into the world, he is said to prepare a body for him, but not a human soul; verse 5. "A body hast thou prepared me."

The

The apostle *John* speaks several times of *Jesus Christ's* being come in the flesh, to signify his coming into the world, in his first and second epistles, intimating that the person who is vested with the name and character of *Jesus* and *Christ*, had every thing besides flesh before.

On the other hand, if *Christ* did take a human soul upon him, or the whole complex nature of man; at the same time when he was born of the virgin, it is a wonder that there should not be any one scripture, neither in the old and or new testament, which should give such a hint to us, that he then took a reasonable soul as well as a body? Or should tell us at least that he expressly assumed human nature, which might include both flesh and spirit? but that it should always use such words as chiefly and directly denote the body. This seems to carry some evident intimation that his human soul existed before.

Perhaps it will be objected here, that the word flesh in many places of scripture signifies mankind or human nature, by the figure "synecdoche" including the soul also.

It is granted that flesh doth sometimes signify mankind, and this objection might be good if the scriptural language never used any thing but the word flesh to denote human nature, and never distinguished the flesh and the soul: But since there are a great number of scriptures where the flesh or body is distinguished from the soul or spirit of man on many occasions, it seems very natural and reasonable to expect there should be some one passage at least in all the bible wherein the divine nature of *Christ* should be said to assume a human soul as well as a body or flesh, when he came into our world, if this spirit or soul had no existence before the incarnation.

And we have the more reason to expect this also when we observe, that there is mention made of the soul of *Christ* himself in several places of scripture on other occasions, as *Isa.* liii. 10. "Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." Verse 11. "He shall see of the travel of his soul." *Luke* xxiii. 46. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." *Acts* ii. 31. "His soul was not left in hell." *John* xii. 27. "Now is my soul troubled." *Matth.* xxvi. 38. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful." *Luke* x. 21. "Jesus rejoiced in spirit" *John* xi. 23. and xiii. 21. "Jesus was troubled in spirit." Now since we have the human soul or spirit of *Christ* mentioned several times in scripture on other occasions, and yet never once mentioned with relation to his incarnation, but always find his coming into our world described by taking flesh and blood, body, the fashion of a man, the likeness of sinful flesh, &c. there is much reason to suppose that *Christ* had a human soul before, and did not then begin to have it.

Argument IV. "Though the jews were much at a loss in our Saviour's time in their sentiments of the *Messiah*, and had very various and confused notions of him, yet it is certain that amongst many of the learned of that nation, and probably amongst many of the vulgar too, there was a tradition of the pre existence of the soul of the *Messiah*." *Philo the jew*, who lived very near the time of our Saviour, interprets several of those scriptures of the old testament concerning the mediator or Logos which we do: He calls him the Son of God, and yet he makes him expressly a man, the prince of the angels, the prophet of God, the light of the people; and though he talks with some confusion on this subject, and gives him some such characters as seem to make this Logos truly divine, and one with God, yet other characters also are such as seem to be inferior to godhead, and very happily agree with this doctrine of the pre-existent soul of *Christ* in union with his divine nature, as will plainly appear in what follows.

In

In some parts of his works *Philo* describes the Logos as a particular divine power, *δύναμις*, which he also calls *σοφία*, or wisdom, as *Solomon* does in the eighth of *Proverbs*, and he attributes to this wisdom or word an existence before any creature, the contrivance of the creation of the world and all things in it, with other divine and incommunicable ascriptions. Sometimes the ancient *jews* make it the same with God himself; so the *targums* do, which are *jewish* commentaries upon scripture, when they speak of the *memra* or word, thereby representing either divine powers or properties in a personal manner, or the divine nature itself in a particular manner of agency, relation or subsistence.

In other places *Philo* makes the Logos or Word to signify that glorious arch-angel which the ancient *jews* suppose to be the supreme of creatures, formed before all the angels and all the other parts of the creation, "in whom was the name of God," who was sent to conduct *Moses* and the *jews* into *Canaan*, *Exod.* xxiii. 20. This glorious spirit *Philo* calls "the most honourable Logos, the arch-angel, prince of the angels and stars, high-priest in this temple of God, the world, who stands in the limits between the creature and the creator, the eldest, the first begotten of the sons of God, who under God governs the world, and who doth humbly mediate for us mortals with him that is immortal."

The seventy *jewish* interpreters seem to have had some notion that this arch angel was the *Messiah*, when they call the child born, the son given, in *Isai.* ix. 6. Μεγάλου βουλῆς Ἄγγελος, the angel of the great counsel, even as *Christ* is called an angel, *Isai.* lxiii. 9. *Mal.* iii. 1. *Exod.* xxiii. 20. And it was a general opinion of the ancient *jews* that there was one glorious angel superior to all the rest, by whom God made his visits to the patriarchs, and declared his will to *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *Moses*, *Joshua*, &c.

I confess these ancient *jews* speak variously and with some darkness and confusion on these subjects, that we cannot gather any steady or certain inferences that they generally believed either of these two Logos's to be the very person of their expected *Messiah*: Yet a christian, who has the clearer light of the new testament, may from their writings easily and naturally trace and infer the doctrine of the uncreated Logos, that is, the divine word or wisdom united to the created Logos, that is, the great arch-angel, because these ancient *jews* ascribe to the Logos so many things which are truly divine, and so many things inferior to divinity.

But they speak in some confusion, because they seem not to have had a clear idea of this personal union between God and a creature. Whereas christians being instructed in this doctrine by the the new testament, may clearly understand how by this glorious being, this complex person, viz. our Lord *Jesus Christ*, God created the world, and God governed the affairs of his ancient church: and that standing in the limits betwixt God and the creature, both by his nature as well as his office he becomes the high-priest, and mediates between mortal men and God who is immortal, according to the language of the ancient *jews*.

What I have cited already, discovers the acknowledged sense and opinion of the ancient *jews* both philosophers and commentators on this subject. See much more to this purpose in my dissertation on the Logos or Word of God. pages 553—594.

If we search among other of the *jewish* writers, we may find more intimations of this doctrine.

Bishop *Fowler* cites some notable traditions of the *jewish* rabbies to this purpose; one in an ancient book amongst the *jews* called *Pesikta*, viz. That "after God had created the world, he put his hand under the throne of his glory, and brought out the

the soul of the *Messiah*, with all his attendants, and said unto him, Wilt thou heal and redeem my sons after six thousand years? He answered, I am willing so to do. Again therefore, said God unto him, And art thou willing to suffer chastisements, for the purging away their iniquities? And the soul of the *Messiah* answered, I will suffer them, and that with all my heart."

And there is, saith he, a cabbalistical representation of their expected *Messiah's* being in heaven, in another old book of high esteem among the *jews*, intitled *Mid-rash Conen*, viz. "In the fifth house sits the *Messiah*, Son of *David*; and *Elias* of blessed memory said to this *Messiah*, Bear the stroke and judgment of the Lord, which he inflicts on thee for the sin of *Israel*, as it is written by *Isaiab*, he was wounded because of our transgressions, &c." Now though we allow no more credit to these traditions than to other *jewish* tales, yet it discovers their antient notion of the pre-existence of the soul of the *Messiah*: and the learned Mr. *Fleming* tells us, that it was an inducement to him to favour that opinion, "because the *jews* seemed to have laid down this as an undoubted maxim in all ages, that the soul of the *Messiah* was made before all creatures, as all must own that are in the least acquainted with their opinions and writings. "christology," book III. chapter v. page 457." That this was an antient opinion of the *jews* is confirmed by other writers also.

And it is no wonder if many of the common people as well as the learned had also this notion of the soul of *Christ*, since it appears, *John* ix. 2. that they had a belief of the pre-existence of all human souls, for which opinion I think there is neither in scripture nor in reason any just foundation; nor doth the pre-existence of the soul of *Christ* at all infer the doctrine of the pre-existence of other souls, but rather the contrary, as will appear under the next particular.

Argument V. "Since it pleased the Father to prepare a body for our Lord *Jesus Christ* by the overshadowing of the holy Ghost, and by a peculiar manner of conception, that his body might have some peculiar prerogative, and that he might be the Son of God in a superior sense with regard to his flesh, as *Luke* i. 35. so it is not unreasonable to suppose that the soul of *Christ* also, which was to be united to god-head, should have this peculiar prerogative, to be derived immediately from God before any creature was made, and to enjoy this union with the divine nature, and glories suitable thereto before it's union with an earthly body." And thus in consideration of it's formation before all creatures in a most immediate manner by the will of God, as well as it's nearest resemblance to God himself above all other spirits, this human soul might be called also the Son of God and his only begotten Son, in a transcendent manner above all other beings, whether men or angels, who are sometimes called sons of God. But this thought perhaps will be set in a clearer light, when we come to explain a variety of scriptures according to this hypothesis in the next section; and it may be yet made plainer still, whensoever I shall publish another dissertation which I have written on the name Son of God*. See page 647—672.

* This dissertation was never published.

S E C T I O N . V.

A confirmation of this doctrine by arguments drawn from the happy consequences, and the various advantages of it.

I Think the reason and considerations mentioned in the two foregoing sections have some weight in them: But the argument will receive new strength if we survey the various advantages that attend this opinion of the pre-existent soul of *Christ*.

Advantage I. "This doctrine casts a surprising light upon many dark passages in the word of God; it does very naturally and easily explain and reconcile several difficult places both of the old and new testament, which are very hard to be accounted for any other way." Some of these I have already mentioned, and I think they appear in a fairer light by the help of this doctrine. Other passages there are which speak of *Christ* as the true God, and yet at the same time in the context attribute such properties and characters to him as are very hard to be reconciled and applied to pure godhead; but are explained with utmost ease to us, and honour to *Christ*, by supposing his pre-existent soul even then united to his divine nature.

Let us survey some of these portions of scripture.

Text I *Col.* i. 15—19. *Christ* is described as the "image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, &c. All things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist; and he is the head of the body the church, 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 fulness dwell, or as it is expressed in the second chapter, verse 9. for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the of the godhead bodily." Here are some expressions which seem too sublime for any mere creature, viz. "All things were created by him and for him, and by him all things consist." But when it is said, "He is the image of the invisible God;" this cannot refer merely to his divine nature, for that is as invisible in the Son as it is in the Father; therefore it seems to refer to his pre-existent soul in union with his godhead, who is the brightest, the fairest and most glorious image of God; and so he appears to the world of angels in heaven, and by his frequent assuming a visible shape heretofore, became the image of the invisible God to men, and dwelt here for a season on earth.

He is said to be "the first-born of every creature." There has been much labour and art of criticism employed to apply these words merely to the divine nature of *Christ*, by giving them a metaphorical or some unusual sense: But if we suppose this soul of *Christ* to exist thus early, then he is properly the first-born of every creature in the literal sense of the words; and in this sense he may be literally called "the beginning of the creation of God," as he styles himself, *Rev.* iii. 14.

If we join the expressions of the first and second chapters to the *Colossians* together, we may explain the one by the other. "He is the image of the invisible God; by him and for him were all things created, and in him all things consist, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence, &c. for it pleased the Father that in him should dwell all the fulness of the godhead bodily." All the godhead dwelt in him as a spirit, or spiritually before the incarnation, and bodily since; thus the nineteenth verse of the first chapter comes in properly as a reason for all those attributions both
supreme

supreme and inferior, viz. because God was pleased to ordain that the divine nature should be united to this glorious being, the human soul of *Christ*, now appearing in a body.

Doctor *Thomas Goodwin* was a learned, a laborious and a successful enquirer into all those scriptures that treat of our Lord *Jesus Christ* in order to aggrandize his character; and when he interprets these verses in volume II. "of the knowledge of God, &c." he finds himself constrained to explain the expressions concerning the divine nature of *Christ*, as united to man by way of anticipation, or as considered in it's future union with the man *Jesus*, and argues strongly for this exposition: But there is no need to bring in such a figure as "prolepsis" or the anticipation of things future, since the real and actual existence of the soul of *Christ* before the creation makes all this language of scripture just and plain in the literal sense. And what that pious and ingenious author declares upon this subject almost persuades me to believe that had he lived in our day, he would have been a hearty defender of the doctrine which I propose.

Text II. The next scripture I shall cite for this purpose is that illustrious description of our Lord *Jesus* in the first chapter of the epistle to the *Hebrews*, wherein there are sufficient evidences of his divine nature: but there are some such expressions as seem to imply also a nature inferior and dependent. He is represented as "laying the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of his hands; he upholds all things by the word of his power:" which expressions carry in them an idea too sublime for any mere created nature. And the citation of the first of them from the hundred and second *Psalms*, proves yet farther that *Christ* is *Jehovah* the Creator.

But when he is called a Son, a begotten Son, this seems to imply derivation and dependency: and perhaps the sonship of *Christ*, and his being the only begotten of the Father, may be better explained by attributing it to his human soul existing by some peculiar and immediate manner of creation, formation, or derivation from the Father before other creatures were formed; especially if we include in the same idea of sonship, as doctor *Goodwin* does, his union to the divine nature, and if we add also his exaltation to the office of the *Messiah* as king and Lord of all; which some zealous trinitarians suppose to be the chief thing meant when God saith, verse 5. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

Now this matter being set in a fair and full light, and established by just arguments from scripture, would take off the force of many *arian* pretences against the trinity, viz. such pretences as arise from the supposed derivation of one person from another in pure godhead, and a supposed eternal act of generation producing a co-essential son, which things are not plainly expressed in any part of the bible, and which are acknowledged on all sides to be great and incomprehensible difficulties.

Heb. i. 3. Perhaps these words, "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person," may be better explained, if we suppose the divine nature of *Christ* to be united to his pre-existent soul, when it was first created: This human soul of *Christ* was then like a glass through which the godhead shone with inimitable splendor in all the perfections of it, wisdom, power, holiness and goodness: thus *Christ* was his Father's most perfect image, or copy, both in his own native excellencies, bearing the nearest resemblance to God, as an only begotten Son, and he was also the brightness of his glory; because the perfections of the Father shone through him with more illustrious rays than it was possible for any mere creature to represent or transmit them, who was not thus united to a divine nature.

I cannot forbear to illustrate this by a similitude which I think has been somewhere used by doctor *Goodwin*: Suppose it possible for a hollow globe of crystal to be made so vast as to inclose the sun; this globe of crystal considered in itself, would have many properties in it, perhaps, resembling the sun in a more perfect manner than any other being: but if it were also inhabited by the sun itself, and thus transmitted the glories of the sun to men, how express an image would it be of that bright luminary, and would it not be the most happy medium by which the sun could exert it's powers of light and heat? Such is *Jesus* the man, who is the Son of God inhabited by the divine nature, and the fairest image of God.

Besides, let it be yet further considered, that when *Christ* is called in *Colossians* i. "15. the image of the invisible God," and in *Heb.* i. 3. "the express image of his Father's person," it must be understood either of his divine nature or his human. If it be understood of his divine nature, it must mean that he is the image of the Father's essence or of his personality, for the personality together with the essence, make up the complete character of God the Father.

But the divine nature of *Christ* cannot properly be the image of his Father's nature or essence; for the essence of godhead, or the divine nature both in the Father and in the Son, is one and the same individual nature or essence, which cannot properly be the image of itself, nor can the same individual essence be both the original and the image at the same time. When we conceive of the self-same body, or the self-same man, or the self-same angel, in different positions or situations, circumstances, relations or appearances, we never say that the self-same thing is the image of itself. Thus *Christ* in his divine essence cannot be the image of the Father's essence, when it is the same individual essence with that of the Father. The essence of God in the person of the Son cannot properly be the image of that essence in the person of the Father, since it is the same individual essence.

Nor is *Christ* in his divine nature an express image of the personality of the Father. Sonship is no image of paternity: A derived property or subsistence is no image of an underived property or subsistence, but just the reverse or directly contrary to it.

Since therefore *Christ* in his divine nature is neither the image of his Father's essence, nor of his Father's personality, these words must be spoken with regard to *Christ*'s human nature; and in this respect he is the express image of his Father, or the image of the invisible God; and that, these three ways.

1. As the human soul of *Christ* is a creature, which has the nearest likeness to it's Creator. This Son of God is a most glorious spirit, the brightest and nearest image to the Father, the eternal glorious spirit; far nearer than the angels who are also the sons of God, or than *Adam* who was the son of God too; for his properties and perfections are much greater than their's, and bear a much nearer resemblance to the properties and perfections of God the Father.

2. The human nature of *Christ* is the image of the invisible God the Father, as he often assumed a visible form under the old testament, and appeared and spake, and acted as God in a visible glory; and so he is the proper "image of the invisible God," *Col.* i. 15.

3. As he took upon him, in the fulness of time, a visible body of flesh and blood, and therein appeared as one in whom the fulness of the godhead dwelt bodily, the visible image of his invisible Father.

But I proceed. The holy writer in *Heb.* i. 3. adds further, that "he was appointed heir of all things," which seems to be not so applicable to the pure godhead of *Christ*;

Christ; for godhead has an original and eternal right to all things, and does not come at it by way of inheritance or derivation, much less by being an appointed heir. Doctor *Goodwin* is so well persuaded of the sense of these words, that they are not properly applicable to pure godhead, that he again supposes the holy writer to speak by way of anticipation, and to view the divine nature of *Christ* in union with the man, though he acknowledges the things which are now spoken of, were transacted before the world was.

There are other expressions in this chapter which seem to refer to some being inferior to godhead. Verse 4. "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. Verse 9. "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows;" that is, has given thee the holy Spirit as a comforter, in a superior measure. These things cannot be supposed to be spoken of the godhead of *Christ*: And yet they seem to be spoken concerning *Christ* before his incarnation, and then they point out to us the pre-existence of his human soul: Whereas if they are spoken of him after his incarnation, then they prove nothing of his pre-existent glory, which seems to be the design of this chapter.

Since the design of the second chapter to the *Hebrews* is, to prove the incarnation of *Christ*, and his taking upon him a human body, I might here ask, whether the design of the first chapter may not be to represent our blessed Lord in his pre-existent state, both divine and human, that is, to set forth the glory of this human spirit both in it's own excellencies and in it's original union with the divine nature. And this appears the more probable, because the author in the first chapter is frequently comparing him with angels, and sets him above them in several comparisons; now this would be but a low and diminutive account of the godhead of *Christ*, to raise him above angels; but it is a glorious and sublime account of his human soul, considered as united to godhead, and one with God.

And since there are so many expressions in the first chapter which ascribe ideas to *Christ* which are inferior to godhead, as well as some sublimer expressions which appear incommunicable to any but God; I would enquire whether the introduction of this pre-existent soul of *Christ* here may not be a happy clue to lead us into the very mind and meaning of this portion of scripture, rather than to suppose the godhead of *Christ* is always intended here: For by so doing we embarrass ourselves with this difficulty, which the *arians* frequently sling upon us, of attributing something derivative and dependent to the divine nature, and ascribing something too low and mean to the godhead of *Christ*.

I might add also in confirmation of this thought, that had the sacred writers only design been to prove the divine nature of *Christ*, there are several passages in the old testament which are of equal force and significance with any which he has cited, and which are more evidently applied to the *Messiah* by the prophets themselves: But if we suppose him to speak of the whole pre-existent glory of *Christ*, then the citations seem to be well chosen and well mingled to represent his two natures, both divine and human, and the glory of his sacred person resulting thence.

That noble expositor on the epistle to the *Hebrews*, doctor *Owen*, being sensible that all these expressions in this chapter can never be applied to the divine nature of *Christ*, asserts, that, "it is not the direct and immediate design of the apostle in this place to treat absolutely of either nature of *Christ*, either divine or human, but only of his person: And though some things here expressed belong to his divine nature, some to

his human ; yet none of them are spoken as such, but are all considered as belonging to his person." See his "exposition on the *Hebrews*, verse 3. page 52." So that I have those two excellent writers doctor *Goodwin* and doctor *Owen* concurring with me in this sentiment, that it is not the prime design of this first chapter to the *Hebrews* to prove the deity of *Christ*, but the glory of his person considered as God-man: And in this view several expressions of the apostle are most appositely adapted to represent the glory of the human soul of *Christ* in it's pre-existent state, and in it's union to the divine nature.

Text III. Another difficult scripture which is made more easy and plain by this doctrine, is the eighth of *Proverbs*, verse 22. &c. where wisdom is represented as brought forth, and dwelling with God before the world was. May not this be happily attributed to *Christ*'s pre-existent soul united to the divine nature, or the person of the mediator God-man? For it is said, "the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old: I was set up from everlasting: Before the hills was I brought forth: I was by him, and was daily his delight." These words admit of two or three remarks.

1. These expressions, "I was possessed or acquired, I was set up, I was brought forth," seem to express and imply something inferior to pure godhead, which is undivided and independent; yet it seems to be the proper description of a being distinct from God the Father in the literal sense*, for these words intimate so much, "I was by him as one brought up with him, I was daily his delight, I rejoiced before him, and my delights were with the sons of men." If these things be taken literally, they mean a real person inferior and distinct from God.

2. The original *hebrew* does not say, "the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, but קנני acquired or assumed or possessed me the the beginning of his ways," not ברשית but רשית which gives a fair ground for this interpretation, viz. that the divine nature acquired, assumed or possessed himself of the human soul of *Christ* as the beginning, head and foundation of all his works and ways, both of creation and providence: So *Rev. iii. 14. Christ* is called the beginning or head of the creation of God.

Mr. *Fleming* citing these verses at large, "christology book III. chapter v. page 469." adds, "What we render in verse 24, and 25. brought forth, the *targum* renders, by being born in the first verse, and by being created, in the next. But the *hebrew* word is the same in both, and is justly rendered by *Arias Montanos*, "formata;" that is, framed, formed or made: As the septuagint to the same purpose renders it by ποιῶσαι, which is of the same import. And what else can he mean, when in verse 30 he represents himself, as one brought up with God, or as the *targum* says, "as one nourished up at his side?" Surely, if this be meant of the first created spirit, who is now the soul of the *Messiah*, no expressions can be more plain as well as natural: Whereas if we understand them immediately of the Logos, as the second person of the trinity, we must get over abundance of figures, that can never,

I think,

* I readily grant the divine wisdom may be here represented, after the manner of the eastern writers, as the counsel, contrivance and the decretive power or will of God in a personal character, as being present with God in the creation of the world, and as produced or brought forth by him: But even this wisdom may be supposed to make the pre-existent soul of *Christ* in some unknown manner, it's instrument of operation, as doctor *Goodwin* uses the word, and when the sacred writer adds, "I rejoiced daily before him in the habitable parts of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men;" this seems to cast a stronger aspect upon some real proper person distinct from godhead.

I think, be properly either explained or accommodated; besides our being involved in endless criticisms about words."

Doctor *Goodwin* also is positive that these expressions cannot refer to the second person considered in his eternal generation, but they must be referred to *Christ* as God-man, because they denote an act of the divine will. "*Goodwin* of the knowledge of God, volume II. page 111, and 189."

The learned doctor *Knight* supposes this birth of divine wisdom is her coming forth into a human figure and subsistence, or her entrance into the substance of the first created nature, that is, the human soul of *Jesus Christ*, at the moment of it's creation. By this means the Word as man became the head of mankind, who were to be made by him after his image and likeness; and as the first-begotten, he had the right of primogeniture or government over the rest.—See his "considerations on Mr. *Whiston*, &c. pages 108, 109, &c."

3. I remark also, that though the *hebrew* language may express the eternity of God, by saying, "Before the mountains and the hills, &c." yet since we suppose the soul of *Christ* to be the first of the works or ways of God, this manner of expression may more particularly and expressly describe the date of his existence before this world was made, though it be not co-eval and co-eternal with the godhead.

But I proceed,

4. To mention some other difficult texts which may derive light from this doctrine.

If we can but suffer ourselves to believe what I have intimated before, that the sonship of *Christ* does not belong to his divine nature, but rather to his human soul considered in it's original derivation from God the Father, and in it's being appointed to the sacred office of the *Messiah*; then we have a most evident and obvious interpretation of those scriptures in the new testament, which have been attended with so much darkness and difficulty, and have given so much anxiety and pains to our divines, viz. *John* v. 19. "The Son can do nothing of himself." *Matt.* xxiv. 36. *Mark* xiii. 32. "But of that day knoweth no man, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father." *Heb.* v. 8. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Now this sonship refers to verse 5. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." *1 Cor.* xv. 28. "Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him; that God may be all in all." These expressions sound very harsh if applied to the divine nature of *Christ*, but are very naturally applicable to a being or spirit inferior to godhead.

To these expressions I might add, *John* xiv. 28. "The Father is greater than I;" which is very hard to apply to the divine nature of *Christ*, and to make a greater and lesser God: And yet it seems but a poor low assertion if our Saviour spoke of it himself as a mere common man, who begun to exist thirty-four years ago: It was no strange thing that God should be greater than a man. But if we suppose it refers to *Christ*'s glorious human soul, which was the first-born of every creature, it carries in it something grand and august, and he pays hereby a sublimer honour to God his Father.

All other places of scripture wherein the Son of God is represented, either as receiving or invested with sublime powers from God, or as bearing any inferior characters, have a most natural and easy explication if they are applied to this glorious human spirit sometimes considered as distinguished from the divine nature, sometimes as personally united to it, and that either in it's own existence before it's incarnation, or in it's incarnate state, according as the context requires: For since both natures

have

have their part and share in man's redemption, they are thus distinguished in the holy scripture, some expressions relating more properly to the one nature, some to the other, and some including both natures united. There is no need of paraphrasing these scriptures at large, and giving an example how these texts may then be interpreted, since this key being given, the way lies open for every unlearned christian to penetrate into the sense of them, and to explain many other scriptures besides those I have cited, by the help of the same doctrine.

Advantage II. "This doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul of *Christ* not only explains dark and difficult scriptures, but it discovers to us many beauties and proprieties of expression in the word of God, and casts a lustre upon some of those passages whose justness and beauty were not before observed." Let me mention a few of them.

1. When man is said to be "created in the image of God," *Gen.* i. 27. it may refer to the God-man, to *Christ* in his pre-existent state. God says, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;" the word is redoubled perhaps to intimate that *Adam* was made in the likeness of the human soul of *Christ*, who was the first of God's creation, as well as that he bore something of the image or resemblance of the divine nature itself: And hereby *Christ* has the honour of being set up as the first and fairest image of God, and the grand pattern of all human souls who were to bear his likeness.

2. Again, when God is said to grieve, to repent, to be angry, to come down from heaven, to stand, to speak, to receive and assume to himself many of the actions and passions of human nature, we are wont to explain them as mere figures of speech, employing human expressions to represent divine actions: But if we suppose the divine nature of *Christ* united to this pre-existent soul, then these expressions perhaps may be taken in a more literal sense than we imagined; when he that was true God, by virtue of this union, came down from heaven, stood, spake, grieved, rejoiced, and was pleased or angry at the view he took of the affairs of men. Doctor *Owen* in "his meditations on the glory of *Christ*" asserts, that "it had been absurd to bring in God under perpetual anthropopathies, as grieving, repenting, being angry, well pleased, and the like, were it not but that the divine person intended was to take on him the nature wherein such affections do dwell."

3. And not only human actions are attributed to God, but even the very name of man is given to that glorious being which visited the patriarchs of old: He assumed a human shape, and appeared as a man; and even the soul itself might be so called by "synecdoche," which puts a part for the whole. And yet this glorious appearance is also called God, and the Lord or *Jehovah*. "It was a man that wrestled with *Jacob*," *Gen.* xxxi. 24. and yet he is acknowledged and adored as God. That extraordinary man, who is called "the man of God," when he appeared to *Manoab*, *Judges* xiii. is supposed to be the *Messiah*: His countenance is described "like an angel of God," and his name is called "secret or wonderful," verse 6, 18*. so in *Ezekiel's* vision, chapter i. 26. "upon the likeness of the throne was the appearance of a man above:" And in the prophecy of *Daniel* we meet with several of his appearances in the form of a man: Chapter iii. 25. "The fourth man walking in the midst of the burning fiery furnace was like the Son of God." So, chapter viii. verse 15, 16. "There stood before me as the appearance of a man," and this man bid *Gabriel* make *Daniel* understand

* It is the same word נִלְוֹד wonderful, which is attributed to *Christ* as one of his names, in *Isai.* ii. 6. which the angel here assumes when *Manoab* asks his name.

stand the vision: And chapter x. 5. "A certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with gold," is described very nearly in the same form and dress as *Christ* appeared in to St. *John*, *Rev.* i. 13. and chapter vii. 13. "One like the son of man came to him that sat on the throne, &c." which is parallel to *Rev.* i. 7. It is possible that most times when the angel, who is also called God, favoured the patriarchs with a visit, he appeared in the form of a man. thus the great "Theanthropos," or God-man, put on a human shape frequently as a prelude, figure and prophecy of his own incarnation.

Nor can it be objected here that a human soul is not a man; for surely it may be called a man as well as *Christ* may be called an angel, as he is often in scripture; and better than the pure divine nature may be called a man; which yet is the sense of those who will not allow *Christ's* human soul to be here meant. The soul is the chief part of the man, and St. *Paul* calls his own soul by this name, viz. a man. See 2 *Cor.* xii. 2, 3. "I knew a man, that is, his soul, whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell."

4. Another instance of the justness and beauty of scriptural language we find in *Zech.* xiii. 7. where the man *Christ* is called the neighbour of God, or the man who is near to him, as it may be rendered; "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow or neighbour, saith the Lord of hosts." The word עִמִּיתִי which we render my fellow does never signify any sort of equality, but conjunction, nearness or neighbourhood: It is often rendered neighbour in scripture. It denotes the man that was with God, or near to God, by the intimate union of the human soul to the godhead, and was the shepherd of the flock of God, or the keeper of *Israel* in all former ages. So the vulgar *latin* renders it, "co-hærentem mihi," cleaving to me; and because of the union between the divine and human nature it may be very properly expressed, "my neighbour."

I might take occasion here to remark also how appositely God himself is sometimes called the "shepherd of *Israel*," *Psal.* xxiii. 1. *Psal.* lxxx. 1. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom," *Isai.* xl. 11. which is a prophecy of *Christ*, though he is called the Lord God in the foregoing verse. This language has great propriety in it when we consider the human soul of *Christ* united to godhead, acting the part of a shepherd towards the *jewish* nation, "leading them through the wilderness like a flock," and watching over them as a shepherd in the land of *Canaan*. How beautiful is this idea, when we observe that both in prophecy and in history, in the old testament and in the new, this office is appropriated to *Christ*, *Ezech.* xxxiv. 23. "I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant *David*." *John* x. 14. *Jesus* calls himself "the good shepherd;" and St. *Peter* echoes to the voice of *Christ*, and calls him "the chief shepherd, and the bishop of souls," 1 *Pet.* ii. 25. and v. 4.

This seems to carry something of evidence with it, that the human soul of *Christ* had an existence before; and therefore the scripture was careful to use human language, to express his offices as well as his person and actions. This will further appear by what follows.

5. This doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul of *Christ* affords us a plain reason, why he is called *Christ* or the *Messiah*, in those many places of scripture which represent transactions before his incarnation, to shew that this very person was anointed to his offices of old. So in 1 *Cor.* x. 9. "Neither let us tempt *Christ* as some of them, that is, *Israelites*, tempted him, and were destroyed." *Eph.* iii. 9. "God created

created all things by *Jesus Christ*." 2 *Tim.* i. 9. "Grace was given us in *Christ Jesus* before the world began." 1 *Pet.* i. 11. "Searching what manner of time the Spirit of *Christ*, which was in the prophets, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of *Christ*." 1 *Pet.* iii. 19. "By which also he, that is *Christ*, went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which were disobedient in the days of *Noah*." *Heb.* xi. 26. "*Moses* esteemed the reproach of *Christ* greater riches than the treasures in *Egypt*." The word *Christ*, which is the same with *Messiah* or anointed, implies a complexion of the divine and human nature; at least it seems to import his human nature in an especial manner; for "there is one mediator between God and men, the man *Christ Jesus*," 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. The manhood is eminently represented in the person of the mediator, though the godhead being united, rendered all his actions infinitely efficacious and powerful.

6. It presents us also with a fair and rational account why God himself was called the king of *Israel*, and took upon him the political government of that peculiar nation; and we learn why the *Messiah* had also this title given him, "the king of the *jews*," when we consider the pre-existent soul of the *Messiah* personally united to the divine nature. That God was often called the king of *Israel*, is sufficiently manifest in many places. 1 *Sam.* xii. 12. *Samuel* reprov'd them when they wanted another king to reign over them, "while the Lord their God was their king." *David* and *Isaiab* often called God the "Creator of *Israel* and their king, the redeemer of *Jacob* and his king, the holy one of *Israel* and his king," *Psal.* lxxxix. 18. *Isa.* xli. 21. *Isa.* xliii. 15. And in the vision of *Isaiab*, chapter vi. verse 5. the prophet says, — "My eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts," which is properly applied to *Christ* by *John* the evangelist, chapter xii. verse 41. He is called the "King of glory," *Psal.* xxiv. 7, 9, 10. When the ark was brought up to *Zion*, he is intitled the "King of *Zion*," *Zech.* ix. 9. which is attributed to *Christ*, *John* xii. 25. and the common name of the *Messiah* was the "king of *Israel*," *John* i. 49. *Nathanael* saith to *Christ*, "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of *Israel*." All these expressions are very natural, and just, and proper when we consider the soul of *Christ* in it's pre-existent state united to the divine nature, and becoming a patron and protector of the holy seed, assuming the *jews* above any other nation, into a peculiar relation to himself. And upon this account is said in *John* i. 11. "He came to his own, *εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ*," to his own property or possession, to his own people the *jews*, but the *jews* his own subjects received him not.

Now if we suppose the soul of our blessed redeemer in union with his godhead to be the appointed or anointed king of the *jewish* church and nation, through all the ages of that oeconomy, and if we consider that when he took flesh upon him and came down to dwell in the midst of them, according to the prophecies of the old testament, he was renounced, disowned, scorned, reproached, scourged and crucified by his rebellious subjects; and when we remember that all these sorrows were sustained in obedience to the will of his heavenly Father, and in compassion to sinful man; how just and meritorious a foundation does this lay for his exaltation to a greater and more extensive kingdom, even to be raised to the government of all churches and all nations? He was king of the *jews* for many ages before he came in the flesh; and when he rose from the dead, he became "king of the gentiles, and Lord of all things in heaven and earth," as a reward of his sufferings, *Phil.* ii. 8—11. God at first "set his king of *Israel* on his holy hill of *Zion*," *Psal.* ii. 6. and when he had declared him to be his Son at his resurrection, he says, "Ask of me and I will give thee, &c." So at his request he "gave him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost ends
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of the earth for his possession," *Psal.* ii. 8. He was of old the king of *Jacob*, and when he had "washed us from our sins in his own blood, and became the first-begotten from the dead, he had then a new name given him, king of kings, and Lord of lords, and prince of the kings of the earth;" see *Rev.* i. 5. and xix. 16. And though some of these titles are divine, and belong to the divine nature of *Christ* originally, yet here they are ascribed to him as God manifest in the flesh, or as a man united to God; nor are they too high for that whole person who was God as well as man. Besides, when his human nature had suffered, it was then exalted to a greater participation of, or a nearer resemblance to divine honours than before.

Let us dwell a little longer on this sacred subject, the enlargement of the kingdom of *Christ*.

Is there not some ground from scripture to believe that the great God governs the world by the intervening agency and ministrations of good and evil angels? As his Son *Jesus Christ* was king of the *Jews*, so the good angels were specially employed under *Christ* to do good offices for his people. And may we not suppose that the gentile countries, those sinful nations of the earth, were distributed by divine providence under the dominion or government of several evil angels in the times of God's ancient dispensation before the coming of *Christ*? Is there not reason to think that the heathen nations for their abominable iniquities might be so far judicially abandoned of God, as to be left very much under the dominion, possession and power of evil angels, since they "sacrificed to devils," *Deut.* xxxii. 17. *1 Cor.* x. 20. "and chose devils for their gods?" *Belzebub* is the known god of *Ekron*," *2 Kings* i. 2. 3. "who is called the prince of devils," *Matth.* xii. 24. And other names of the gods of the gentiles are probably the names that several devils might assume to themselves, and teach the gentiles to worship them under those names. And since *Satan* is called the "god of this world," *2 Cor.* iv. 4. that is, the being whom the heathen world worshipped, and since he is called the "prince of this world," *John* xii. 31. and xiv. 30. that is, he whom the heathen and sinful part of mankind obeyed, may not "evil angels be those principalities and powers, those spiritual wickednesses in high places," *Eph.* vi. 12. who are the "rulers of the darkness of this world," that is, of the dark and miserable heathen world?

Do not the princes of *Persia* and *Græcia* seem to be such evil angels, *Dan.* x. 13? For the prince of *Persia* withstood that glorious person, whom I take to be the angel *Gabriel* who talked with *Daniel* for one and twenty days, when *Michael* the arch-angel helped him. And when this glorious person returned from *Daniel*, "he went to fight with the prince of *Persia*," verse 20. therefore the prince of *Persia* could not be a good angel. And it appears yet further, that all these angel-princes of the nations were evil angels, because none of them held with this glorious person, that is, with *Gabriel*, none besides *Michael* your prince, that is, the angel governor of *Israel*.

Though the heathen nations were left under the dominion of evil angels, yet since *Israel* was God's peculiar people, may we not reasonably suppose God let a good angel over them to be a prince, even his own Son in his pre-existent nature, who was "the angel of the covenant," *Mal.* iii. 1. and the "angel of God's presence," *Isa.* lxiii. 9. and the "angel in whom his name was," *Exod.* xxiii. 25; And may not *Christ* himself be this *Michael* the arch-angel, the prince of *Israel*? It has been observed by some writers, that the scripture never speaks of arch-angels in the plural number: Perhaps there is but one arch-angel, and that is *Christ*.

Observe further, that *Christ's* kingdom is directly opposite to the devil's kingdom. His grand design is to oppose and destroy the work and power of the devil: and this seems to be *Michael's* appointed work in scripture, for he is sometimes brought in as "contending with devils," *Jude* verse 9. *Rev.* xii. and as he has other angels under him to "fight against the dragon or devil," verse 7. so has *Christ*. And as he is called the prince of *Daniel's* people, *Dan.* x. 21. that is, the prince or king of *Israel*; so is *Christ*. Observe also, that *Michael* is called one, or rather the first of the chief princes, as it is in the margin, *Dan.* x. 13. which is very agreeable to the character of *Christ*, who is the first and supreme angel-governor, and the prince of *Israel*, who were God's own kingdom or people*.

Now in this view of things, when we consider our blessed Lord as having his dominion extended from sea to sea, and reigning over the gentile nations even to the ends of the earth since his ascension to heaven, may we not justly suppose this is one part of his exaltation, that by him the prince of this world should be cast out, that is, turned out and despoiled of his old dominion among the nations, as well as out of the souls of men, according to *John* xii. 31? And that all these evil angels, who by divine permission were formerly governors of heathen kingdoms, were then captivated, spoiled and dispossessed of their government, and made slaves to the sovereign will of *Christ*? Is there not reason to conceive that these are those "principalities and powers which he spoiled of their dominions, and made a shew of them openly to the invisible world, triumphing over them," *Col.* ii. 15 †. Is not this the "captivity which he led captive, when he ascended on high far above all heavens, that he might fill all things," that is, with his influence, and so might govern all nations, *Eph.* iv. 8, 10? Is it not upon this account that he is described in that magnificence of glory by the prophet *David*, *Psal.* lxxviii. 17, 18. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels. The Lord is among them as in *Sinai*, in his holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Was not this the day of his triumph over *Satan* and his angels, who had been gods and kings, princes and lords || of the nations, when thousands of holy angels

* Some think the glorious person who appeared and talked with *Daniel*, chapter x. 5. was not *Gabriel* but *Jesus Christ*, because he is described much in the same manner as *Christ* is described, *Rev.* i. 13—16. in his appearance to *John*: and if so, then *Michael* cannot be *Christ*, but must be his prime minister in the government of *Israel*. But by comparison of these chapters, it is plain that this glorious person may much better be supposed to be *Gabriel* who conversed with *Daniel*, chapter ix. 21. and who is there called "the man *Gabriel* whom he had seen in the vision at the beginning," which probably refers to the vision of the man *Gabriel* in *Dan.* viii. 15. and then *Michael* the arch angel must be *Christ* the king or prince of *Israel*.

† See the exposition of this text in the most and the best of our commentators: there is scarce any thing they say upon it but is very consistent with the sense I give it in this place, and with the scheme of my discourse.

I confess Mr. *Peirce* supposes these "principalities and powers" must mean good angels, whom he believes to have been governors of the gentile nations till *Christ's* time: and the chief reason he gives for it is, that the *Colossians* are forbid to worship them, verse 18. for they are dispossessed of their government by the exaltation of *Christ*: whereas had they been evil angels or devils, there would have been no need of forbidding the christian *Colossians* to worship them.

To this I answer, That these *Colossians* were but young converts, and might not know that these were evil spirits whom they were tempted to worship, but only some invisible powers by whom God governed the nations in former times. And let it be observed too, that the apostle in the course of his argument excludes all angels from worship, verses 10, and 18, 19. and not merely evil angels, verse 15.

|| The heathen idols, or devils whom they worshipped, had such names as signify their dominion: *Baal* and *Bel* denote a lord, *Moloch* denotes a king. *Adrammelech* and *Anammelech* denote kings, &c.

angels are represented as the chariots of God attending him in that solemnity? Then he led captive a great captivity, even those principalities and powers that had been the rulers of the darkness of the heathen world: then he received gifts for men, and that not only for his antient subjects the *jews*, but for the rebellious gentiles also, who had been the subjects of *Satan*, under the power of the devil, led captive by him at his pleasure. And the *Psalmist* says it was all done with this design, that the Lord might dwell among them, that is, that the heathens might become the people, the kingdom, the habitation and sanctuary of God, as the nation of the *jews* had been before; that *Christ* who is God-man, and who was king of the saints or the holy nation of *Israel*, might become king of all nations.

Now what a glorious scene of things opens itself to us by this interpretation of a few scriptures? How naturally and how easily do all things co-incide and lead us to this amazing prospect of the victory of *Christ* over the devil? How illustrious does he appear in this dispossession of evil angels of their dominions on earth, at least so far as to make them become his slaves, and act peculiarly by his permission? How magnificent does this doctrine represent the ascension and exaltation of our blessed Saviour? And how gloriously does the God-man *Christ Jesus*, who in ancient ages was the king of *Israel*, aggrandize and extend his present title and dominion as king of nations, and Lord of all, since his death and ascension to heaven?

7. This opinion of the pre-existent soul of *Christ* is made use of by doctor *Knight*, in his "Primitive christianity vindicated against Mr. *Whiston*," page 85. to explain those reproofs given to *Job* by *Eliphaz*, *Job* xv. 7. "Art thou the first man that was born? Wast thou made before the hills? Hast thou heard the secret of God? And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?" Let us consider each of these four sentences distinctly.

"Art thou the first man that was born?" Μη παρὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπων ἐγεννήθης; Wast thou born the first of men?" as it is in the septuagint. Art thou that primitive spirit, "the first-born of the creation?" *Col.* i. 15.

"Wast thou made before the hills?" *Adam* was formed after the hills, but this first man the *Messiah*, speaking of himself in the person of wisdom, says, "Before the hills was I born, or brought forth," *Prov.* viii. 25. which in the *hebrew* are the very words of *Job* applied to the first man with only a change of the second to the first person: The first man then and the divine wisdom, or *Messiah*, are all one, that is, by the personal union of this first man to the divine word or wisdom.

"Hast thou heard the secret of God?" The septuagint add to it, "Did God use thee as a counsellor?" But the *Messiah* by way of eminence is called the counsellor, *Isai.* ix. 6. in the septuagint, "the angel of the great counsel;" and perhaps it is he to whom God said, "Let us make man," *Gen.* i. 26.

"And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?" Does all divine wisdom dwell in thee? It is only in the *Messiah* in the person of *Christ* "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," *Col.* ii. 3. From these interrogatories put to *Job*, doctor *Knight* infers, that the ancients had a notion of such a wonderful being, such a glorious and first-created human spirit. As for myself, I dare not say, this interpretation carries full and sufficient conviction with it; yet both the sacred pen-men of this book, as well as the seventy *jewish* interpreters, in this passage may be fairly explained in this manner, and cast no unfavourable aspect on the pre-existence of the soul of *Christ*.

8. This doctrine in the judgment of some great authors gives us a fair idea of those passages of scripture wherein God is said "to create all things by *Jesus Christ*,"

Ephes. iii. 9. not merely by his divine nature, but by him considered as God-man, and called by the names *Jesus* and *Christ*. This I confess has something so sublime in it, that I dare not indulge my own thoughts too far on this subject. Creation is a divine work, and the scripture always describes it as the prerogative of God to create. Nor can I believe that the real and proper power of forming any thing out of nothing is less than infinite, or that it can be communicated to any creature whatsoever. The light of nature and scripture fully agree in making this work an incommunicable prerogative of godhead: Nor can I persuade myself that God would give so much as a shadow of this glory to a mere creature who was not personally united to God, and thereby became one with God, lest it should too much intrench upon those divine titles, prerogatives and operations, whereby he distinguishes himself from his creatures. And upon this account I think it is a good proof that *Christ* is God, because the scripture joins him with the Father in the work of creation.

Yet there may be some proprieties and condecencies in it, that when this first-created spirit or soul of *Christ* was framed, and united to the divine nature, he should not be a mere idle or unactive spectator of the first works of God. But I chuse to represent this matter here no further in my own language, but propose it as it is represented by two great divines, doctor *Thomas Goodwin* and Mr. *Robert Fleming*.

Doctor *Goodwin* in his treatise of the "knowledge of God, page 177." asserts, That all things were created by *Christ*, "he having been some way the instrument, as he is *Christ* God-man, anointed, of the creation as well as, actually, of redemption." And though the doctor supposes the human nature to be then united to the godhead only in decree, yet he says concerning *Christ*, page 178. "If he were at all to be made a creature, it was his due personal privilege to have been first himself made, and himself to have been God's instrument in creation, and to have uttered those words which were spoken by God, "Let there be light:" But for other ends it was suspended." The same author makes it the title of chapter XI. page 180. "That *Christ* as God-man is the creator of all things, proved by scripture, viz, *1 Cor.* viii. 6. by whom are all things. *John* i. 1, 2, 3. "All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made." That the Logos or Word connotes the person sustaining before God the personage of God-man, by whom, as such, all things were created." And he interprets the eighth of *Proverbs* to the same sense.

If it be enquired, How it is possible that the human nature of *Christ*, even though it be united to the godhead, can have any thing to do in the work of creation, I might give an answer to it out of this author's own words, page 178. that is, *Christ* might utter those words, "Let there be light;" and as God's word and instrument might create all things, as he wrought miracles here on earth. Now to speak that word, "Let there be light," which the almighty power of God attended with divine efficacy, was a most illustrious honour put upon the human nature or soul of *Christ*; but surely it is not above the power of a creature to speak such a word.

It may be objected, "That no words could be spoken when there was no air to form the sound of a voice;" therefore in the description of *Moses* this language is metaphorical, and signifies the act of the will, or a volition that there should be light.

But as the doctor explains *Christ*'s instrumentality in the creation of the world by his way of working miracles, this may as well be applied to a volition of the soul,

as to a word of the tongue. We may suppose his human spirit might as well will there should be light, as when he cleansed the leper, *Matth. viii. 3.* he said, "I will, be thou clean." As in that miracle the human soul put forth this volition and the divine power performed the cure, so in the creation this same glorious spirit might have this honour put on it, as to exert such a volition concerning the several creatures, and the almighty power or godhead united to it seconded this volition with it's own creative efficacy.

Though the will of this human soul might have no more real influence in causing creatures to exist than the tongue of *Jesus* had in curing the leper, yet God may be said to "create all things by *Jesus Christ*, even as he wrought miracles by him; and *Jesus Christ* himself also may be properly called the creator, in as much as the divine nature, being personally united to the human soul, performed this work. Now the godhead cannot be said to give away any of it's own incommunicable prerogatives to a mere creature by any sublime expressions of this kind, which attribute the creation to *Christ*, because the soul of *Christ* is not a mere creature; for by it's near and intimate union to the divine nature, it becomes one with God: which honour is not given to any creature whatsoever, but to the man *Christ Jesus*.

This representation of things perhaps may prevent the surprising and offensive ideas which doctor *Goodwin's* expressions may raise on a sudden in the minds of those who are affrighted at every sound they have not been accustomed to hear.

Now surely if *Christ* considered as God-man by way of anticipation, or in the decree of God, be vested with this due dignity, and thus employed in creation, it can never be supposed that the actual existence of his human spirit, at that time in union with his godhead, should impair or diminish the due use of this privilege: and I am well assured, there is much more evidence in scripture that his soul was actually the "first-born of the creation," than there is that it was to have been so, and that this right was suspended four thousand years, which is doctor *Goodwin's* sense of the matter.

Mr. *Fleming* in his "christology," book III. chap. v. page 451. humbly supposes that the second person of the trinity was from all eternity pitched upon to be the grand organ of all the divine operations, "ad extra:" But since the second person is equally infinite as the Father and holy Spirit, it is inconceivable that he should be the immediate organ of the production of finite beings, any more than the other persons: Therefore a creature was formed that should have as much of divinity as was possible to be imparted to it; and since the very notion of a creature includes imperfection when compared with the creator, therefore this creature was personally united to the Son of God, and by virtue of this union and relation it has the name and designation of the Son of God. Hence it comes to pass, that sometimes the person of the Son of God is denoted by these names *Logos, Shekinah, memra*; at other times this organized creature is represented as the Son of God: Then he supposes the angels themselves as well as *Adam* were created by the second person acting through this glorious creature as an organ, and made after the image of this *Shekinah*, or original man, though with various degrees of perfection and resemblance. Thus "God made man in his own likeness." This was that intelligent being that appeared to angels, to *Adam*, to *Moses*, to the three martyrs in the fiery furnace, and he appeared in the same bright figure to the three apostles in the mount of transfiguration.

But rather than follow these great men all this length, and set my seal to every thing they propose, I chuse at present to say in the words of Mr. *Fleming*, That "to
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give a nice or exact adjustment of all these things, may be reserved to *Christ*, to teach us when we come to heaven." And as I am well assured of the doctrine of the deity of *Christ* from many scriptures, so if there be any thing which I have asserted that runs counter to that doctrine, I desire it to be expunged and forgiven.

Thus I have reckoned up two considerable advantages which may be derived from this doctrine of the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, viz. "That it explains and reconciles many dark and difficult passages of scripture, and it casts a new lustre upon other texts, whose beauty, justness, and propriety were not before so much observed." I proceed now to mention some other advantages of it.

Advantage III. Another argument for this doctrine, drawn from the consequences of it, is, That "it does exceedingly aggrandize the personal glory and dignity of our Lord *Jesus Christ*," of whom we never can have too high an esteem, while we keep within the bounds of scripture.

This supposition admits and confirms all the honours paid him by other hypotheses, and adds yet other honours to him. It allows him all the supreme dignity and perfection of the divine nature, and the titles and attributes of true God by virtue of the personal union, and it also better secures and maintains the honour of his deity, by guarding it from those inferior attributions and characters, which otherwise must be ascribed to it before his appearance in flesh; and this it doth by proposing a nature below godhead, which is a fitter subject of these attributions.

It allows him also all the honourable and peculiar prerogatives of his conception and the birth of his body, upon which account, as well as others, he was called the Son of God.

And besides this, it supposes his human soul to be a most illustrious spirit, which had a long prior glorious existence before his incarnation, and to be the first-born of the creation of God, and to have been present with the Father, surveying and approving of his works of creation, and perhaps also employed by him in adorning and disposing various parts of the new-created world, so far as any thing below pure godhead was capable of being employed in that work.

Perhaps it will be objected,

Objection. That this exalts his human nature indeed, and raises it as high as the *arians* have raised the notion of their Logos or soul of *Christ*, which they suppose to be the sublimest nature he has, and call it his godhead or divinity.

But it may be easily replied here,

Answer. And what if we do take in all the advantages which the *arians* so much boast of, and thereby support our own faith more honourably? This will bereave their scheme of it's fairest allurements and strongest supports. What if we do advance the human nature of *Christ* as high as their Logos? Yet whilst we strenuously maintain the necessity of true and proper godhead to belong to the person of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, in order to answer the many divine names, titles, attributes, operations and worship, which are ascribed to him in scripture, we can be in no danger of compliance with the *arian* error, which attributes all these divine characters to the man *Christ Jesus*, and denies his personal union to the godhead.

The aggrandizing of the man *Jesus* has not been esteemed dishonourable to his deity. Doctor *John Owen* affirms "the nature of the man *Christ Jesus* to be filled with all the divine graces and perfections whereof a limited created nature is capable, "Meditations on the glory of *Christ*, page 112." And doctor *Thomas Goodwin* asserts the

the man *Jesus*, by virtue of union to the divine nature, to be "as glorious a creature as can possibly be made by God, vol. III. book iii. chap. 7. page 104."

And what injury can it be to our holy religion, or what hurt can it do to the gospel of *Christ*, to suppose his soul to be as glorious and sublime a being as any thing can be which is not God? This is doing honour to the man whom God the Father delights to honour, and in whom the godhead dwells bodily: And while it wonderfully exalts our esteem of the human nature of *Christ*, it does not diminish the least degree of honour or adoration due to his deity.

Nor can any danger arise to the sacred doctrine of the satisfaction and atonement of *Christ*, from this exaltation of his personal excellencies and honours; but rather it sheds a new glory upon this doctrine, and renders our blessed Saviour so much the fitter to undertake that great, that glorious and dreadful work. Suppose it should be said that this human soul, this man *Jesus*, according to this opinion, is worth ten thousand of us, as the people said to *David*. Then certainly he is so much the more proper person to become a surety for ten thousands of sinners; his life is the more valuable sacrifice to redeem millions of lives; and the death of a man so transcendently excellent is a fitter price to ransom innumerable multitudes of men from death. Yet the infinite merit of his sufferings to satisfy for the infinite offences of mankind, in my judgment arises still from the dignity of his whole person, who is God as well as man, and includes in it the infinite deity united to a finite or created nature; and probably for this reason, was that expression used, *Acts* xx. 28. "God purchased the church with his own blood."

Advantage IV. "This doctrine greatly magnifies the self-denial and the condescending love of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, in his state of humiliation and death; it casts a thousand rays of glory upon all the scenes of his humbled estate; it makes his subjection and obedience to the will of the Father appear much more illustrious, and his charity and compassion to perishing mankind stand in a very surprising light."

Conceive of this glorious human spirit, the only begotten Son of God, who was vested with such dignity before the creation of the world, united personally to the divine nature, and thus adored by angels, appearing often to the patriarchs in the form of God, with rays of divine majesty, and governing the nation of *Israel*, or church of God during all the former ages: Behold this holy and happy spirit descending from heaven, to take upon him, not flesh only, but the likeness of SINFUL flesh; and according to the ancient covenant between him and his Father, now uniting himself to animal nature in very mean and despicable circumstances, and actually, really and sensibly feeling the hardships of poverty and a low estate: See that illustrious being who had been surrounded with ministering angels for many ages, coming into our world with all the marks of poverty and meanness: Behold one higher than angels, supreme above principalities and powers, thrones and heavenly dignities, made a little lower than angels, by being confined to flesh and blood, or made for a little while, *επαχθῶτε** lower than the angels, and even below the common rank of men, brought forth in a stable, beside the ox and the ass; this very being himself was united to the flesh and limbs of a helpless infant, wrapped in swaddling bands, and laid to sleep in a manger: See this glorious spirit who was replenished with all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge necessary for his illustrious pre-existent state, cramped and confined in it's operations by the feeble engine of the body of a babe, and willingly submitting to have a veil of darkness cast over it's
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* It is either for a short season, or in a small degree.

most sublime intellectual qualifications, and recover his ideas by human degrees: for the child "*Jesus* grew in wisdom and knowledge, as he grew in stature," *Luke* ii. 52. Contemplate this most excellent being enduring all the feeble and innocent frailties of an infant-state, wearing out the years of childhood among the poor and necessitous children in the lower ranks of life, himself the reputed son of a carpenter, and subject to his earthly parents; he that was with God when he built the heavens, and said, "Let there be light, the first among those sons of God who shouted for joy when he laid the foundations of the earth." Behold him now perhaps sweating and toiling with the saw and the hammer, as tradition tells us, to make ploughs and harrows and yokes for oxen: Consider this blessed soul, the antient ornament of heaven, and the brightest created spirit there, now spending thirty years together in utmost obscurity, who had lived for four thousand years in the midst of divine splendors: Trace him wandering through the villages from town to town, hungry, thirsty, and weary: Follow this illustrious man travelling on foot to preach the gospel, attended with a few poor fishermen, instead of the chariots of God and the legions of angels, legions and chariots that waited on him at mount *Sinai*, when in majesty and terror he delivered the law: Consider this very person abused, reproached, and called a blasphemer and a devil, who was the fairest image, and the delight of God his Father, and rejoicing always in his presence before the earth or her mountains were made: Look upon this innocent, this holy soul arraigned, at the impious tribunal of *Pilate*, and condemned to the shameful cross as a scandalous malefactor.

See the antient and original king of *Israel*, who had made *David* and *Solomon*, and all their race his deputies for many generations; see him crowned with thorns instead of glory; see him scourged, buffeted, nailed to the cursed tree between two thieves, his hands and feet pierced, his limbs stretched out in grievous torture, and himself groaning and expiring in blood and anguish.

Behold this original favourite forsaken of God his Father in that dreadful hour of darkness, and assaulted by the armies of hell with rage and impudence and horrid temptations: Think of this holy soul just departing, his soul by the force of exquisite torment perhaps driven out of the sacred mansion of his flesh, even that body which the Father had prepared for him; he was banished out of this world by those very criminals, those merciless rebels for whose salvation he came down to dwell in it.

Think of that antient darling of heaven, now made the sport of the *jewish* rabble, a sacrifice both to the fury of men and to the arrows of vindictive justice, while he was amazed with inward agonies, and "his soul exceeding sorrowful even unto death, when the sword of God awoke against the shepherd of his *Israel*, against the man that was his neighbour, his companion before the angels were made."

Collect all these strange and astonishing ideas together, survey them in one view, and say, how divinely glorious was the love of God in parting with such a Son from his bosom! How amazing was the condescension and self-denial of this glorious Saviour in giving himself for us! How inimitable was his submission to his heavenly Father's will! His zeal for his Father's honour, and his god-like charity and compassion to sinful man! When we contemplate his holy soul in his pre-existent and exalted state, foreknowing and surveying all these indignities, these agonies and deaths, and yet resolving to descend into flesh at his Father's proposal, and to endure them all for the redemption of sinners, to what an inconceivable height of sacred astonishment doth this raise all the wonders of his painful life and his love! and how doth it awaken all
that

that is tender in the bosom of a christian, and penetrate the very heart with divine affection and gratitude to the Son of God his Saviour!

When we conceive of this pre-existent soul of *Christ*, this glorious, this holy and happy spirit, with pleasure consenting to his Father's proposal of this most surprizing abasement and bloody agonies, it gives us an example of such profound humility, such absolute obedience to God his Father, and such unspeakable love to sinful men, as far surpasses the greatest instances that he ever gave, or ever was capable of giving while he was here upon earth, if we suppose, according to the common opinion, that he was merely born, and trained up for this service without his own previous consent. This idea of the love of *Christ* answers those sublime characters which the apostle gives of it, *Ephes. iii. 18, 19.* "It is a love that has lengths and breadths in it, that has heights and depths; it is a love that passes knowledge."

You will reply perhaps, "That most part of this representation is true in some sense, if you only suppose the divine nature of our Lord *Jesus Christ* existent before his incarnation, and consenting that his human nature should suffer all this." I answer,

Answer. Many of these things, by the help of tropes and figures, may be said concerning the deity of *Christ*, or God manifest in flesh; but if we leave out the figure of communication of properties, and speak in such plain and natural terms as scripture seems to use generally on this occasion, it signifies only "God's will that the man *Christ* should suffer these sorrows, and that the man *Jesus* passively consented to suffer them when it was revealed to him that he was born and made for this purpose." But the divine nature itself could really suffer nothing of all this; the utmost condescension of the godhead was, that it stood related to the man who endured these sufferings: And infinite condescension it was indeed, for God manifest in the flesh to be thus dishonoured and unglorified. But the godhead itself is impassible still, and cannot really suffer pain or loss; nor undergo proper sensible humiliation, shame or sorrow.

Whereas by aggrandizing the human nature of *Christ*, by this doctrine of his pre-existent state, we see that very same glorious being itself who suffered all this, actually leaving the bosom or beatifying presence of his Father, really divesting himself of his primeval glories and joys in the literal sense, and without a figure, and freely devoting his very self to all these calamitous circumstances: We see that very same spirit descending from heaven to take a body upon him that he might be capable of all these various stages of misery, and of sustaining these scenes of sorrow, anguish and death, persevering in his resolutions till the dreadful work was all finished.

Now where we can explain the language of scripture in a literal and proper sense, where we can also by this literal sense do unspeakable honour to God the Father and his love in sending such a Son, to *Jesus* the Saviour, and his grace in coming down from heaven to suffer such sorrows, and at the same time, can lay a just foundation for raising our own love and zeal, and gratitude both to the Father and the Son, to such unknown and superior degrees, and can set before our eyes such an astonishing example of humility, charity, and self-denial; surely these are such advantages to the christian scheme, and such honours to the blessed gospel, as should not be slightly rejected.

It should be also considered that the *arians* raise a very common and plausible objection against the vulgar explication of the trinity and the divinity of *Christ*, because that scheme allows no real self emptying, no literal and proper abasement and suffering of the Son of God, but only a relative abasement by being united to the man who

did suffer. The author of the "sober appeal to a turk or an indian," endeavours to expose the common scheme of the doctrine of the trinity; because it supposes only a "relative humiliation, a relative or nominal suffering of the Son of God by his uniting himself to a man, while he himself really suffered nothing, underwent no diminution, but was all the while possessed of the highest glory, and of the same unchangeable blessedness, page 145." Whereas this doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul of *Christ* sets the whole scheme of the self-denial and sufferings of *Christ*, in as glorious and advantageous a light as their doctrine can pretend to do; and yet at the same time secures the divinity of *Christ*, together with all the honours of it's condescending grace, by supposing this pre-existent soul always personally united to his divine nature. Thus all this sort of pretences for the support of the *arian* error is destroyed at once, by admitting this doctrine.

Advantage V. This doctrine of the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, not only casts a new lustre upon several parts of the gospel, and displays the glories of the person of *Christ*, and the wonders of his love in a fairer light, but it also "enables us to defend the doctrine of the deity of *Christ* with greater justice and success against many other cavils of the *socinian* and *arian* writers:" For while we keep this doctrine in our eye, we are by no means constrained to interpret any expression in the old testament concerning the divine nature of *Christ*, which carries in it something inferior to the majesty of godhead: Here we have a subject proper to receive these meaner attributions. There is no need to call the mere godhead of *Christ* a man, an angel, a messenger; there is no need to animate a human shape with pure deity in order to wrestle with *Jacob*, to eat and drink with *Abraham*, to appear in the form of a flame in the bush to *Moses*, to travel through the wilderness on a cloudy pillar in the sight of all *Israel*, in order to direct the motion of their camp: There is no need to suppose the pure godhead talking with *Joshua*, and conversing familiarly with *Gideon*, nor holding a plumb-line in his hand while he stood upon the wall in the view of *Amos*.

The *arian* will tell us, that these things seem to be too mean and low condescensions for the great God of heaven and earth to practise; and thence they infer, that the person to whom these things are ascribed cannot be true God. Behold then this glorious Spirit, the Son of God, the soul of *Jesus Christ*, the man personally united to the divine nature appearing to perform these actions, to sustain these inferior characters, and to solve all this difficulty; and yet he is rightly called God, Lord, *Jehovah*, and has the perfections and honours of godhead ascribed to him; for he is God as well as man, though his human nature is the immediate agent in these inferior transactions.

Advantage VI. As this doctrine casts a beauty upon various passages of scripture, and upon the whole scheme of the christian faith, so "there is not one scripture, nor one point or article of our faith that can receive any evil influence from it, no dangerous consequences, that I know of, can possibly attend it. Some of the most zealous and learned defenders of the sacred trinity have acknowledged to me, that they could see no danger of heresy in it, nor any injury to sacred truth, though they themselves had not seen this doctrine yet in a convincing light.

And as there is no article of the christian faith that is endangered by it, so "neither does it alter any of the particular schemes of doctrine which divines of various parties have espoused." You may still follow the sentiments of *John Calvin*, or *Arminius*, or the intermediate schemes of *monsieur Amyrald* and *Mr. Baxter*; for this doctrine makes no innovation in all the peculiar matters of dispute between these great men, but sets the whole contrivance of our salvation according to any of their schemes

schemes in a better light, and throws perhaps an impartial brightness upon the gospel, though it should be explained in any of their particular methods.

“Nor does it in the least interfere with any particular schemes which men have invented to solve the difficulties of the blessed doctrine of the trinity.” If this sentiment of pre-existence be allowed, the godhead of the sacred persons may still be explained, either according to the antient *athanasian* scheme, which bishop *Pearson*, and bishop *Bull* have defended; or according to the modern or scholastic *athanasianism*, which doctor *Cheynell*, doctor *Owen*, doctor *South*, bishop *Stillingfleet*, and others have well displayed; or according to the hypothesis of doctor *Fowler*, the late bishop of *Gloucester*; or that of the late learned Mr. *John Howe*; or according to the sentiments of the great and learned doctor *John Wallis*, an eminent member of the assembly of divines. This sentiment of the pre-existent soul of *Christ* has a friendly aspect upon any scheme that maintains the godhead of the sacred three; and may be easily assumed and ingrafted into any one of them: But the *socinian* and *arian* errors are inconsistent with it, as I have explained it.

To conclude this last set of arguments on this subject, I beg leave briefly to recapitulate them in this manner. There are many dark and difficult texts of scripture which have puzzled interpreters in several ages, and which have hung heavy upon the various schemes that support the doctrine of the deity of *Christ*. Now suppose there could be one single clue found out, which leads us into such a solution of all these difficulties, and such an interpretation of these scriptures, which has the following advantages attending it, viz.

1. Which gives the most natural and obvious, and literal sense; so that every common reader that had no pre-conceived notions or schemes of thought, would readily run into at the very hearing of it:
2. Which puts learned men to no trouble of figures and metaphors, such as “prophecies;” that is, speaking of things before they are done; or “catachreses,” that is, calling the eternal God, without actual union to human nature, a man, or an angel, or a messenger, a captain, &c.
3. Which is most consistent with, and most agreeable to all other parts of the word of God, both in the old testament and in the new, and renders the exposition of many other texts easier and plainer than before, and sets the several parts of scripture in a beautiful harmony:
4. Which interferes with no particular scheme of divinity, nor makes any alterations in the important articles of our faith: And thus it does not widen the common differences of the several parties of christians, but freely allows each of them their own sentiments in the common controversies of religion: And yet,
5. Which assists us to answer the objections of our opponents against the divinity of our blessed Saviour, and also allures them to embrace the truth:
6. Which aggrandizes the personal glories of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and raises his condescension and his love to most amazing degrees:
7. Which spreads a new lustre over the whole gospel of *Christ*, and the various transactions recorded in the word of God;

I say, suppose such a single clue were found out to lead us into the understanding of the holy scripture in such a manner as I have described, I would humbly ask, whether it does not bid fair for the truth of gospel, and the very meaning of the sacred writers? And whether it has not sufficient force and allurement in it to invite our assent? Such is the doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul of *Christ*.

S E C T I O N VI.

Objections answered.

WHEN any doctrine has been proved by sufficient force of argument, there may be still various difficulties that remain to perplex it. But if those difficulties are not of equal force or evidence with the arguments that have been before produced for the support of it, we may reasonably give our assent to the doctrine, and wait until providence may afford a fairer light to scatter the clouds that hang upon it. There is one learned author*, who has written upon this subject, speaks with so much freedom as to tell us, that "in this doctrine of the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, the difficulty of every thing vanishes, except that of bringing men off from expounding the scripture by human authorities as the key of divine oracles; and without doubt, saith he, there the difficulty will lie, when all is said." So confident is he of the truth of it, and that on solid and sufficient reason.

However, that I may make it appear that the difficulties and objections which attend this doctrine may have a fair solution given them, I have left the last section for this purpose, in which they are ranged in a fair just order; and I hope the opposers, if any such be found, will have no reason to complain that I have not displayed them in their complete light and strength; and perhaps by this means the tender and scrupulous christian may have some stumbling-blocks removed that lay in his way, and be more easily induced to receive this doctrine, and to pay proper honour to our blessed Lord.

Objection I. "Is not *Christ* frequently in scripture called a man? Now this glorious being with such extensive powers as you describe, is something above a human soul; it is far above angels, and therefore though it be united to a body it will not make a man."

Answer I. The name of man denotes a nature, which is made up of a mind or spirit united to an animal body in human shape. But the name angel signifies originally a messenger, and denotes the character of an office sustained by a spirit, either with, or rather without a human body, and is most frequently so used in scripture; though angels have often appeared in human shapes, being appointed by the great God to assume such a shape on proper occasions.

Answer II. All the idea which I have of a human soul is this, viz. A created mind or spirit which hath understanding and will, and rational powers, and which is fit to be united to a human body, in such a manner as to exert the powers of a man, to feel the appetites and sensibilities and passions of a man, as to receive impressions or sensations, whether pleasant or painful, by the means of that body, and is also able to actuate and influence all the animal powers of that body in a way agreeable to human nature. Now though the powers of the human soul of *Christ* may be as much superior to the most exalted man or angel, as the powers of the most exalted man are superior to the powers of an idiot; yet this does not hinder it from being properly called a human soul, supposing it still capable of, and fit for such an union to a human body, as I have described.

Answer

* Mr. *Joseph Huxley*, who was really a man of learning, though he had some odd and peculiar sentiments.

Answer III. The powers of the human soul of *Christ* in his now glorified state are represented in the word of God to be so extensive beyond and above men or angels, that might give as just an occasion for this objection as any thing I have asserted concerning his pre-existent state, and yet he is still a man. What large and comprehensive faculties of understanding and will may be communicated to a glorified creature, is far above our skill to determine: Now *Christ* was in glory, or was a glorified creature before he was in flesh, even before the world was made, *John* xvii. 5. And therefore his antient powers in the pre-existent state might be very great, and yet his soul might still be a human soul.

But if no mere creature were capable of such powers and honours as are attributed to *Christ* in his exalted state, yet we cannot determine what vast and amazing capacities such a creature may be endued with, who was always personally united to God; and it is in this view, it is *Christ* as a man united to godhead, who has such extensive powers as may fit him to govern, and to judge the world, as I have shewn in a former discourse, to which I refer the reader. See pages 772—801.

I add further, that it was the perusal and study of some of those scriptures wherein so vast and extensive a knowledge and power are attributed to the man *Jesus* in his present glorified state, that led the way to my more easy belief of the powers and glories of his antient state of pre-existence: And thence I thought I might infer, that since the man who has these amazing glories and powers now, was once without them here on earth; therefore the same human soul might be with God the Father from the beginning of the world; might enjoy some part of these powers and glories, and yet for a season divest himself of them at his incarnation, and then be restored to them again with a most illustrious addition as a reward of his sufferings, *John* xvii. 5.

Objection II. Some persons have been ready to cry out against this doctrine, as though it supposed the “pre-existent nature or natures of *Christ* to be united to a mere carcass, if it were united only to an animal body without a soul or spirit.”

Answer I. In antient and more ignorant ages, this might perhaps be a stumbling-block to some weaker philosophers, who would mingle their mistaken philosophy with their christianity, and falsely imagined that an animal body was a mere dead carcass, without some immaterial being in it, some superior vital soul or spirit: But in the present age, when it is generally believed by the best philosophers, that animal bodies may have animal life in and of themselves, and all correspondent animal motions and powers, without any spiritual intelligent thinking substance superadded to them, this objection vanishes. *Christ*'s pre-existent soul, united to his divine nature, assumed a living animal human body when he became incarnate; for it is now agreed that the human thinking rational soul does not give animal life to the organized body, which life arises from the circulation of the blood, inspiration and expiration of air, &c.

Answer II. But suppose the human body were lifeless, without a rational soul, why may not *Christ*'s rational pre-existent soul be united to this body, and give life to it as well as a new created soul? Therefore this objection vanishes in all the views of it.

Objection III. “How can you suppose so glorious a being as you have described, who was present at the creation of the world, who governed the nation of *Israel*, and transacted the affairs of the church for four thousand years, should lose all it's vast treasures of ideas, and it's extensive faculties, and become ignorant as a human infant, and

and grow up by degrees to knowledge and wisdom? Yet this is asserted concerning Christ in his childhood," *Luke ii. 52.* *Jesus increased in wisdom and stature."*

Answer. If such a sentiment as this can be fairly accounted for according to reason and scripture, then the objectors must allow that it adds a most astonishing lustre to the humility, condescension, self-denial and love of our blessed Lord. Now let us see whether it may not be explained according to the common laws of union between a human soul and body.

Amongst these laws of this union, which are appointed by God our Creator, it is evident from manifold experience that this is one, viz. "That though the soul may have in itself ever so rich ideas, or powers ever so glorious and extensive, yet while it is united to animal nature in this manner, it can exert them to no farther than the organs of the animal will admit, or than those organs are fit to assist in such operations." There have been many instances wherein persons of eminence and skill in arts or sciences, have had the brain, with all the traces and images which were impressed upon it, so confounded by some disease, that they have lost almost all their ideas, and all their skill; they have forgot even their native language, and they knew not their own names: Sometimes by slow degrees they have recovered their ideas and words again, and perhaps in some years have arrived at their former excellencies; the brain has recovered it's old traces and images again, and the soul has recognized them with pleasure, and that in much less time than it was first employed in acquiring them.*

Yet further, let us suppose the soul of the greatest philosopher or mathematician united to the body of a new-born infant: This soul would find no images or traces on the brain of the babe correspondent to his antient ideas; but on the other hand it would receive incessant impressions and sensations from this infant brain, according to the laws of union, derived from the sensible objects around it, or the natural inward motions and appetites that attend the infant state; and thus all it's antient and learned ideas would be as it were obliterated for a season, or rather concealed and overwhelmed, or buried by the impetuous impressions of animal nature, and by the constant importunity of such sensations and images as belong to a new-born child.

It is true indeed that such a learned soul would recover it's own ideas by much swifter degrees than one that had never possessed them; and it would form proper traces and images on the young human brain with much greater speed and facility than other children could attain them, whose souls never had these learned ideas.

And is it not possible that this may be the case of the holy child *Jesus*? His glorious soul might submit to have it's former numerous and sublime ideas as it's first union to animal nature, so concealed and overwhelmed by the importunate and overbearing impressions of infant-animal nature, that it might recover them again only by such degrees as flesh and blood would admit; and thus he was "made for a little while lower than angels," as *Heb. ii. 9.* and so might "grow in wisdom and know-

* This may be represented by an easy similitude. Suppose an organist of exquisite skill in music should have all the pipes of his instrument filled with mud, he could neither excite with his hand, nor receive with his ear, any of those rich varieties of sound which belong to the organ, until by degrees the bellows and pipes were cleansed; and thus by degrees he would form and hear broken pieces of tunes, until the muddy obstacle being quite removed, the grateful harmony will be recovered, and the former skill of the organist appear.

knowledge and stature together," as in *Luke* ii. 52. And indeed if we compare this with *Isa.* ix. 6. and *Isa.* vii. 14, 15. those verses may be naturally explained to this sense. He was a child born, he was a son given; a virgin conceived and bare a son, and called his name *Immanuel*: "Butter and honey did he eat, that he might know to refuse the evil and chuse the good;" that is, he was nourished with the common food which they gave young children, that he might grow up by degrees to human understanding, and knowledge of distinction between good and evil.

It seems also agreeable to the history of the gospel, that our blessed Lord attained the knowledge of things by much swifter degrees, and far greater facility than common children; for at twelve years old he was found discoursing with the doctors in the temple: And when he first preached to the *jews*, they wondered how this man should "know letters having never learned," *John* vii. 15. And then in his manly state, he knew his near relation to God, and his pre-existent glory, as man yof his own speeches testify. According to this representation, Mr. *Fleming* in his "christology, book III. page 455." supposes "the notices of former things to be so far obliterated from the memory of this glorious spirit, as was just necessary to his being fitted for a state of trial in a human body. But he did so far remember his former exaltation and glory in general, as frequently to mention it, and to plead it sometimes in prayer to his Father;" particularly in *John* xvii. 5.

I am not so fond of this representation of things as to persuade myself that my readers will readily receive such a strange alteration of scenes passing over the soul of our blessed Lord; especially if they have never accustomed their understandings to indulge any opinion different from the common track: Yet I can declare solemnly, that after my best searches into the word of God, I can see nothing unscriptural, absurd or dangerous in such a representation; and I am well assured it gives the highest honour to our blessed redeemer for this surprizing instance of his obedience to his Father, and condescending love to mankind: Nor is there any thing we can imagine that will set his admirable self-denial and humility, and his inimitable love in a nobler light; or more aggrandize the love of the Father in parting with such a son out of his bosom, and confining him to such a state of union to a body and such amazing humiliation.

Objection IV. "Is it not said frequently in the new testament, that *Christ* was exalted to glory and honour, and to the government of all things after his resurrection, as a reward of his sufferings and death? Now if the human soul of *Christ* in it's pre-existent state, being in union with the divine nature, had glory and happiness before the world was, and might be employed in most glorious works, even at the creation of the world, and afterwards in the works of providence; then how can this excellent spirit be said to be exalted as a reward of his sufferings, by having the government of the world given to him after his resurrection, or by being advanced to glory and honour and happiness in heaven?"

Answer I. I have already shewn, that how great and glorious soever the powers of *Christ* were before his incarnation, yet he might be made governor not only of the church, or of God's chosen people the *jews*, during all former ages of his pre-existent state, and thus he was called the king of the *jews*; but after his sufferings he was advanced to sovereignty over all nations, and made "head over all things, and all nations of mankind for the church's sake," *Eph.* i. 22.

Answer

Answer II. What affairs he transacted, and what honours he received during his pre-existent state among the children of men, was, for the most part, in his Father's name, and as sustaining the character and person of God his Father, : Now since his sufferings and death he is advanced to receive these honours in his own name, as well as raised to a government of much larger extent. Before the creation he had no honour from creatures, and after the creation he had not such sublime and distinct honours paid to his human nature before his incarnation, as he has now in heaven.

Answer III. It is very plain that though the human soul of *Christ* might enjoy a glorious degree of honour and happiness before his incarnation, yet having properly the nature of a human soul, it could not arrive at it's perfection of appointed happiness, but by it's union with a human body ; even as the spirits of departed saints enjoy a glorious degree of honour and happiness in the world of spirits ; yet neither their honour nor happiness is complete until the resurrection, when they shall be rejoined to immortal bodies, and their happiness and honour shall be completed by unknown sensations of pleasure. Besides, that sensible survey, those various sensations and eye-sight of their own exaltation, which they acquire by the means of their union to a glorified body, is a farther kind of honour and happiness than in a separate state they were capable of.

Thus the human soul of *Christ* having passed through the sorrows of life, and the painful sensations that arose from it's union to our flesh in such poor and infirm circumstances, having suffered shame and reproach, and a thousand indignities from men, and having felt the agonies of death as a ransom for them, was exalted both to greater honour and greater happiness at his resurrection and ascension, by being united to a body raised in power and in glory, than he could have been without it.

1. He was exalted to greater degrees of happiness, by receiving all that intense pleasure, and those unknown sensations of delight, which are capable of being conveyed to a spirit by the medium of a body, a glorious body ; and this as a reward of his sensations of pain in the body of his humiliation.

2. It is most probable that he is and shall be exalted also to greater degrees of honour, by seeing and hearing, or taking in perhaps by some corporeal methods, all the honours done to him by the whole human and material creation, and in beholding with a vast and comprehensive survey, all the subjection and obedience of the known and unknown worlds of spirits dwelling in flesh, paid to him ; and particularly all the acclamations and worship of all the glorified saints paid to his divine person as dwelling in a human body, and this as a reward of that shame and reproach, and those uneasy passions which he might sustain in animal nature in his humbled state.

Thus it appears how the soul of *Jesus Christ*, though it had very great powers and dignities and blessedness in it's pre-existent state, yet may receive a most sensible addition to it's honours and happinesses when he was raised from the dead and ascended to heaven in a glorified body. There are parallel instances in scripture which confirm this account of things, *John xvii. 22.* our Saviour says, "The Father loved him before the foundation of the world ;" and yet his Father's love is said to be continued to him, and to be bestowed on him, on the account of this obedience, *John xiv. 10.* "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." *John x. 17.* "Therefore doth my

my

my Father love me because I lay down my life." We must naturally suppose this to imply some additional instances and effects of the Father's love bestowed, or to be bestowed on *Christ*, because of his obedience unto death: And what additional instances, manifestations or effects of the Father's love did the man *Jesus* receive, if his exaltation to superior degrees of honour and glory in heaven be not reckoned among them?

Objection V. "If the human soul of *Christ* had a being before his incarnation, how comes it to be expressed, that God was manifest in the flesh, and that the Word was God, and this Word was made flesh? Would it not have been much more proper to say, the soul of our Lord *Jesus Christ* was thus made flesh, or manifested in flesh?"

Answer I. The most usual way of expressing the incarnation of *Christ* is, by representing the Son of God as "coming in the flesh, *Christ* coming into the world, the Son of God made of a woman, the Son of God sent into this world, &c." This is the most frequent language of the new testament: Now these words do most properly include, if not chiefly denote, the soul of *Christ* under the character of the *Messiah*. This was the Son of God which was intimately united to flesh and blood. It is possible that the name, Son of God, may not so directly refer to the godhead of *Christ*, as it does to his human soul and his body; for since the idea of sonship carries in it the notion of derivation and dependence, and inferiority, we should not without great necessity apply such ideas to godhead, whose very nature is to be supreme, underived and independent. This hath been made to appear more at large in an essay on that name "the Son of God." See pages 647—673.

It is granted there are two or three places which represent the divine nature or God himself as appearing in the flesh; and this may be written in those few places, with a special design to aggrandize the mystery of the incarnation, and spread a divine glory over it: always remembering that it is a great truth that "God himself was incarnate," though the more immediate subject of union to flesh was the human soul.

Answer II. It might be noted also, that that evangelical interpreter of scripture doctor *Goodwin* explains the Logos or Word, even as it is described in the first chapter of St. *John's* gospel, so as to include the idea of God-man, and to take in the human nature of *Christ* as well as the divine, when "the Word was with God, and when all things were made by him." That author indeed supposes the human nature to be united at that time only in the divine idea, and by way of "prolepsis" or anticipation: But if we suppose the term Logos or Word to include the human soul then actually united to the divine nature, which doctor *Goodwin* takes only proleptically, then it will follow that when the evangelist adds, verse 14. "The Word was made flesh," or took a body upon him, he plainly includes the incarnation both of the human soul and the godhead together. The Logos, that is, the human soul united to godhead, or if you chuse rather to say the eternal Word in union with the human soul, became incarnate.

Objection VI. "This doctrine expounds some of those scriptures to another sense, which were wont to be employed for the defense of the divinity of *Christ*, and that by applying them to his pre-existent soul: It exalts his human nature indeed, but perhaps it weakens the sacred article of his divine nature, by withdrawing some of the proofs of it."

Answer. There are many and sufficient arguments drawn from the word of God to support the deity of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, which cannot with any evidence or truth or justice be turned to another sense, and indeed it is by such arguments as

these that doctrine must be established, for if it be possible with fairness or justice to the text and context to interpret a scripture otherwise, and apply it merely to the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, it can never be a convincing and effectual proof of his divinity.

It is no injury to any cause to remove those arguments from it which are in themselves feeble and unsupported, lest when the adversary finds several of them trifling and utterly insufficient he should be tempted to despise all the rest. If there be any of those scriptures which are used to prove any doctrine that in their most natural, most proper, and most rational sense, and in their relation to the context do rather signify something else, then they had much better be dropped or left out in the proof of that doctrine.

So if these scriptures cited in this discourse are in a much more natural and proper, easy and obvious manner applied to the pre-existent soul of *Christ* than they are or can be to the pure divine nature, then it is better to drop them in that argument than to insist upon them, for all the reason in the world will lead us to give them the most obvious and natural exposition, and apply them to this pre-existent spirit. We ought not to deal falsely with the word of God, nor give it an unfair and improbable sense under pretence of supporting the greatest truth. The gospel of *Christ* needs not our feeble artifices.

It should be observed also, that several of those passages of scripture, which may be applied to the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, cannot properly be applied to it considered alone by itself without the personal union to his godhead, such are those *Col. i. 15—19. Heb. i. 3—8. Prov. viii. 22—31.* And in this view they continue to support the divinity of *Christ*, as well as they did before: And in my opinion when they are set in this light, they render these proofs of his divinity more defensible, and at once maintain the sacred idea of *Christ* our mediator as the great "Theanthropos" or God-man.

Objection VII. "Some may imagine, and have been ready to object, That this notion paves the way to lead us into the *arian* camp, since it agrees in so many parts with their sentiments of their Logos, which they call the divine nature of *Christ*."

Answer. This objection has been answered in part already; nor is there any such danger while we maintain the necessity of the union of the divine nature to this pre-existent spirit in order to make it capable of several names, titles, honours and prerogatives that are ascribed to it in scripture, which are incommunicably divine.

But on the other hand, why may not the charity of a reader give it another turn, and say, "It paves the way for the *arians* to come into the sentiments of the orthodox, and believe the divinity of *Christ*," since it removes some of their greatest bars and objections against our common faith? It transplants their strongest allurements and fairest colours of argument into our own doctrine, and thereby renders their pretences to support their own scheme more feeble, ineffectual and needless. It enjoys the advantages which their scheme pretends to, without any of those difficulties and inconveniencies with which their opinion is incumbered.

And I cannot but hope that if ever the modern refiners of the *arian* error are allured and drawn to receive the truth, it must be by the means of this doctrine and the happy consequences which attend it. Perhaps if this doctrine had been set in it's fairest light, and published to the world in the days of the *nicene* council, it might have prevented the fatal and bloody contests that succeeded in the following ages; it might have been a happy medium in the providence of God to have reconciled the ancient *arians* to the catholic faith. This is the sentiment of the late
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reverend and learned writer Mr. Robert Fleming in his discourse on this subject, in his third volume of "christology."

Objection VIII. "Could such a doctrine as this be true, and yet the disciples of *Christ* know nothing of it in our Saviour's life-time, nor the apostles express it in plainer language in their writings, nor the primitive Fathers declare it as the sentiment of the church, nor even our own divines in these enlightened days since the reformation proclaim it to the world?"

Answer. As for the disciples during the life of *Christ*, they may be supposed to have the same opinions concerning the soul of the *Messiah*, which many of the *jews* had in and before their times; and that was, that the *Messiah's* soul was formed from the beginning of the world*: and if they thought all human souls had a pre-existence, which some learned men suppose, then doubtless they believed the soul of *Christ* to have the same prerogative.

Besides the several expressions which our Saviour used concerning "his coming down from heaven, his returning thither again, his being sent by the Father not to do his own will, his praying for the restoration of a glory which he had before the world was, and his speaking of the love of God which he enjoyed before the foundations of the world," all these expressions might justly and naturally lead them into the idea of the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, since it is pretty evident that they had but very little thought or belief of his divine nature before his resurrection. Some of their own expressions seem to intimate their assent to this doctrine of his pre-existent soul, when they tell him, "Now we are sure that thou comest forth from God," *John* xvi. 28, 29, 30. And they seemed to understand him in the literal sense, and without a parable or figure, when he told them, "He came forth from the Father, and came into this world, but he was now leaving this world, and returning to the Father."

As for the writings of the apostles *St. Peter* and *Paul*, these seem to manifest this doctrine, if the exposition which I have given of various parts of their epistles be just and true. The apostle *John* speaking so often of *Christ's* coming in the flesh, seems to manifest that this was his conception of the matter, as though he supposed his soul to have an existence before.

As for the primitive writers of christianity of the first two or three hundred years, they express themselves in so inaccurate and confused a manner concerning the pre-

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* Bishop *Fowler* cites this passage from an ancient book of the *jews* called *Pesikta*, "After God had created the world, he put his hand upon the throne of his glory, and brought out the soul of the *Messiah*, with all his attendants, and said to him, Wilt thou heal and redeem my sons after six thousand years? He answered, I am willing so to do. Again therefore God said unto him, And art thou willing to suffer chastisements for the purging away their iniquities? And the soul of the *Messiah* answered, I will suffer them, and that with all my heart."

The late doctor *Thomas Burnet* of the *Charter-house* in his book "De statu mortuorum & resurgentium," page 249. speaks thus, "Judæi & inter patres, &c. that is, the *jews* and some among the christian fathers have determined, that the soul of the *Messiah* had an existence before his incarnation, and before the very origin of the *jewish* nation, before the law, and through the whole oeconomy of the law and the prophets." Now if they supposed this soul joined with the *Logos*, by which he means his divine nature, they might well agree that this was the *spirit* of the patriarchs and the prophets, and that these motions and returns from heaven to earth, and his appearances whether in human shape or not, may be attributed to the *Messiah*, which can never belong to mere divinity. And indeed I can scarce understand *Justin Martyr* and other of the fathers, who from the invisibility, infinity and omnipresence of God the Father would prove that he never appeared, neither could he descend or ascend, or change his place: for unless the soul of the *Messiah* did pre-exist in union with the *Logos*, that is, his divinity, I cannot see how these arguments, drawn from invisibility and omnipresence, can be of any force with regard to God the Father any more than to God the Son.

existent nature of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, that it is hard to say what was their sense, or whether they had any uniform, regular and settled ideas on this subject. Sometimes their language plainly denotes some pre-existent nature of *Christ* to be truly divine, and part of the very essence of God the Father, even his mind, his wisdom, &c. others of their speeches seem to sink it far below the dignity of godhead when they speak of his temporal generation and derivation from God as the author and cause of his being, from which the *arian* writers have taken occasion to suppose they were engaged on their side. Now as this doctrine of the pre-existent soul of *Christ* united to true godhead, happily reconciles many difficult places of scripture, so perhaps if it were wisely applied upon a diligent review of the writings of some of the fathers, this same doctrine might reconcile some of their strange expressions which seem contradictory and inconsistent: at least I am sure it would have secured them from some of the absurdities which they seem to have fallen into.

It is worthy of our notice, that many if not most of the ancient *antenicene* fathers, when they spake of the generation of the Son, understand by it a voluntary generation or manifestation some time before the world began, in order to create that world: though they suppose the divine Logos or Word to exist in God, or in and with the Father from all eternity. That great and zealous defender of the *athanasian* faith, the learned doctor *Waterland*, allows this in his citation from several of those fathers; see "Second defense of the queries," pages 104, 107, 283—292. and his third defense, page 25. Particularly *Ignatius* had this idea of the generation of the Son. *Justin Martyr* speaks of no generation higher than that voluntary ante-mundane generation otherwise called manifestation. The Logos became a Son according to *Justin*, by voluntary appointment; it is the procession makes him a Son, and that was voluntary. The Son proceeded light of light in time according to *Justin*, and according to many more beside him, particularly *Hippolytus*, and perhaps even the *nicene* fathers. *Tatian* who was *Justin's* scholar, speaks only of a temporal generation or procession. And *Athenagoras* and *Theophilus* speak of no higher generation than this. *Clemens of Alexandria* and *Tertullian* may be both allowed to go upon the same hypothesis, and *Hippolytus* was undoubtedly of the same mind, for he says, "The Father begat the Son when he willed and as he willed," that is, sent or shewed him to the world. *Tertullian* supposes the "sonship properly to commence with his procession, so that the Logos became a Son in time, and was not yet a Son until he came out to create."

We might ask here now, whether all these expressions may not be reconciled, if we suppose the deity of the second person of the trinity, as some persons have done, to be an eternal divine principle in godhead, which is represented in scripture as a person called his Logos or sophia, his word or his wisdom: and that some time before the creation of the world, God created, generated, or caused to exist the human soul of *Jesus Christ* in an immediate union with this word or divine principle, and gave the whole complexum the same name, viz. the Logos or Word, and ordained this glorious being, viz. his own divine Word or Logos united to the human spirit, to operate in creating and adorning the world, the human spirit having a subserviency herein to the divine principle, so far as it was possible for any thing beneath God to be employed in an inferior or ministerial manner in such sublime and divine work. Does not this give a fair, a natural and easy explication of these glorious expressions of scripture concerning our Lord *Jesus Christ*, that "by him God made the worlds, and created all things by him, and without him was nothing made that
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that was made?" For the name *Jesús Christ* seems to imply something more than the mere divine power or principle called the Word.

But I retreat, and mention no more of any attempt to give a particular idea of the divine nature of *Christ*, since this doctrine of his human soul's early existence is consistent with any known scheme of explaining his true and real deity.

Origen seems to be a believer of the pre-existent soul of *Christ*, when he says, "Perhaps the soul of the Son in it's perfection was in God and his fulness, and coming out thence when he was sent by the Father, took a body of *Mary*;" and again, upon these words of *John* the baptist, "After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me," *John* i. 30. He says thus, that it is spoken of *Christ*, "that we may learn that the man [or manhood] also of the Son of God, mixed with his divinity, had a prior subsistence to his birth of the virgin." *Origen* also seems to allow this human soul to be the first created; for speaking of the formation of wisdom before the world, he says, God created *Ἐμπύχου σοφίας*, "An animated wisdom, or wisdom with a soul." And this opinion appeared so very reasonable, that we find some marks of it in the later centuries. For the author of the "meditations, called *St. Austin's*," distinguishes between eternal wisdom the Son of God, and the first created wisdom; which he makes to be a rational and intellectual mind. See more of this kind in the learned doctor *Knights*'s "Primitive christianity vindicated," in answer to *Mr. Whiston*, page 45.

But after all, though it be a doctrine, that has so many happy advantages attending it, yet it is not necessary in order to make a man a christian, and therefore many primitive christians might not believe it. It casts a beauty indeed upon the whole christian faith, but it does not make a part of the essence of it. Now there are many such beautiful doctrines which might have a veil of darkness or confusion thrown upon them very early in the christian church, especially amidst the reign of *Antichrist*, and again after some ages may emerge into light and entertain the christians of such a later age with the brightness and pleasure of them: How was the doctrine of the millennium long obscured, that is, "the happy state of the church before the end of the world?" It was known and believed in the first centuries, but after the third it was counted a sort of heresy for several ages; and yet now it has arisen into further evidence, and has obtained almost universal assent, so this doctrine of *Christ's* pre-existent soul, though it might have lain dormant several ages, yet since that excellent man doctor *Henry More* has published it near threescore years ago in his "great mystery of godliness," it has been embraced, as bishop *Fowler* asserts, "by many of our greatest divines, as valuable men as our church can boast of; though most of them have been too sparing in owning it, for fear, I suppose, of having their orthodoxy called in question."

The most modern authors and writings which have professed this doctrine publicly, are these that follow*.

1. Doctor *Henry More*, of "the mystery of godliness."
2. Doctor *Edward Fowler*, bishop of *Gloucester*: in his "discourse of the descent of the man *Christ Jesús* from heaven," and his "reflexions on the examiner of this discourse," [doctor *William Sherlock*, dean of *St. Paul's*.]
3. A "defense of the bishop's discourse, by a presbyter of the church of *England*."
4. A "second defense, by the publisher of the first."

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* Note, This was written at least twenty or thirty years ago, many more persons may be now found who have acknowledged it.

5. Mr. *Robert Fleming* in his first and third volumes of "christology."
6. A very great man cited, but nameless, by bishop *Fowler* in his reflexions," &c. page 111.
7. Mr. *Joseph Hussey*, in his treatise of "the glory-man."
8. Doctor *Francis Gastrell*, bishop of *Chester*, in his "remarks on doctor *Clarke's* scripture-doctrine of the trinity," page 47.
9. Mr. *Nelson's* learned friend, doctor *Knight*, in answer to doctor *Clarke*, pages 65, 103.
10. Doctor *Thomas Bennet*, in his "discourse of the trinity in unity."
11. The learned doctor *Thomas Burnet* of the *Charter-house*, in his book "De statu mortuorum & resurgentium," published after his death.
12. "The doctrine of the trinity intelligibly explained by doctor *Thomas Burnet*, rector of *Westkington* in *Wiltshire*, and prebendary of *Salisbury*."
13. Doctor *Knight's* "Primitive christianity vindicated," in answer to Mr. *Whiston's* bold assertions.

In three of these books I confess this opinion is but just mentioned, as the certain and probable opinion of the author; but in the rest it is strenuously asserted and maintained, and in some of them with great degrees of assurance: And I think every one of them do profess and maintain the real and proper deity of *Christ* in that or other parts of their works, so that there is no *arian* among them all.

After authors of such learning and reputation in the world, as some of these which are named, I have ventured to propose this doctrine once more to the public. It is attended with a variety of arguments drawn from the holy scripture for the support of it, and I have stated much stronger objections than I have ever met with in opposition to it from any *english* or foreign writers, and I do not find them impossible to be answered.

I dare not assume that air of assurance which bishop *Fowler* has done in several parts of his writings on this subject, when he tells us, "that there is no christian doctrine more clearly delivered than this, and even immediately by our Saviour himself, and often repeated by him: and let the opposers of it be as magisterially positive as they will, yet there is not more plain and undeniable evidence for any one article of faith than there is for this doctrine; and that this is the sense in which most certainly the disciples of our Lord understood his declarations." See his "reflexions on his opposer, doctor *William Sherlock*, pages 3, and 23." Yet I think I can join with him when he asserts that "our Saviour never said a syllable which so much as seems to contradict the plain literal natural sense of the words by which he chose to express this doctrine; and that it is worthy of our observation that there is no one text in the bible, that the bishop knows of, whose plain and natural sense so much as seems to thwart the plain sense of those scriptures that he has produced to support it; and he adds, what controverted point is there in religion of which we can say the like?"

I easily persuade myself that most christians will agree with me thus far, That if this doctrine be true, it gives a natural and easy solution of a great number of difficulties in the word of God, it adds beauty as well as clearness to many expressions in the new and old testament, and it enables us to answer many inconveniences and appearing absurdities which the *arians* sling upon the common explications of the trinity. But if there be any sufficient argument to refute this doctrine and to prove it false, I am not so fond of it as to persist obstinately in the defense, nor make all things truckle and yield to this supposition.

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The great doctrine of the deity of *Christ*, and his sacred office of mediator, may perhaps be maintained without it; but then we must return again to explain some of these difficult texts of scripture by hard tropes and figures; we must speak of *Christ* as God-man before his taking our nature upon him by way of "prolepsis" or anticipation. We must apply many inferior expressions of scripture to the divine person of *Christ*, considered in his office as mediator, which might otherwise and much better be applied to his human soul; we must construe some phrases into truth economically which can never be true in their real and natural sense. We must indulge some catachreses or improprieties of language in the bible, which might be literally and properly expounded by the scheme now proposed: We must solve other expressions by the doctrine of communication of properties between the divine and human natures of *Christ*, in the same manner as we did before; some of which solutions, I confess, are certainly necessary and always will be so, to explain some scriptures that relate to the person of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, according to the well-known methods of speech in all nations and ages. But we would never chuse these interpretations, where there is a more plain literal sense which is perfectly accommodated to the text.

As this doctrine, so far as we have gone in explaining it, has given abundant light to many scriptures, there are also other texts which if we drop this doctrine we must leave under a heavy cloud still, among the ἀλύτα and ἀνοσιγήτα, the unsolvables and the things hard to be understood; and we must still be daily waiting upon the Father of lights, until he shall give us further discoveries of his own meaning in those passages of his holy word, which I think are made sufficiently plain in and by this scheme: We must wait until providence and grace shall join to furnish us with a better clue than this to lead us into the mysterious glories of the person of our blessed redeemer, the more complete knowledge whereof is reserved to entertain saints and angels in the future ages of blessedness. There it is certain, if we shall be so happy as to accept of his gospel, we shall "see him as he is, and behold him face to face; then shadows shall flee away, and darkness vanish for ever, for in his light we shall see light." Amen.

A P P E N D I X.

O R,

“ A short abridgment of that excellent discourse of the late reverend doctor THOMAS GOODWIN, on the glories and royalties that belong to *Jesus Christ* considered as God-man, in his third book of “ his knowledge of God the Father and his Son *Jesus Christ*. page 85,” in the second volume of his works.”

HAVING found occasion in several parts of the foregoing discourse to cite some passages out of this learned and pious writer, who soars far higher than I dare to do in describing the glories due to the human nature of *Christ Jesus*, I thought it might be very entertaining to many of my readers, as well as serviceable to the doctrine here proposed, to draw out an abridgement of that discourse which he wrote concerning the “ glories of *Christ as God-man*,” so far as it relates to this doctrine.

Hereby the pious reader will easily perceive, that the manner in which I have expounded many scriptures, is nobly patronized and supported by this great author, whose name and memory are honoured among evangelical writers, and continue in high esteem among many private christians of the present age; and whose special character it is to have searched deep into the hidden treasures of the word of God, and drawn out thence many peculiar glories which belong to the person and offices of our blessed Saviour.

Though I call this an “ abridgement,” of doctor *Goodwin*’s discourse, yet it is necessary I should tell the world that it may rather be called a “ collection of his sentiments in his own words;” for I have never added or altered any words but where it was necessary to make the sense plain, and to connect the sentences: So that both the sentiments and the language are all his own.

In chapter I. page 95. He lays the foundation of his discourse on *Col. i. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19*, and transcribes all the verses. “ Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: 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: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist: 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

should all fulness dwell." Then he writes thus, All this fulness, and the particulars thereof mentioned in this text, are attributed to *Christ* as God-man, either as actually united or to be united in one person.

To take off prejudices, saith he, it is meet the reader should know how that holy and greatest light of the reformed churches *Calvin* interprets the first passage, "He is the image of the invisible God," viz. "It is he alone by whom God, who is otherwise invisible, is manifested to us: I know how the antients are wont to expound this, because they had a controversy with the *arians*, who held *Christ* "to be a mere creature;" they urge this place for *Christ*'s being of the same essence or nature with the Father; but in the mean time they omitted what was the chief thing in the words, namely, how the Father hath exhibited himself in *Christ* to be known by us."

Then the doctor adds, page 101. That all and every one of these particulars before rehearsed are those glories which as so many several pieces do make up this pre-eminence, and are parts of that fulness which is said to dwell in him: and the apostle makes all this fulness to reside in *Christ* by an act of God's good pleasure. Hence I infer of all these parts and pieces, that they must be understood of him as God-man; for had they been spoken of him singly as God, they are natural to *Christ*, and not at all subjected to God's good will, page 102. But take all these as spoken of *Christ* as ordained to be God-man, all this might indeed be the object of God's decree and the act of his good pleasure, and it was the highest act of grace and God's good pleasure to ordain that man to such an union.

Chapter II. pages 103, 104. *Christ* "is the image of the invisible God," which words are resolved into this assertion, That in that man *Christ Jesus*, by virtue of his union with the godhead, there is inherent a fulness of all divine perfections, which may make up an image of the attributes of the godhead, in so transcendent a way of excellency and eminency, as is incompatible and incommunicable to any mere creature remaining such.

The godhead of *Christ* is as invisible as the godhead of the Father; but *Christ* is such an image as makes the godhead manifest and visible. In *Christ* as man united to the second person, there is a resemblance, an edition of the godhead in all the perfections of it. He is the "express image or engraven image, *Heb. i. 3.* The shine, the brightness of his Father's glory;" as the beams of the sun are to the body of the sun, so is *Christ* God's image; and this similitude the apostle there useth and applies it to him as he was man, namely, as he was "appointed heir of all;" which phrase as he is merely the second person might be used of him: Thus *Beza*, *Cameron*, and others have understood it.

This image is such a system or fulness of perfections really inherent and appertaining unto the manhood, by virtue of that it's union with the divine nature; as although infinitely coming short of the attributes that are essential to the godhead, yet is the completest image of them, and such as no mere creature is capable of. This in general may be made out of that parenthesis, in *John i. 14.* "And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten Son of God."

Page 105. To give two or three instances of some of these perfections peculiarly, and incommunicably dwelling in the human nature of *Christ*; as wisdom, power, independency, and sovereignty.

1. There is a wisdom in *Christ*'s human nature which is so high an imitation of the attribute of wisdom in God, as no creature, nor all creatures could reach to, nor

have attained; and therefore they, though they be called wise, yet not wisdom, as *Christ* God-man is called, 1 *Cor.* i. 24. And the reason why so transcendent a wisdom is in him as man is given, *Col.* ii. 3. "In *Christ* are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge:" Not objectively only, but subjectively also, as whose knowledge in himself inherent contains in it "all treasures of wisdom. Now the reason of all this fulness of wisdom in *Christ* is there given, verse 9. that "in him dwells the fulness of the godhead bodily."

Christ is not omniscient as God is, but it is a similitudinary omniscience, as *Zanby* calls it, an image of God's omniscience. God's knowledge extends itself not only to all that is made or to be done, but to all that he can make or do; which is an infinity. *Christ*'s human nature, now glorified, knows all that God hath done or meant to do. It had, by virtue of it's union with the divine nature, a right to know both things past, present, and to come; and so it is in a sense a kind of omniscience, incommunicable to any other.

2. The same holds in his power. It is not equal with God's: Yet there is a similitudinary omnipotence in *Christ*'s human nature, both in that he can do whatsoever he will, his will agreeing with God's in every thing, and in that all that God will ever pitch upon to be done he is an instrument of, *Matth.* xxviii. 18. All the businesses of the world run through his hands and his head: and therefore he is called the "power of God," 1 *Cor.* i. 24. and the "arm of the Lord," *Isa.* liii. 1.

John v. 19, 20. "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; and whatever the Father doth, the Son doth likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth." Here we have, 1. That whatever God doth, or means to do, the Son hath a hand in it. 2. That the Son knows all that is done by the Father. Here is both the omniscience we speak of, and the omnipotency, in the terms we stated it, as respecting all God's works, "ad extra," even all that ever was done. And this, 3. in an incommunicable way to any mere creature, for this is given him that he "might be honoured even as the Father is honoured," verse 23. And this, 4. in a similitudinary way, *quodammodo*, likewise, or in like manner: And, 5. all this *Christ* speaks of himself as the son of man; and it is one of the greatest keys to *John*'s gospel that multitudes of such speeches are spoken of him, both as God, and a God-man. But to put it out of all doubt, he speaks of himself in this discourse as he is the son of man united to God, he himself in the close of all expressly explains it so. Verse 27. "The Father has given the Son authority to execute judgment, because he is the son of man."

3. Another attribute in *Christ*, which is such an image of what is in God as is incommunicable to any mere creatures, is independency and sovereignty. This is one of the chiefest flowers in that crown of his glory. God might annihilate creatures at pleasure, and yet in so doing rob them of nothing, which they can lay a just claim to as their own: but it is not thus with *Christ*'s human nature; now it is assumed into union with the second person, for it is invested with the royal prerogatives of the persons with whom it is one; it hath an independency like unto God's; such as is communicable to no creature: therefore, says *Christ*, verse 26. "As the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given to the Son to have life in himself." It is said to be given him, but by this union he is invested with this indisposible prerogative to have life in himself, and not to hold it by gift, though at first it were obtained so. Indeed it was a free act of grace in God at first, but in doing of it God did a wonder in the world, of all, the greatest: For he sets up an independent creature, a creature backed with such a right to his being, that now himself cannot pull him down,

nor.

nor dissolve that union again. And what a glorious image of God's independency is this?

I might shew the like also in holiness and all other attributes; and it is a noble subject to spend pains upon, to set forth and cut out every limb of this vast image of all God's attributes that are in *Christ* merely upon his personal union. I have limbed out only these two or three parts of it, that by the like proportion we might infer the vastness of all the rest.

Chapter III. page 109. "*Christ* is the first-born of every creature:" This is not spoken of him simply as second person only, so as that his eternal generation as Son of God should be only intended; yet it does establish his godhead, for these things could not have been said of him had he not been God. The first-born or first-begotten of every creature is spoken of him as he is admitted into the catalogue or society of the creatures, or as he is become one of them. Or take him as he is the Son of God ordained to human nature, and then to have his name stand highest among the rest of the creatures. It is spoken of him in respect of a dignity and birth-right that this God-man hath at that instant he is admitted amongst the creatures, *Psa.* lxxxix. 27. "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth," *Prov.* viii. 23. "I was set up from everlasting." The phrase, "I was set up," will less permit us to understand it of his eternal generation, for that was an act of God's will.

Page 113. "For whom all things were created," *Col.* i. 16. *Christ* as God-man is set up as an universal end of the whole creation of God. His person decreed to subsist in man's nature was considered by God to be of that worth and distance above the creatures that their very being and existing was to become absolutely and simply his propriety, of which prerogative no mere creature is capable. Page 114. Suppose God would decree him to be God-man and to subsist in a human nature, and likewise withal would ordain multitudes of other things, viz. Angels and men, &c. then it becomes the necessary due of this *Christ*, and that as God-man, to be set up by God in his decrees as the end of all those things. This did become that man's due and the necessary consequent of that union with God's Son; and accordingly that God should cast his decrees for *Christ*'s glory as well as for his own. Hence we read *Heb.* i. 2. "He is appointed heir of all things."

And if it be affirmed, that then *Christ* needed not to have merited any glory to himself, this surely is a truth, though it may not be made use of to exclude another title unto this his own glory, namely that of purchase; for it is no dishonour to him to have two claims. Page 116. It is certain that all God's works "ad extra," whereof the union of the divine and human nature of *Christ* is one, are the objects of God's decrees, *Col.* i. 19. "It pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell in him." And again, *Psa.* ii. 6, 7. "I will publish the decree, I have set my king on my holy hill of *Zion*: And upon this decree his kingdom over all is his due and inheritance.

Chapter IV. page 120. This human nature is made God's fellow, as *Zechariah* calls him, *Zech.* xiii. 7. "The man, God's fellow," is advanced to a fellowship in this society of the trinity, and therefore to him God communicates proportionably without measure, as *John* iii. 34. Page 121. By means of taking up one reasonable creature, a man, into this highest union, he communicates the riches of his knowledge and wisdom, to the utmost that they are communicable to that creature so united; for it is his due to know more at the first instant of that his union than

all the angels : For by virtue of that union he is presently in his Father's bosom, *John* i. 18. "The only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." God can hide nothing from him which he means to do ; he draws nearer to God infinitely than *Moses* did, or angels ever did or shall.

Chapter V. Wherein the doctor shews, that the glory which *Christ*, as God-man, had assigned him before the world was in his election by the Father signified in *John* xvii. 5. "Glorify me now with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Page 124. It is not the glory of the second person simply or alone considered, for this was not a thing to be prayed for, it is naturally and essentially his due ; and he had it as much now at the time when he prayed as he had from everlasting : The word, "Now glorify me," necessarily implies a suspension of a glory due before ; and it argues a glory to be given in time ; for both which reasons it concerns the human nature, not the divine. The subject of the glory prayed for is the man. *Austin* was convinced of this, though he was engaged against the *arians* as much as any in his time. It is the man, or rather the person of God-man in union together is rather the subject prayed for : It is the petition of the person who had been humbled, who had glorified God on earth, and had finished his work and waited for this glory until now ; and it is a glory suspended until this work was done. This will never be unriddled, says the doctor, page 126. so fairly any other way, as by predestination, that is, the glory he was ordained to, as God-man ; for he had before the world was, the title of God-man elect, although not of God-man united, or made flesh. He bore the title and repute of it, and went under that name with God the Father. Verse 24. is explained to the same purpose, and must be interpreted of *Christ* as God-man, when he says, "The glory which thou gavest me, for thou lovedst me from the foundation of the world."

Chapter VI. page 151. The author declares that *Christ* being the second person did bear and sustain the glory of being God-man, all along from his predestination thereunto, and as an officer elect, he hath the title and honour accordingly, and had the glory of it before his Father.

When he appeared to the patriarchs, and was with the people of God in the wilderness, and appeared as captain of the host of *Israel*, these acts were done as bearing the personage of God-man, and all along from everlasting he acted as such in that capacity together with his Father.

Isa. ix. 6. One of his names is the everlasting Father, that is, a Father from everlasting, and therefore he must be said to have born that relation of a Father to us from that time. In the trinity, take them considered as mere persons, there is but one Father ; therefore this title must be given to *Christ* in God's decrees, upon the consideration of his being God-man in his undertaking and acting accordingly. *Paul* tells us, *Heb.* ii. that *Christ* is a Father considered as he is a man, verse 13. "Lo I, and the children thou hast given me." And *Isaiab* tells us he was this from everlasting, before he actually assumed the same nature : He must be the everlasting Father, representatively, by bearing the personage of God-man, afore his Father, and undertaking that relation.

Chapter X. page 173. *Col.* i. 16. "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, &c. all things were created by him and for him."

Page

Page 177. His subserviency to God in the creation is set forth here in three particles, *in auctō* in him, *si auctō* by him, and *ei auctō* for him.

1. In him, as the exemplary cause; that is God set up *Christ* as the pattern of all perfection; for so that human nature united and quickened by the godhead, must needs be even above the angels themselves; and he drew in scattered pieces in the rest of the creation, the several perfections met in that human nature as a pattern. And in man's creation this seems to have been considered by God in that speech, "Let us make man according to our image;" that is, after that man who was to be united to God, whom we in our decrees have set up as the pattern and express image of the invisible godhead.

2. "By him all things were created;" he having been some way the instrument of the creation as he is *Christ* God-man anointed, as well as he is actually of redemption. And page 168. *Christ* is the medium of God's creation. Page 178. If he were at all to be made a creature, it was his due personal privilege to have been himself first made, and to have been God's instrument in creation, and to have uttered those words which were spoken by God, "Let there be light, let there be sun, moon, &c." even as it was his due when he assumed our nature, to have been filled with all that personal glory which he hath now in heaven. But for the accomplishment of other ends this was suspended, namely, that he might first become sin and a curse for us; so I say, it was his due to have existed in his human nature first, and then as God's word and instrument, he should have created all things, as he wrought miracles when he was here on earth; and though it was suspended for glorious ends, yet God gives him the glory of creation virtually, that he created all things by him, and by virtue of his incarnation. And in creating, to shew that he should have done it as his Logos, or Word to be made flesh, he accordingly acts his part, as in *Gen. i. 3.* "God said, let there be light," which but for this very mystery needed not have been. Yea such seems to have been his subserviency to God herein, that *John* contents not himself only to have said, that "all things were made by him;" but further adds, "without him nothing was made that was made."

Chapter XI. page 180. *Christ* as God-man is the Creator of all things, proved by *1 Cor. viii. 6.* "One Lord *Jesus Christ*, by whom are all things," page 181. This is not attributed to him as man, singly considered; nor is it a property of God considered singly as God only, but as a man who was one person with God, or God-man; nor are these things attributed to him merely by way of communication of properties, whereby what was proper only to the divine nature is attributed to the manhood; but these all by way of influence and virtual efficacy, are attributed to him as God-man, as truly as the works of redemption, mediation, &c.

Page 183. His being appointed Lord, will send us to a higher date than his actual ascension to heaven, even to afore the creation; yea, even to eternity, *Heb. i. 2.* "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:" Yea, and because as God-man, he was appointed Lord of them, therefore it was also that God commissioned him to make them, considered as God-man, to make his title of lordship even as son of man proper and direct, and adequately full to him, and there needs no more to verify this, viz. that as God-man he made the worlds, and virtually as man, as well as efficiently, both as God and man in the sense it hath been explained in.

Chapter XII. page 184. That *Christ*, as God-man, is the Creator of all things, is further proved from *John* i. 1, 2, 3. "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, &c." This name "the Word of God" imports both his being the image of God the Father, as the second person, and the image or manifestation of God to us in human nature. Many of our protestant divines have altogether declined the first sense and betaken themselves to the latter, viz. That *Christ* is called the Word, in relation to his being manifested in a human nature, and therein to manifest the whole of God unto us. This is not appropriated to him only as the Son of God and second person; but as united to human nature, *Rev.* xix. 13. "He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God." Page 187. That repetition in the second verse, viz. *John* i. 2. "The same was in the beginning with God" imports that the second person did then sustain, and take on him another relation, even the person of the mediator, and enter upon the office, acting the part and sustaining the place and reputation of it.

Page 189. Compare this with *Prov.* viii. 22. and the titles, the Word and wisdom are in effect and significancy the same in the original languages. *Solomon* speaks but the same things of him there that *John* doth here: "The Word was with God in the beginning, that is, the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, I was by him rejoicing before him;" and so it may explain what is meant by the beginning here, namely, the beginning of creation, and therefore is not meant of his eternal generation; for so *Christ* is not the beginning of God's ways, for the ways of God are his goings forth toward his creatures. That speech is all one with *Col.* i. 15. "The first-born of every creature," being in God's decree of creation the first, the corner stone, and beginning of the rest, so as it must be meant of *Christ*, as God-man.

Page 190. We find, *1 Cor.* i. 24. that *Christ* is said to be "the power of God, and the wisdom of God;" both which are spoken of him, not as they are essential attributes in God's nature; for the person of *Christ*, as a person, is distinct from the attributes, which are common to all three; and so, he is not styled the attribute of wisdom, but they are thus spoken of *Christ* manifestatively, and instrumentally, and executively, and as he is from God, and made use of by God towards us, and in things that concern us, to be the whole scene and manifestation of God's wisdom, and "substratum" of his counsels concerning us. And so also the executive power by whom God effects all he doth, That observation evidently demonstrates this, which *Cameron*, and many others, have made, by comparing *Moses*, *Gen.* i. and this first of *John* together, which many things parallel lead to: That whereas *Moses* in the creation mentions God the Father and the Spirit, two of the persons, yet he veils the Son under that so often repeated speech used of the creation, that, God said, "Let there be light;" God said, "Let there be a firmament," which could not be without mystery; and what other mystery could it be, than that *Christ* was that Word by whom God created all things? When therefore *Christ* is termed the Word of God, the meaning is, he is the power of God, in being his instrument and agent in all he doth, or means to do.

Page 191. Thus God elected us and bestowed all things upon us before the world was, even in *Jesus Christ*, *Ephes.* i. 4. as then bearing this person of God-man. And thus all the promises which the written word of God contains, were made for us unto *Christ*, as really bearing that person; and *2 Tim.* i. 9. "They were given

men us in *Christ* before the world began." Notable to this purpose is that place *Tit. i.* 2, 3. where the apostle first says, "That God promised eternal life before the world began." A promise is a word given forth, and is more than a purpose with one's self; for it is to another: There was a promise made to *Christ* as then with God. Now merely as second person, he is capable of no promises, but only as he is God-man. It is the Son of God as he is "*Jesus Christ*, in whom all promises are, yea, and amen," 2 *Cor. i.* 19, 20.

Page 192. When God came to make creatures, he did it by *Jesus Christ*, as sustaining this person of God-man, *Eph. iii.* 9. "God created all things by *Jesus Christ*;" and *John* adds, "Nothing was made without him that was made;" merely to shew the instrumental general dependence God had of him in this work: He was all in all, as we say of one that is a right hand to another; he does nothing without him: Such was *Christ* to God; not that God had not power essential to have created without him; for it is by that power that *Christ* did it; but that this power, God's will, would never have put forth, but for his assuming to be God-man.

Chapter XIII. page 197. *Christ* God-man is subservient to God in all the works of his providence; he upholds and supports all things; he governs the world, and he shall judge it.

First, "For the upholding all things." That is evident in this text of *Col. i.* 17. "By him do all things consist;" he is the corner-stone that keeps the building and all the parts of it together, *Heb. i.* 2, 3. it is said, "He upholds all things, by the word of his power;" and it is spoken of him not simply considered as a second person, but as God-man, for so he is here appointed.

Secondly, Whilst the world stands, he governs it, easeth God of that burthen, and is his prorex for him: "All judgment is committed to the Son," *John v.* 22. "For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:" "And the government is upon his shoulders," *Isa. ix.* 6. And then,

Thirdly, When he hath thus governed the world with a greater advantage unto God, then this man *Christ Jesus* will judge it also at the last, and give all men their accounts, *Acts xvii.* 31. "He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world,—by that man whom he hath ordained." God would not employ a mere creature in this work, it was too great a honour; and yet it was meet it should be done visibly and audibly, and to the satisfaction of all men's consciences, both concerning themselves and others. God would have a person in the trinity manifest in a creature like unto us to do it, armed with power and authority, because he is God; and yet a man that should deal with creatures in their own way; in a rational and audible way convince them, and visibly sentence them, so as they should be able to see and hear their judge as man, and yet fear and dread him as being God. And this is a high and great service, which *Christ* as man shall do for God; for a man in a vocal manner to be able to clear the accounts of the world, which, how entangled are they! And punctually to give every man his due in righteousness! A man, that shall be able to convince all God's enemies of all their hard speeches they have spoken against him, as *Enoch* the seventh from *Adam* prophesied; *Jude* verse 14. able to give a full and satisfactory account of all God's ways and proceedings, which men cavil at; to justify God's decrees, which men quarrel with, and think much at; and his children whom men despise and bear down: One able to bring to light the secrets of all hearts, so as all men shall judge of every man, 1 *Cor. iv.* 5. "Therefore judge

judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: And then shall every man have praise of God." One able to search the deep things of God and bring forth his counsels, for the "books are then opened," *Rev. xx. 12.*

Lastly, After all this, *Christ* is the "founder of that other world into which he brings his children." That personal fulness that is in God-man is reserved by God as a subject of that depth and glory to take up, together with his own perfections, the thoughts of men and angels for ever, *Rev. xxi. 23.* "That city had no need of the sun nor moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamb is the light thereof." When those two great volumes, this of his word, and that of his world, which now in this life are put into our hands, to read the characters of his glory in by faith, when both these shall be folded up and clean laid aside, then will the person of *Christ*, God-man, be set forth to us, to entertain us for ever with the sight of the glory of God in the face of *Christ*.

Having drawn out this little abridgement of this excellent treatise, I take the freedom to make these few remarks on it.

Remark I. This learned and pious author plainly manifests that he could not expound several scriptures which speak of *Christ* both in the old testament and the new, without taking in his human nature to be the joint subject of such ascriptions, because there are so many things expressed in them below the dignity of godhead: And therefore he supposes the human nature of *Christ* to exist in the view or idea of the Father from everlasting, and to have all those glorious actions and characters ascribed to him as man united to God, or as God united to man. And it is to be observed, that he does this not in one sentence or two, or in one page or two, but it is the chief design of that whole discourse of the "glories and royalties that belong to *Jesus Christ* considered as God-man," which fills up more than a hundred pages in folio.

Remark II. He supposes the man *Christ Jesus* not only to have an existence in the divine idea through all the various antient transactions of creation, providence, &c. But he asserts that he ought actually to have existed the first of all creatures, and to have been as it were an under-agent in the creation of the world; but that this actual glory was suspended for four thousand years, merely because he was to bear sin and the curse for the redemption of men.

Remark III. He rises much higher in his ascriptions to the man *Jesus Christ*, than I have dared to do in any part of my discourse, and invests him with much more sublime powers than any angelic spirit; and yet he supposes his soul to be a human soul still, and calls him a man: He gives him most illustrious prerogative, on the account of his virtual union to his divine nature, all which he asserts to be his early due had he actually then existed.

Remark IV. The actual pre-existence of the man *Jesus*, or the human soul of *Christ*, and his actual union to his divine nature can never withhold or diminish any of those sublime characters, those illustrious honours or prerogatives which this author saith were his due, had he then existed, and which he supposes to be attributed to him in scripture by the figure prolepsis, and by way of anticipation, and which were given him by God the Father, as supposing him then to exist in his idea long before his actual existence.

Remark V. The exposition of all these scriptures will appear much more natural, easy and plain by the doctrine of the actual pre-existence of the soul of *Christ*, than by the mere decree of his existence or supposition of it only in the idea and foreknowledge of God. In the proleptical sense, only learned men can find the meaning

of



of them. In this sense of actual existence, the meanest christian may read and understand what he reads. And it is a general rule among divines for the interpretation of scripture, never to introduce figures of speech, nor to explain the word of God in a figurative sense, but where the plain obvious literal sense has something in it inconsistent or improper.

Remark VI. There is not one scripture in all the bible which denies the actual existence of *Christ's* human soul before the foundation of the world, but there are many which in this author's judgment cannot be explained without the supposition of his virtual existence then in the idea of God, and therefore they are supposed to be spoken of him as though he did actually exist by the help of tropes and figures.

Now I leave it to the judgment of any candid reader, whether those scriptures which are written for the use of the unlearned, ought not much rather to be explained in their most easy and obvious sense, than to spread so many and such hard figures of speech almost all over the bible, the old testament and the new, without evident necessity: and it is very reasonable to believe, that had this evangelical writer lived in an age when the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul of *Christ* had been freely proposed to the world, he would have imbraced it with great readiness and pleasure.

Remark VII. Though these more elevated sentiments and bolder expressions, which I have cited from so great an author, are by no means a standard of truth, nor indeed can I follow him in some of these sublimities, neither do I cite his magnificent expressions concerning the man *Jesus Christ*, nor his expositions of scripture as a sufficient proof of what I have advanced; yet it will appear to the world by this collection, that I have not ventured upon such expositions of the bible, nor such exalted sentiments and language concerning *Christ's* human nature, without a honourable precedent. If I am mistaken, yet I may reasonably hope that while I have erred and wandered under such a leader, and in so good company, the censure will be but light and gentle, since most of the reproaches which may be cast on me on this account will fall heavy on this venerable author, whose name has been honourable, and his praise great among the churches.

The END of the LAST VOLUME.

