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A DEFENCE of NATURAL and REVEALED RELIGION:

BEING AN

ABRIDGMENT

OF THE

SERMONS

Preached at the LECTURE founded by

The Hon^ble *Robert Boyle*, Esq;

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Dr. BURNET's

DEMONSTRATION

OF

TRUE RELIGION.

PART II.

IN the first Part I gave a general View of the Design and Method of the Divine Providence in the Government of the World, demonstrated from the Natures and Reasons of Things; from hence I inferred, that if there be any History of the Government of the World agreeing with these Notions, it must be so far esteemed a credible History.

Now I have shewn the Scriptures to be such a History; which are wrote to give us a Knowledge of the various Circumstances of Mankind from time to time, and of the various Methods of God's dealing with them according to those Circumstances.

And as in this Book the whole Design of Providence is set forth to be what we shew'd it must be, that of making the World happy, by that only way of making them holy:

And since the Method for this Purpose is represented to have been by various Revelations at different Times, according as different Occasions called

for them, this is ſo far a rational and conſiſtent Hiſtory, and on this Account it carries in it not only a general Credibility of the Hiſtory it ſelf, but alſo of thoſe Revelations contained in it, as being of ſuch a Nature, and given for ſuch an End, and in ſuch a Manner, as, according to our foregoing Arguments, it is reaſonable to expect they ſhould be.

Thus far I have gone in the Proof of the Scripture Hiſtory in general:

I come to conſider it more particularly, and examine it Step by Step.

And as it is, as I have ſaid, a Hiſtory of Providence; ſo ſince the whole Deſign of Providence is the Happineſs of his Creatures; I will conſider what Account this Hiſtory gives us of Mankind, what Circumſtances they are here ſaid to have fallen into from time to time; and what Methods of Providence we can reaſonably think ſuch Circumſtances might ſtand in need of, and whether it informs us of any ſuch Providence made for them. And if we find it anſwer in theſe Particulars, we have all that is requiſite in the Nature of the Thing, to demonſtrate it a credible Hiſtory.

In order to this Inquiry, it is neceſſary, that I remind you, that had the World continued innocent, there could have been no other Method of Providence neceſſary for its Happineſs, but Preſervation: And therefore as it was Sin that let in all thoſe various Manifeſtations of the Divine Wiſdom, Goodneſs and Power, that are neceſſary to the Government of the whole World, ſo as this Hiſtory is apparently a Hiſtory of Providence, it muſt inform us of the Riſe and Progreſs of Sin, and of the ſeveral Methods that have been taken for the Happineſs of the World, according to the different Circumſtances that Sin has brought them into, and their Neceſſities called for.

And therefore as it is natural that it ſhould, ſo it does

does begin at the first Sin, if it gives us such an Account of this Sin, and the Consequences of it, and of such Methods taken for the Happiness of the World, as the Nature of their Case required, agreeable to the Reason of Things, this must be a credible Account.

Now in order to judge of this we will inquire what Reason can find out, and what Light it can discover in these Particulars, in order to compare it with this History.

The first then we are to enquire into, is the Origin of Sin.

The Origin of Sin.

The best way to find out how Sin came into the World, is to enquire into the Time when it began.

That it was of early Date, is certain by the Effects that are seen of it in all Mankind.

For before Sin entered into the World, Human Nature was otherwise, than we find it now.

Our first Parents, we have shewn, were made in a State of Perfection, Happiness, and Immortality.

But we are in a State of Imperfection, in respect both of our rational and bodily Faculties.

So that there is evidently a Change wrought upon our Natures.

And 'tis likewise evident that in all Parts, this Depravation is the same: As we may thence naturally conclude, that Depravation is something inherent in our Natures, and therefore must have been derived from that common Stock from whence all Mankind derived their Natures.

So on the other Hand, if it was the Effect of Sin, as we have shewn it was, it must have been the Sin of our first Parents. And as they must have been depraved in their own Nature, before any Depravation could be imparted to their Children, this Sin, which was the Cause of that Depravation, must have been committed before they had Children.

Thus far the Case is clear, as to the first Sinners.

But yet conſidering the State of Perfection our firſt Parents have been proved to be created in, the Queſtion is, how they could be capable of falling into Sin?

For though Man was in his own Nature capable of Tranſgreſſion, yet there was nothing in his own Nature to incline him to it.

His Will, in his State of Perfection, was, as we have ſhewn, made ſubject to his Underſtanding, and therefore he could will nothing but as Reaſon ſhould direct. The Body likewiſe was then ſubject to the Underſtanding, ſo that this could not carry him to any Thing, but what his Underſtanding ſhould approve, and therefore if Man's Fall was owing to himſelf, it muſt have proceeded from ſome Error in his Underſtanding.

But this we have proved to be perfect, and capable of finding out Truth, ſo far as it lay within the Compaſs of Reaſon:

And therefore if the Underſtanding was miſtaken, it muſt have been in ſomething that Reaſon could not perfectly comprehend.

But 'tis hard to conceive, how this could be; for that which by being miſtaken, could produce ſuch ſad Effects, was doubtleſs neceſſary to be known: And we have ſhewn, that what was neceſſary to be known, and yet not knowable by Reaſon, was neceſſary to be known by Revelation; and therefore we muſt conclude, that if the Sin of our firſt Parents was owing to any Miſtake of the Underſtanding, as that muſt have been in ſomething above Reaſon; ſo it muſt have been in ſomething that had either been commanded, or forbidden by Revelation.

And if ſo, then, ſince there were required a Revelation even in a State of Purity, relating to their Food, Marriage, and Language, the firſt Sin was committed through ſome Miſtake, relating to one or other of theſe.

How

How this could be, is ſtill hard to conceive. For the ſame Neceſſity, that required a Revelation to inform them, what they wanted to know, did require that it ſhould be ſuch a Revelation, as they could not be miſtaken in. And therefore whatever Miſtake they fell into relating to any Revelation, it could not ariſe from any defect in the Revelation itſelf, or any Ignorance of what was pretended to be revealed to them.

So that if they fell into Sin, it could be only for want of a due Conſideration.

But how they could be wanting in this, is ſtill hard to conceive.

And therefore as it could not ariſe from any want of Information, and as nothing could incline them to it, we muſt conclude they muſt have been drawn into it by ſomething from without.

And as it could not be from God who is good, we muſt conclude, that if there are any evil Beings it muſt have ariſen from them.

But further, if, as we have ſhewn, that Mankind was made for Happineſs, and this Happineſs conſiſts in *being like God*, from hence it will follow, that as the firſt Sin muſt have ariſen from ſome Miſtake, ſo that Miſtake muſt have been in ſomething that they were made to think would *make them like God.*

And ſince we have ſhewn, that *this Likeneſs to God* muſt conſiſt in acting according to right Reaſon which we call Holineſs, and that ſo long as they continued to act ſo, they would be immortally happy.

From hence it will follow, that as our firſt Parents had no Inclination in their Will to act contrary to Reaſon, and therefore could be in no danger of loſing their Happineſs, they had nothing to take care of, but that their own Reaſon ſhould be always right; that is, that they ſhould always make a right Judgment of Things, ſo as truly to diſcern between Good

and Evil; and if they could be sure of such Knowledge, they could not fail, both of Happiness and Immortality, and in this respect of being perfectly *like God.*

And then, as the only Thing our first Parents could desire, in order to immortal Happiness, was to be sure of such a Knowledge of Good and Evil; so this seems in Reason to be the only Thing they were capable of being tempted in, and therefore the Hopes of this Knowledge, seems to be the only Thing possible for them to be drawn into Sin by.

And if to all this we add, what we have proved, that in a State of Purity whatever was done, was done out of a Principle of Duty to God, we may farther conclude, that as the first Sin was owing to some Mistake, and that Mistake in something our first Parents thought would contribute to their Happiness in making them *like God*, so it must have been done out of a false Imagination, that it was what they must do, out of Duty to God.

Thus far we stand upon the Reason and Nature Things.

But yet, since we have shewn that the first Sin must have been committed against some former Revelation, it is hard to conceive, how it could be possible for our first Parents to think, that any thing could contribute to their Happiness, which they knew to be contrary to a revealed command, unless they had some Notion of a second Revelation commanding them to act contrary.

For to do any thing out of Duty to God, supposes that it is the Will of God that it shall be done.

And therefore if our first Parents sinned against a known Revelation, that Mistake must have arisen from some false imagination of a second Revelation enjoining them to do that as necessary to their Happiness, which by the former they were commanded not to do.

But

But yet it is hard to conceive how they could be drawn into ſuch a falſe Imagination:

And therefore ſince it is a Matter of Fact, and is known by Hiſtory, whatever Hiſtory we have of this Event, which agrees with theſe Reaſonings, and yet accounts for theſe Difficulties, we muſt not only conclude that Hiſtory to be credible, but the more, by how much theſe Difficulties are by Reaſon the more unaccountable.

Now ſuch a Hiſtory we have in the firſt Book of *Moſes*.

In which we are no ſooner told of the Creation of one Man and one Woman, who were placed in a Garden, were they had ſuitable Objects to every Appetite; but we are told of a Revelation concerning their Food, in which they have a Power to eat of every Fruit of the Garden but one, which is forbidden under the Penalty of Death, as being dangerous to be eaten.

Againſt this Revelation, they are repreſented to have ſinned, by being drawn into a Miſtake by the Inſinuations of the Serpent.

What this Serpent was is not here told: But however that by the Serpent could not barely be meant the Animal ſo called, is certain; becauſe ſuch Things are ſpoken of it which can belong only to a rational Creature.

And ſince that Hiſtory tells us, there was no other rational Creature of Human Kind, but one Man and one Woman; therefore by the Serpent *Moſes* muſt have meant ſome wicked Spirit, who either appeared under the Diſguiſe of a Serpent, or elſe actuated the real Body of that Creature, or elſe is repreſented by this Expreſſion, as a figurative Character.

And accordingly in other Places of Scripture we are told, that this Serpent was that evil Spirit called the Devil.

And here it is to be obſerved, that this evil Spirit,

according to Tradition, was originally created an happy Angel. But how great soever his Happiness was, he is nevertheless said to rebel against God, and thereupon to be cast, with his wicked Companions, into some Regions of Dishonour and Unhappiness.

When this happened we are not told: Whenever it was, 'tis natural to conceive, that the Motive which might induce him to destroy Mankind might be his Envy of their Happiness, and a Desire to revenge himself on God, by defeating his Intentions in the Creation of Mankind, by drawing them into Sin and Misery.

This might be the Motive that induced him to this wicked Enterprize; for the compassing of which he is here said to have come as a Serpent; and whatever the Expression means, it represents to us a Design formed to deceive. And with this View he is said to have addressed himself to the Woman, endeavouring to persuade her that there was no Danger in eating the forbidden Fruit, insinuating, that as they wanted nothing to make them sure of everlasting Happiness, but to discern between Good and Evil, so that was what this Fruit would give them; and by consequence they could then want nothing to make them *like God*, and free them from Death and Misery.

And as he urges this Motive to them, on the Consideration of the Lord's knowing it to be true; so without doubt he pretended to come from God to inform them of it. Of which Pretence though the Scripture is silent, yet it is reasonable to suppose, that unless it had been ushered in by some previous Pretence to gain him Credit, our first Parents could not have been capable of so much as lending an Ear to that which was an evident Contradiction to a positive Revelation of God.

And though the History does not directly say this, yet it is implied by the Abruptness of the Words in the

the firſt Verſe of the third Chapter, that there had been ſome precedent Parly between the Serpent and the Woman.

The Words in the Original run thus. [Not as we tranſlate them; *yea, hath God ſaid?*] But, *yea, becauſe, hath God ſaid? ye ſhall not eat of every Tree of the Garden:*

Which is as much as if he had ſaid, *yea*, for this Cauſe, *viz.* becauſe *God hath ſaid ye ſhall not eat of every Tree of the Garden.*

Now theſe Words are plainly ſpoken, as an Anſwer to ſomething that had been ſaid before, which made the Woman aſk a Reaſon for what he had pretended to her, as if ſhe had inquired, whether the Thing was really as he pretended, and what was the Reaſon of it.

To which he anſwers, *yea*, and that this was the Reaſon of it, becauſe God had not given Liberty to eat of every Tree.

Now what can we imagine more natural, than that he had pretended, he was ſent from God; the Reaſon of which, when ſhe inquires after, he tells her was about the forbidden Fruit. For ſays he, *hath God ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of every Tree of the Garden?*

To which the Woman replied in the Affirmative. [*V.* 2, 3.] To this the Serpent anſwered, *ye ſhall not ſurely die, for the Lord knows, that in the Day that ye eat thereof, your Eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil.*

If any ſhould be prejudiced againſt this Notion of the Serpent's tempting our firſt Parents to ſin, under the Pretence of his being a Meſſenger from God, he may ſee it fully confirmed by St. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* xi. 3. where he cautions the *Corinthians* againſt a falſe Teacher, that came to them as an inſpired Perſon, and as a true Apoſtle ſent by God, when he really was a Miniſter of Satan; and he makes a Compariſon

between

between *Eve* and those People, and represents them in the same Condition she was in, when she was beguiled by the Serpent.

And again, on the other Hand, makes a Comparison between *Satan* and his Ministers, and represents these as acting the same part with the *Corinthians*, as *Satan* did with *Eve*. And as he expresses his Fear lest the *Corinthians* should be beguiled by the Ministers of *Satan*, as *Eve* was by the Serpent: So he explains how that was; For, says he, as *Satan transforms himself into an Angel of Light, so his Ministers are transformed into Ministers of Righteousness.* And by this it is implied, that if the People should be beguiled by suchMinisters, under such a false Appearance of Ministers of Righteousness they would then be beguiled as *Eve* was by *Satan*, under the false Appearance of a Messenger from God.

Thus you see what Authority I have for this Opinion, that as our first Parents were seduced by an evil Spirit, so he did it under the Appearance of an Angel of Light, and as a Messenger from God: And as he thus applied himself to the Woman, it is said, that *when she saw*, that is, was convinced that *the Tree was good for Food, and* since it was *desirable to look unto, and a Tree to be desired to make one wise, she did eat.*

These Things being thus, you may here see what a wonderful Agreement there is betwen this History, and our foregoing Reasonings.

The Effects of the first Sin, and the Methods of Providence necessary in the Case.

By knowing the Circumstances Mankind were brought into by the first Sin, we may find out the necessary Methods of Providence, that their Happiness might require, considering those Circumstances, and whether this History agrees accordingly.

The

The Origin of the Depravation of human Nature.

We have shewn that Mortality and the Depravation of human Nature must have been the Effect of some Sin of our first Parents, before they had Children; but whether it was the Effect of one, or more Transgressions, and whether this was inflicted as a Punishment, or produced by the natural Causality of Sin, is proper Matter of Inquiry.

'Tis evident, the History of *Moses* agrees with Reason, in ascribing the Certainty of Death to Sin; and as this is here represented as the first Effect of it, so it is said to be the Effect of the first Sin.

But though this gives us an Account how our first Parents came to die, yet it does not inform us how their Posterity became mortal, and so depraved, unless it were the natural Effect of the Fruit forbidden and therefore forbidden to be eaten, as being in its own Nature dangerous and destructive.

The Depravation of human Nature not included in the bare Denunciation of Death.

For if this Death threatened to our first Parents was only an arbitrary Punishment, and did not depend upon the Nature of the Fruit itself, the eating of it could only make them liable to the Execution of the Sentence, and could reach no further than the Sinners.

And therefore, though it gives us an Account how they became liable to Death, yet it leaves us in the Dark as to the Depravation of human Nature.

This Corruption we derive from our first Parents, and was the Effect of Sin.

But if the Death here threatened was a bare arbitrary Punishment, it is hard to conceive, how this Corruption of Nature could be the Effect of this Sin.

For the Punishment threatened is Death, and 'tis evident that a mere outward Sentence of Condemnation to Death, does by no means imply any inward Altera-

Alteration of the Nature of the Person condemned.

Much less can it imply, that the *Flesh shall lust against the Spirit.* And yet this, as I have said, we derive from our first Parents, and what they contracted by Sin; and as this could not be included in the Denunciation of Death, so neither

2*dly*, Could it arise from their Sin of eating the forbidden Fruit, merely as Sin.

For if their Sin was only owing to a Mistake of their Understanding, here was nothing in the Nature of Man, or his Operations, amiss, thus far.

As the ruling Principle of the rational Nature approved and directed, so the Will inclined to chuse and act. And this was as it should be.

And from acting according to Nature can never arise any unnatural Tendency to Dissolution; and when the Body is governed by the Understanding, this can never beget a *Lusting of the Flesh against the Spirit.*

And therefore this Corruption of human Nature could not proceed from the Sin of our first Parents, considered merely as Sin; nor

3*dly*, Could it arise from any Frequency of Sin;

For if our first Parents were capable of sinning only through Mistake; and if the Obedience of the inferior Faculties to a mistaken Judgment cannot change the human Constitution, we cannot conceive any such Change should arise from any such Mistake, though ever so frequent.

But if it might, we have no Reason to suppose any such frequent Mistakes in our first Parents Case:

For all that they could be mistaken in, was, either such Things as their own Reason was not able to find out, or such as Revelation was to inform them of.

But as for those Things their Reason could not find out, they were necessary to be made known by Revelation, and how they should mistake in Things that

they knew is not easy to apprehend. And 'tis what we could never have understood, had not this History resolved the Difficulty.

And though we see, how they were drawn into Mistake once, yet we must think they would be more cautious for the future, and we have no Reason to doubt but they were so.

And therefore since that Depravation of their Nature, which they derived to their Children, was the Effect of some Sin before they had any Children; and since they were not capable of sinning, but by mistake, and not easily capable of mistaking often; we may thence conclude, that as this Depravation of human Nature was the Effect of Sin; so it was by consequence of, the first Sin.

And if so, it will follow,

First, That it was either inflicted on our first Parent as a Punishment of that Sin, or else,

Secondly, That it was the natural Effect of eating that Fruit.

If we suppose it a Punishment, considering that a first Fault, especially if owing to Mistake, is usually looked upon as Matter of Mercy: And considering how long-suffering God appears now to be, one would think, that he would hardly inflict a severer Punishment, than he had threatened for a single Fact of this Nature.

For all that was threatened was Death, but if the moral Depravation of their Nature was inflicted too, this was a more severe Punishment than Death.

To punish Sin of any Kind with Death alone might be proper for the Support of God's Authority, and therefore might be thought convenient as a Warning to the succeeding World.

But to suppose, that a holy and good God, who does no otherwise incline to preserve Sinners, but as he desires their Happiness, and as a means of that, their Reformation; and who will not do this without

out some means to discourage the Innocent from imitating the Sinner:

I say, to suppose that such a Being would punish such a Sin as this was, with such a Corruption of Nature, as was in itself an unholy State, would seem to be an unholy Act.

And therefore one would rather chuse to account for this Corruption,

Secondly, By supposing it to have arisen from a natural Cause, that is, the Fruit itself might have been the Cause of it in a natural Way.

Now that it was so, as we have very good Reason to believe, from what we have observed; so if it does also appear from those Effects which were produced by the eating of it, in the Bodies of our first Parents, even according to this History itself, it will be a further Addition to its Credibility.

Now the first Effect that we are here informed of, is, that upon the eating of the Fruit, *their Eyes were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and sewed Fig Leaves together to make them Aprons.*

Now by *their Eyes being opened*, must be understood the discovering something, which they had never seen. And by their *knowing they were naked*, must be meant, that they found themselves under a Necessity of being clothed.

They saw such uncomely Motions and Disorders in their Bodies, as they were ashamed of, and therefore thought it necessary to hide. And *Adam* is represented as making this Excuse for hiding himself from God.

And if so, we cannot be at a loss to account,

How the Depravation of human Nature might be produced by a natural Cause.

For these Effects which the Fruit produced in the Bodies of our first Parents, do shew a manifest Depravation of human Nature, both as to that moral and natural Perfection, which they were created in.

'Till

'Till the eating of this Fruit all the Appetites of the Body were under the abſolute Command of the Mind.

But as ſoon as ever they had eaten, 'tis plain the Body became immediately ungovernable, becauſe we ſee its Motions were ſuch, as Reaſon condemned, but yet ſuch as they could not ſubdue, and therefore were forced to hide.

And then as to the natural Perfection of the Body. As ſoon as ever this Fruit was eaten, its natural Equability of Temper was broken, and new and diſorderly Motions were excited; the Blood was viſibly inflamed, and the animal Spirits not only diſturbed, but probably augmented too, by the new Juices of this Fruit; which being incorporated with the Blood may be conceived to create, not only an unnatural, but alſo a corruptive Fermentation in the whole.

For the Health, Vigor, and Stability of the Body conſiſts in a due Combination of its Parts. And therefore it being compoſed of ſeveral Parts, in various Motions, of diverſe Natures, and diſcordant Qualities, while theſe continue in a due Mixture, a juſt Proportion, an equal Temperature, and regular Operation, as there is a natural Harmony, ſo there is a perfect Health and Vigor maintained. But when this natural Harmony is broke, the Conſtitution muſt unavoidably be injured.

Now that this was the Nature of this forbidden Fruit, that as it had excited ſtrange Diſorders in the Body, ſo it would likewiſe beget Corruptions and Death, is further probable from this very Hiſtory.

For we are here told not only of this Tree of Knowledge, but likewiſe of a Tree of Life, which, after our firſt Parents had tranſgreſſed, they were excluded from.

And as they were not allowed to eat of the other, leſt they ſhould die; ſo on the contrary they are deprived of this, leſt they ſhould eat of it, and live.

Now

Now from hence, as we may argue on the one Hand, that this Tree of Life was of a sanative Virtue, which would naturally preserve Life:

So on the other Hand, we may as reasonably conclude, that the Tree of Knowledge was of a noxious Quality, which would naturally bring Corruption and Death.

For since they were denied the Use of this Tree of Life, lest they should eat of it and live. As it is thence evident, that the eating that Tree would have prevented their dying; so it is equally evident that this Death was purely a natural Effect, in that it might be cured by a natural Cause.

Now from all this put together, it does sufficiently appear, how the human Nature came to be depraved, according to this History of *Moses*; wherein it is set forth as the natural Effect of Sin, and that too the first Sin of our first Parents, and that Sin committed upon Mistake, and that too in a Matter of Revelation, and that too in respect of something, which they thought their Duty to do, as necessary to their Happiness in making them like God.

In all which we see a wonderful Credibility, as there is an evident and exact Agreement between this History, and our forgoing Reasonings.

Why God did not prevent the Depravation of human Nature, answered.

And though it may seem strange that God should permit such a fatal Event, as this, to come to pass;

Yet if we remember, what has been proved, that God governs all Things according to their Natures, there is nothing in this Event but what may be very fairly accounted for.

For as Mankind are rational Creatures indued with Understanding, and Will, if they be governed according to their Natures, it must be in such a way as is suitable to these Faculties.

And

And by consequence, they must not only be provided with all the necessary Means of Knowledge of every Thing necessary to be known, and with sufficient Motives to chuse and do whatever is necessary to be chosen and done, but they must also be left to their own Freedom.

And therefore, when God had forbidden the eating of the forbidden Fruit, as being in its own Nature dongerous to be eaten; and had forewarned them of the Danger under the Notion of a Penalty, and that too expressed in such a manner as though he had engaged his own Veracity to see the Execution of it.

After they had been thus informed what was necessary for them to do; what could there be wanting in their Case to a rational Nature, but to leave them to chuse according to their Reason?

And if after this they do eat of this Fruit, what can Reason expect, but that as God likewise governs natural Things in a natural Way, the Fruit should be left as a natural Cause to produce its natural Effect, as this History tells us that it did? And therefore, what can we desire more consistent with the Natures and Reasons of Things, and by consequence more worthy to be received by reasonable Men, than this Account of *Moses*'s, so far as we have considered it?

Thus we have a View of the Effects of the first Sin, and of the Origin of the Depravation of human Nature.

The necessary Methods of Providence upon the first Sin considered.

For the more exact Inquiry into these, it will be necessary to look back, and consider the Case of our first Parents; and

The first Thing we may observe in it, is, that, whereas they were, before they transgressed, in a State of Perfection and Immortality, they were now sure to die.

And as Death was contrary to their Nature, and that Happiness they were made for, so if we conceive the Goodness of God disposed to consult their Happiness in this Case, we must suppose some Method would be provided for their Preservation, so far as they were capable of it.

Now we have shewn already, that a Sinner in this Case might be capable of Preservation, so far as any suitable means could be found for the Prevention of a future Disobedience, and the Maintenance of the Honour and Authority of God.

What Methods are most proper for this End, God alone is Judge. But it seems not unsuitable to Reason, 1*st*, That God should let the Sinner feel some ill Effects of Sin; and 2*dly*, That he should shew some token of his Displeasure at it, by inflicting some suitable Punishment for it, to affright the Offender from a further Disobedience, and discourage others from following his Example.

And therefore since our first Parents were subject to certain Death on the Day they eat of the forbidden Fruit, and might have been put to Death immediately; we have reason to think, if they were not put to Death, that there was some Provision of this kind made.

And as this is a Matter of Fact, and can be known only in History, if this History of *Moses* gives us any suitable Account of this, so far 'tis a credible History. But,

2*dly*, Though our first Parents might be preserved from Death by the Goodness of God, yet here another Question will arise, how long that Preservation might be supposed to last? For that it could not be a total Preservation from Death, we have reason to think from the Natures of Things.

For though they were originally made of such a Constitution, that, while they continued innocent, they were capable of living for ever; yet if upon eating

ing the Fruit, their Nature was changed; then since God governs all Things according to their Natures, natural Things in a natural Way, by leaving natural Causes to produce their natural Effects, we may hence conclude, that God would not so far preserve our first Parents from Death, as to exempt them from dying.

Besides, according to this Account of *Moses*, God seems to have put them under a moral Necessity of it, by giving his Word, that it should be so.

And though it may be disputed in such Cases whether Lawgivers are obliged by such Expressions to a literal Execution of such Penalties; yet considering that the total Exemption from this Penalty might incline our first Parents or their Posterity to think God regardless of his Word, there seems to be a Necessity it should be executed.

But then as they could never be sure they should be put to Death, and by consequence could never be sure God would perform his Word, so long as they were preserved, unless they had some further Revelation concerning it; from hence we may infer the Necessity of a Revelation concerning their Death.

But then as the Reason of their being preserved at all, is, their Happiness, and as no Man can be happy under the Expectation of Death; so from hence it will follow, that as there was a Necessity in our first Parents Case, to assure them of a Certainty of Death, so there was likewise a Necessity of another Revelation to assure them of a Deliverance from it, and of their being restored to Life again.

And thus we have a View of several Revelations that seem necessary in the Nature of Things, upon the first Act of Sin, considering this first Effect of it, the Certainty of Death.

And if to this we add, how this Sin of our first Parents came about, *viz.* by the Instigation of the Devil; if it was, as 'tis probable it might be, attempt-

ed by him out of Envy at the Happiness of Man, and in Opposition to the Wisdom and Power of God: Here is a great deal more required in this Case: Here is not only the Honour of God, in respect of Man to be provided for, lest he should think God regardless of his Laws and his Word; but here is also something to be done in relation to the Devil, lest he should seem to be too hard for the Wisdom of God, as if he had defeated his Design.

And as from hence we may conclude, that if we have any true History of Providence in this Case, we must have some Account of this Kind; so it is a very material Character of the Credibility of this History of *Moses* that it agrees with all this.

For in this History of *Moses* we are no sooner told of our first Parents Sin, and the Death they were exposed to, but we are told of their Preservation; but lest this should encourage them to Sin,

1*st*, For the Prevention of their future Disobedience, we read, that they were left to bear the ill Effects of their past Transgression, and for that purpose, as they were now become mortal they were shut out from the Tree of Life.

2*dly*, That God might convince them of the great Regard he had to the Observation of his Laws, we have next an Account of the most likely means possible, to give them a likely Apprehension of God's Displeasure: For,

1*st*, God is here not only represented as banishing them from Paradise, and cursing the Ground for their sakes; but as also denouncing a personal Judgment upon them. And

2*dly*, Lest they might have some Hopes to be exempted from Death, he tells them, that as sure as they were made of Dust, so surely they should return to Dust.

3*dly*, The more effectually to prevent their future Disobedience, it is very probable there was an Institution

tution of Sacrifices at this very time, and the Skins of the Beasts to be offered to God were appointed for Clothing; the immediate End of which Institution was to preserve a just Idea of their Sin and Danger in their Minds, because by this means, whenever they should put on or off, or even but look upon their Cloaths, they must be put in mind of the sad State they had brought themselves into, and by the dying Struggles of the Animals they slew, they must not only be taught what was meant by dying, but also by this means the Dread of it must be continually kept alive in their Thoughts, and they must naturally be afraid of sinning again, lest the Repetition of that which brought them under the Certainty of Death at first, should provoke God to a speedy Execution of it. And,

4*thly*, Because the Devil was the great Contriver of this Mischief to Mankind, here is likewise a Denunciation of Vengeance against him. [See *Gen.* iii. 14, 15.]

Which Denunciation though spoken as to a Serpent, I conceive to relate only to the Devil; and when it is said, that he shall go upon his Belly, the Words seem to be intended to express a Condemnation of the Devil to an ignoble State.

And as for the other Expression, that of *bruising the Serpent's Head*, this must denote, when applied to the Devil, his Destruction. And as the Head is the Fountain of Policy, so when the Devil's Head is said to be bruised, it must naturally denote the Destruction of his Works.

And as the Heel of a Man is an inconsiderable Part, and a Wound in it is usually capable of an easy Cure; so when it is said that the Devil shall wound the Heel of the Seed of the Woman, it must mean, that he shall only do him some inconsiderable Mischief.

This seems to be the natural Meaning of these Expressions, and they were probably spoken in Oppo-

sition to the several Aims the Devil might have had in engaging in this wicked Enterprize: As they might likewise be intended for the Comfort of our first Parents: So that,

1*st*, Whereas it had been threatened to our first Parents, that in the Day they should eat of the forbidden Fruit, they should die, it is not improbable, that the Devil might imagine, that upon the very first Act of Disobedience, they should be destroyed: And therefore as he thought to make an end of them at once; so 'tis here promised in Opposition to this vain Imagination, that the Woman should live to have Seed, and so his Hopes should be defeated in this respect. And,

2*dly*, Whereas he seduced the Woman into Sin and Misery under a Pretext of Friendship, in Opposition to this, a War is here declared against the Devil and his Seed, which should end in the Ruin of them and their Devices. And,

3*dly*, Whereas the particular Policy of the Devil in this first Temptation, was to deprive them of that Happiness they were made for; so in Opposition to this, since 'tis here said, that the Devil's Policy should be here defeated by the Seed of the Woman, here is implied a positive Promise, that through this Seed some Means should be provided, whereby Man should be reconciled to God, and being freed from that State of Imperfection, Death and Misery, they should be restored to a State of Holiness, Perfection, and everlasting Happiness.

If this be allowed to be the meaning of the Promise, what better Provision could there be in Reason for this great End of Providence, the Prevention of future Disobedience, and the Encouragement of Virtue and Holiness, than this?

But if over and above all this, it shall appear, that this general Promise was not only explained to our first Parents; but God entered into Covenant with them

them for the Performance of it on his Part, upon the Condition of Faith and Obedience on theirs, and not only sealed this Covenant with them by Sacrifice, but appointed the Observation of such Sacrifices as a sacramental Sign and Seal of the Benefits they were to expect by this promised Redeemer, when he should come: If, I say, this shall appear, and that too from this very History, here was such a Provision made against Sin, as that there seems to be no room for future Guilt, so far as Reason could be wrought upon.

For as it must be the greatest Comfort to the dejected Sinners labouring under the Sense of what they lost, and the Fear of that Death they looked for, to be assured of being delivered from it into everlasting Happiness; so no stronger Motive or Encouragement could be given to persuade them to a holy Life, than to have it made the Condition of everlasting Life, and the Remembrance of this continually kept up by the frequent Returns of Sacrifice.

Now that there was some Explanation made of this great Promise of a Saviour, and of the Method of Redemption by him, we have very strong Reason to think, even from this very History, and that from several remarkable Instances. As,

A Covenant made with our first Parents of Faith and Obedience.

1*st*, In the very next Chapter after this Promise [*Gen.* iv.] we read of Sacrifices.

Now upon what probable Grounds could bare Reason have suggested, that a good God, would be pleased with that, which, unless he had appointed it for some wise Ends of his Providence, appears to be full of Horror and Cruelty; or, that he could be pleased with shedding the Blood of the most innocent and useful Creatures?

We have already shewed, that the killing of

Beasts was not the Dictate of Reason, but must have arose from Revelation, unless Necessity can be supposed to have obliged Men to it for Food; But this cannot be imagined in our first Parents Days: For we are immediately told after the Fall that they were cloathed in the Skins of Beasts, and that God appointed them to be used in that manner. And since every Thing was made perfect in its Kind, we cannot suppose any Thing should die naturally so soon at least after the Creation; so we must conclude that those Beasts were put to Death by the Order of God. And since we so early read of Sacrifices, 'tis natural to conceive, that the first killing of Beasts might have had its Original from that Institution, and that that Institution was ordained just after the Fall;

I say 'tis natural to conceive this, from what we have taken notice of; but it will be much more so if we consider the several wise Ends of Providence it might serve.

The Institution of Sacrifices explained, and the several Reasons of it.

As, *1st*, Our first Parents had been threatened with Death, but what Notion could they have of dying? And therefore Sacrifices were intended to preserve in their Minds what was meant by Death, and what they must expect for their Transgression. But,

2dly, As they were threatened with Death for their Disobedience, so they had the Promise of a Redeemer to deliver them from it; and 'tis very reasonable to suppose this early Institution might have some Relation to this Promise. For if it shall appear hereafter that this Redemption from Death was to be effected by the Death of the promised Seed, and that this Death would be accepted by God, as an Atonement, through which they should be restored to the Favour of God, and rendered capable of everlasting Happiness,

Happiness, it is more than probable, that Sacrifices might be appointed in remembrance of this Sacrifice of the promised Seed.

For since 'tis evident from the Scriptures, that God did not intend this promised Redeemer should come till many Ages after the Promise made; 'tis reasonable to imagine, that he would appoint some Means to keep up a Remembrance of him: And if this Method of Redemption was to be by his Death, there is nothing more natural than to suppose, that Sacrifices were ordained by God as a sacramental Sign and Representation which the World was to observe in the Faith and Expectation of the Death and Sacrifice of the promised Saviour to come, as Christians celebrate the Christian Sacrament in Remembrance of his Death and Sacrifice already past.

This is a very easy Account of this Institution. But this is not all;

We may further observe, that since this promised Saviour was not to come, till many Ages after, there was some Assurance to be given, that the Virtue of his future Death and Sacrifice should be as effectually convey'd to all Ages before his Coming, as to those who should live to see him come: For otherwise they might suspect whether they should have any Benefit by him.

Now to assure them of this might be another End of this Institution of Sacrifices; and as the Method of God's declaring his Acceptance of Sacrifices was by Fire from Heaven to consume them, so whenever they should find their Sacrifices thus accepted, it was to be looked upon as an Assurance of God's Favour, and of their Acceptance with him through the Death and Sacrifice of the Saviour to come.

And if so, this Institution was not only intended as a sacramental Sign, but also as a sacramental Seal, to assure the World of all the Benefits of the Sacrifice of the promised Redeemer till his coming. What

can

can be more rational than this? And if this be so, what can be more irrational than to imagine that God should appoint an Institution for such great Ends and not acquaint Mankind with the meaning of it, when the fulfilling the Ends, depended upon the Knowledge of them? All this therefore we may conclude might be revealed to our first Parents.

Secondly, Sacrifices also were used to seal and confirm Covenants, and if so, 'tis probable that God might enter into Covenant with our first Parents upon giving this Promise of a Saviour, and this Institution be used as a Seal of that Covenant.

We do not read of any such Covenant, but it seems to be implied where God is represented as saying to *Noah*, *Behold I will establish my Covenant with thee:* In which Expression the Words *my Covenant*, do naturally betoken some Covenant then known to be formerly made with some other, which should be renewed and confirmed with him.

And if so, when can we in reason imagine that Covenant to have been struck, or with whom so well as with our first Parents, upon the giving this Promise of a Saviour?

For what can be more reasonable than that when God promises a Favour to Sinners in Relation to their Happiness, he should do it upon such Conditions, as are necessary to be performed in order to their Happiness; and what time can be more seasonable to prescribe the Conditions than when he makes the Promise?

From hence we may conclude that when God made this Promise of a Redeemer to Mankind, he did it upon some Conditions to be performed by them; and that for the Performance of these Conditions, he entered into Covenant with them and sealed that Covenant by Sacrifice.

Of this we have a further Evidence from the Old Testament.

For

For in that very Place where we read of Sacrifices firſt, we find *Abel*'s Offering was accepted, and *Cain*'s rejected.

Cain being angry at this, God is repreſented as reaſoning the Matter with him, *If thou doeſt well, ſhalt not thou be accepted?* ſays he; *but if not, Sin lieth at thy Door.* Which Words are an Appeal to himſelf, whether he did not know what would recommend him to God's Acceptance, and whether he had not been wanting in it.

In what he was in fault *Moſes* does not tell us, but if the New Teſtament be of any Authority, it expreſsly ſays, that *Cain*'s Sacrifice was not accepted for want of Faith, *Heb.* xi.

And ſince he is accuſed of Sin for want of Faith, as Sin is a Tranſgreſſion of a Law, it is thence evident that Faith had been enjoined as a Condition of Acceptance with God.

And that it was ſo, we may ſee, *Heb.* xi. 7. where *Noah* is ſaid to become Heir of the Righteouſneſs, which is by Faith; that is, according to St. *Paul*'s Phraſe, of the Covenant of Righteouſneſs by Faith, or that Covenant formerly made with our firſt Parents, the Condition of which was Righteouſneſs, or the Obedience of Faith.

Why this of a Saviour was ſo darkly expreſſed by *Moſes* might be; becauſe it was a Thing univerſally known in his Time; and therefore it was enough for him to make mention of the general Promiſe only, the meaning of which, as they had kept to his Time, he had no reaſon to ſuſpect they would forget; and that not only, as being of great Importance to remember, but eſpecially when they had an Inſtitution of Sacrifices on purpoſe to keep up the Remembrance of it.

If then there was ſuch an Explication of this Promiſe, as ſeems to appear from theſe Obſervations, this muſt give credit to this Hiſtory.

For we cannot imagine any Method of Providence more suitable to our first Parents Circumstances, and more proper to prevent their after Disobedience, and maintain the Honour and Authority of God as a Law-giver, than the Revelation of a Sinner so explained to them; and therefore as this History so far agrees with our Reason, we have so far reason to believe it true: And if so, many great Consequences will follow that will give us a further View into various Revelations afterward, that Mankind would stand in need of and which we might expect to find some Account of in any regular History of Providence.

The Necessity of various Revelations.

As, *first*, If it be true, as we have shewn, that upon the first Act of Sin, God made a Promise to our first Parents of a Saviour: As this was a promise of great Importance; so it was, by consequence of the highest Importance to them, that this Promise should be kept in Memory:

And as we cannot conceive that God would be wanting in any necessary Means of its Preservation, so it is reasonable to expect, in any authentic History of ancient Times, several Methods made use of for this purpose.

2*dly*, Since so much depended upon this Promise of a Saviour, and yet nothing here said when he should come; there seems to be a Necessity in the Nature of the Thing, that there should be, some time or other, some Information given of the determinate Time, as likewise some Marks of him, whereby he should be known. And,

3*dly*, Since 'tis said he should be the Seed of a Woman, 'tis natural to conceive, that some Time or other, some Means should be provided for the Examination of this Matter, and the certain Proof of his being so. And,

4*thly*, Since this Promise was of great Importance, 'tis

'tis natural to conceive that all Mankind, at all times after, would be eager for its Completion; and by this means, as they must meet with continual Disappointments, which would make them uneasy, there seems a Necessity of a frequent Confirmation of this Promise to support their Hopes; and the longer it was before his coming, so much the oftner ought this Confirmation to be made: And by Consequence we may conclude, that if there has been any Revelation of this kind, there have been many.

And if so, then a History of Providence must not only be a History of the Rise and Progress of Sin, and of proper Methods taken for the Prevention of it, but also of various Revelations and Prophecies relating to the promised Seed, if he was not to be born till long after.

And by Consequence, as we can have no regular History of Providence without some such Prophecies and Revelations: So it will be a particular Mark of the Credibility of the Scripture History, that it agrees in all these Respects: But this shall be proved hereafter.

The Method of divine Providence after the first Sin.

Having considered the Origin of Sin, and how Mankind became liable to Death, and how far our first Parents were capable of Preservation, after they had sinned, and the Necessity of various Revelations upon that Account, and the exact Provision that was made accordingly.

So let us now enquire, what Effect these Revelations had upon Mankind according to this History.

As the first and great End of God's Providence in his Dealings with Sinners, as such, is the Prevention of Sin, Sin being the only Thing that can prevent their Happiness, the Question is, whether these Revelations, vouchsafed to our first Parents, prevented all after Sin, or not? And if not, then we must

must enquire, what Account this History gives us of them; what their Circumstances and Occasions were, from Time to Time, and what Methods of Providence they or their Children stood in need of, and whether it tells us of any suitable Provision made.

As for our first Parents, this History makes no mention of any after Transgression on their Part.

But as for their Children, we soon find it otherwise; one Brother murdering another, because the Offering of the one was better accepted than that of the other.

Why this should occasion such a Resentment, we are not told; but whatever the Reason of the Fact might be, it was of so heinous a Nature, that there seems a Necessity of some Method to be taken, suitable to the Nature of the Case.

Death had been already threatened to Sin, but Death does not seem so natural a Punishment, whilst the World was yet so very small; and yet some exemplary Punishment might justly be suspected, for the Prevention of future Transgressions of that kind, which were more particularly to be prevented then, whilst Men were so few.

And therefore as we may expect some Account of this nature, in a credible History of Providence relating to this particular Fact, so this History of *Moses* tells us, that *Cain* was not put to Death, but preserved to feel the natural Stings of his guilty Conscience. The Ground is cursed for his sake, and here his Family are banished from the Society of those, whom God intended to favour with his Presence.

This severe Punishment, 'tis probable, our first Parents understood as an Exclusion of him and his Posterity from any Pretence of having the promised Saviour descend from any of them.

This Notion so far prevailed in the Family of *Seth*, and they were so confident that this Promise was to be fulfilled in them, that they distinguished themselves

selves by the Title *of the Sons and Children of God*, in Opposition to the Posterity of *Cain*, whom they reproachfully stiled, *the Sons and Daughters of Men*, *Gen.* iv.

And upon this Account the Family of *Seth* seems to have kept themselves a separate People.

When this Separation was injoined is not said; but as *Cain* and his Family were banished, it does not seem consistent with that Punishment, to leave the rest of the World at Liberty to converse with them; and because their promiscuous Marriages with them was afterwards said to be one Reason of the Flood, it seems therefore to be implied, that this was one Part of their Disobedience, and by Consequence, that God had commanded a Separation.

And as they were at last universally blended together with that accursed Seed; and as this extraordinary Change of Things, begat a Necessity of some new Methods of Providence suitable to this Occasion, we may expect to hear of in a credible History, so we are here told of a new Revelation made to declare God's Intention to destroy them all.

Various Means of Reformation tried before the Deluge.

But before the World came to this Condition, we cannot conceive, but something had been done for the Prevention of this Wickedness. *Moses* indeed says nothing of it; but the New Testament tells us of various Methods taken of divers Prophets sent to preach Righteousness to them. [See 2 *Pet.* ii. 5. *Jude* 14.]

And with these, and perhaps many other external Means of Reformation, 'tis intimated to us, that God was not wanting in any inward Assistances of his holy Spirit.

But when all these Means were ineffectual, then 'tis said that God sent the Flood upon the whole World, sparing only *Noah* and his Family, and such a Number

a Number of Creatures of every Kind, as his Wisdom thought fit to be preserved.

This is the Account we have from *Moses*, and as this is a very rational Account, so 'tis obvious to every Understanding, that according to this State of Things, there were several new Revelations necessary, with which this History agrees.

Several new Revelations necessary at the Deluge.

As 1*st*, 'Tis evident if the World was to be destroyed by a Flood, and God had determined, that *Noah* should be saved, 'twas necessary he should be timely informed of it; and accordingly we are told of a Revelation given him, with Instructions to provide himself an Ark, and the Manner how to make it.

And, 2*dly*, As the Time of going into, and coming out of this Ark depended on the Will of God, so it could not be known without his Revelation; and accordingly *Noah* is here said to have received Directions.

And, 3*dly*, Since, when he came out of the Ark, 'tis natural to suppose, he might be discouraged from a necessary Industry, suspecting it would be all in vain; the History tells us that God assured him, that he would not any more drown the World.

4*thly*, As *Noah* and his Family might be afraid, considering the quick Increase of other Creatures, lest they should be destroyed by them, we are told, that the Dread of them should be upon every living Creature, and that they themselves should multiply exceedingly.

5*thly*, Because the Fruits of the Earth were now become useless, or perhaps were not now capable of affording a proper Sustenance; as there was a Necessity of some other Sustenance, so here we read of a Liberty given them to eat Flesh.

But then,

6*thly*, As they were allowed to feed on Flesh,

since they could not thence know, but they must eat it raw, which might naturally make them savage; and becaufe the very killing of the Beasts for Food, might by degrees train them up to Cruelty, and so make them less averse to Murder, as 'tis natural to conceive there might be; so 'tis here said, there was a positive Prohibition of eating Blood, and Murder is forbidden under the Penalty of Death, and every one is commanded to avenge it. And,

Lastly, Becaufe 'tis natural to conceive, Mankind would upon every rainy Weather be fearful of the like Devastation, 'tis reasonable to expect that God would satisfy them in this Particular.

And accordingly we are told of an Assurance given, that God would not destroy them in this Manner any more; and that he made the Appearance of the Rainbow in the Clouds, a standing Memorial of his Promise. And what a Goodness was this in God, that he should make this a standing Token of their Safety, which in the Nature of Things would ordinarily be presented to them at that Time, when they would have the greatest Apprehension of Danger.

The necessary Methods of Providence to the new World.

Being now come to the Beginning of the new World, we are next to inquire what might be necessary in their Case either for the Incouragement of Obedience, or the Prevention of Sin, or the Preservation of a due Faith in the promised Seed.

As for the Incouragement of Obedience, and the Prevention of Sin, nothing further could be necessary after so remarkable a Difference made between the Righteous and the Wicked; and therefore we read of no other Means at that Time:

But as to the Promise of a Saviour, we may expect to read of something more, to strengthen and support their Faith in this Promise; for the Belief of it was so far sunk even in the Family of *Noah*, that

the Sin imputed by this History to *Ham*, [*Gen.* ix. 22.] is generally understood by the *Jewish* Rabbies, of something done in Derision of this Promise.

It is evident, there is nothing in the Thing itself, consider'd simply, but may be understood in a very good Sense; but since we see it so severely punish'd, it must have something worse in it, than we are now able to apprehend: But if it was done by way of Scoff at this Promise, it was then a Crime of a high Nature, and upon this Account, lest any one should be incouraged to follow his Example, 'tis worthy our Observation, that he and his Posterity are here set forth, as severely punished by God for it: I say, punished by God; because what is here said to be spoken by *Noah*, is to be understood as revealed to him by God; because he not only knew what had been done, when he was asleep, but the Curse he denounced upon it, was afterward literally fulfilled.

And whilst we consider *Noah* as a Prophet, from hence we may understand the Blessing of *Shem* for the Support of the Faith in the promised Seed. And how briefly soever it is here delivered in a History only of general Hints, yet 'tis reasonable to think it must have been understood by *Noah*, so 'tis very probable it was more fully explained by him.

To have their Hopes thus confirmed again to them, was a very great Motive to Obedience; but because, notwithstanding this, Mankind soon degenerated into Wickedness; to prevent the Progress of which, was probably the Reason of the next great event, *viz.* the Confusion of Languages; and in consequence of that, the Dispersion of Nations.

The Reason of the Confusion of Languages.

The Occasion of this Event was the Building of the Tower of *Babel* by *Nimrod* the Grandson of *Ham*, probably in Opposition to the Judgment denounced against that Family, that they should be subject to their Brethren. For

For 'tis rational to conceive, that this Prediction would naturally prompt them to provide against it: And 'tis probable, they might begin this Tower not only for their own Defence, in Defiance of Heaven, in respect of the Curse denounced against them, but also as the Centre of Union to their Family, and the Seat of that universal Empire, which they might hope to make themselves Masters of.

And if so, then as there was a Necessity, if this Prediction of *Noah* was revealed by God, that he should interpose for their Defeat, for the Vindication of his Honour and Veracity; so there could be no Way more effectual to convince them, that their Defeat was effected by the Hand of God, than this strange Confusion of their Languages, which could be wrought only by a divine Power; and one would have thought it should have awaken'd them into a Sense of their Folly.

But when we further consider, that this Posterity of *Ham* were very wicked, and that their bad Example might infect the rest of Mankind; there seem'd a Necessity of the next great Event, *the Dispersion of Nations*. For,

1*st*, By this, here is a Separation made of the wicked Family of *Ham* from the rest of the World, that they should not be corrupted by them; and lest a local Separation should not serve the Turn, here is,

2*dly*, A Confusion of Languages, which would naturally hinder all Intercourse, not only with the Families of *Shem* and *Japhet*, but even among themselves, excepting with such, as should speak the same Language. And,

3*dly*, As they who spake the same Language, would naturally live together, so there must be as many distinct Societies as there were Languages; and the more Divisions there were, whatever Part was infected, the less would the Corruption spread, whilst there could be no easy Communion between them: And,

4*thly*, As the several Societies would form themselves into distinct Governments, so these several Governments must naturally contribute more to the Restraint of Wickedness, than could possibly have been done, had the World continued under one great Empire.

And besides the very Jealousies and Emulations between Nation and Nation, and the Ambition of out-doing one another, must be a great Means to restrain Men from publick Vices, and a Spur to many noble Virtues.

Lastly, This Division of Nations was a wise Means of Providence for the more natural Punishment of Sin; for when any Nation should become wicked, here was no need of any immediate Correction from above; but by this Means one People might be made to punish another, without the Destruction of either: And when any People should become incurable, God could destroy them without hurting the rest.

So that upon the whole, we see nothing could better prevent Sin, and encourage Virtue, than this Confusion of Languages, and Dispersion of Nations was; and therefore there can be no room to doubt the Credibility of this History thus far.

What happen'd immediately upon this Dispersion this History is silent in: For it seems the main Design of *Moses*, to carry on the Succession of the Family of *Shem*, as the Branch from which the *Messiah* was to come; and therefore he takes little Notice of any Thing but what relates to them.

And we find that even they, as well as the Posterity of *Ham*, were about four hundred Years from the Flood, so far degenerated into Idolatry, [*Joshua* xxiv. 2.] that there was no way of maintaining true Religion in the World, without some new Method of Providence for this Purpose.

And since the Knowledge of the true God is absolutely necessary to the Happiness of Mankind, because

cause their Happiness consists in being like God, and by Consequence the Attainment of it depends upon their forming right Notions of him; we have no Reason to doubt, but the Providence of God would display itself for the Recovery and Preservation of true Religion in the Knowledge and Worship of the true God, according as their Case required; and we may expect to find it so, in any credible History of Providence.

The calling of Abraham, *and the Reason of it.*

And therefore when true Religion was in Danger of being lost, God is represented as calling forth *Abraham* from his Country, that he might be the Father of a Nation he design'd to train up in the Knowledge of himself, and in the true Faith of that great Instrument, and Motive of true Religion, the Promise of a Saviour.

And as he was a Person well disposed towards God, this History seems to represent him as set up by God, not only as a Pattern, but as a Guide to succeeding Generations, *Gen.* xviii. 19.

This seems to be the Design of Providence in this Dispensation towards *Abraham*, according to this History; and as something of this Kind might reasonably be expected, this must be so far a credible History.

But here we must not suppose, that God intended not to prevent or reform the Idolatry and Ignorance of Nations, so long as the true Religion could be preserved among his chosen People; no, we may reasonably conclude, that there had been many Methods used for this Purpose before the calling of *Abraham*; as there likewise probably were many others afterwards, that we are told nothing of.

But as the calling of *Abraham* was the most effectual of all, and is the Foundation of the succeeding History, we have a more particular Account of this: And if so,

Let us, in the next Place, see what may reasonably be expected in History of this Person, and those that should descend from him, considering the End they were chosen for, supposing we had no Account of it; and if we find this History agree accordingly, it is so far a consistent and credible History.

The first thing to be expected in a credible History of this Man, is to find in him several great Instances of a remarkable and excellent Piety and Virtue.

And so he is set forth in this History, as a *burning and shining Light*, forsaking *Father and Mother, Brethren, and Sisters*, teaching his Posterity by his own Practice to *count all things but Dross and Dung, in Comparison of the Excellency of the Knowledge* of the true God and true Religion.

But what an amazing Instance of his Faith and Obedience was that of offering his Son? And how lively did he shew by this Example, the Possibility and Necessity of the strictest Obedience, even in the tenderest Acts of Self-denial, and of Trust and Resignation in the hardest Trials?

Now when we consider this Character of *Abraham* so agreeable to the Nature and Will of God, and so suitable to the Work he was chosen for, 'tis no wonder we read of great and eminent Favours, and uncommon Condescentions towards him.

The second Thing to be expected in an History of *Abraham*, is to read of great Motives and Incouragements to him, according as his Circumstances required; so we here find frequent Promises made him, and such Informations given him, as might be requisite to comfort him in his Undertaking, according as he had Occasion from time to time. As for instance;

No sooner had he left his Country, and arrived at the Land of *Canaan*, but we are told of a Promise of that Land to his Posterity; but afterwards,

wards, when he ſaw no Probability of this for want of an Heir; as 'tis natural to conceive he might be, ſo this Hiſtory tells us, that he was under ſome Uneaſineſs of Mind: He might have ſome doubtful Reaſonings how his Seed was to inherit the Land of *Canaan*, when he was likely to have none.

Now when this was the Encouragement to leave his Kindred, and he ſaw no likelihood of fulfilling this, as there was a Neceſſity for ſome proper Aſſiſtance in this Caſe; ſo we read of a Revelation made to aſſure him, that he ſhould have a Son, whoſe Poſterity ſhould poſſeſs that Land.

And that he might have no Doubt of this, God not only gave him a Sign to confirm this, by appointing him to provide a Sacrifice, which God ſhewed his Approbation of, by the paſſing of a Lamp of Fire between the divided Parts of it, but he alſo gives him a View of his whole Deſign, and ſhews him by what Steps he ſhould become a Nation. [*Gen.* xv. 13, *&c.*]

So that here we ſee a ſuitable Proviſion made, ſufficent to diſpel the Fears of *Abraham*, and confirm his Faith.

But yet it is here to be obſerved, that though *Abraham* is aſſured he ſhall have Children that ſhall deſcend from his own Body, yet here is nothing ſaid of the Time when: And as it was natural for him to think in this Caſe, that he ſhould have theſe Children by his Wife, when he afterwards found ſhe was paſt Children in the Courſe of Nature, this probably begat a new Doubt, whether he was to have them by her, or by another; and as this inclined *Sarah* to give him her Servant, (*Gen.* xvi. 2.) here was now a Neceſſity of a new Revelation to ſet them both right.

Accordingly we read of ſuch a Revelation, wherein *Abraham* is aſſured of a Son by *Sarah*, which Son ſhould be that bleſſed Seed, in whom all theſe Promiſes ſhould center, and in whom all the Families of

the Earth should be blessed: By which words must be meant that this Son should be the depositary of that Promise to our first Parents, relating to the Redeemer, who was to bruise the Serpent's Head: For as this was the greatest Blessing that God could bestow on sinful Men, and was such a Blessing as he intended for all Mankind, that would make themselves capable of it; so when 'tis here said, that in this Seed of *Abraham* by *Sarah* all Nations of the Earth should be blessed, this must naturally be supposed to relate to that great Blessing, expected from the promised Redeemer, and must therefore be understood, as a further Confirmation of that Promise.

And for the Remembrance and Assurance of all this, he renews his Covenant with *Abraham*, and his Seed, not only promising them the Land of *Canaan*, but also obliging them to be circumcised, and that not only as a Mark, by which they should be distinguished to be his, (*Gen.* xvii. 8, *&c.*) but also probably, as a standing Sign, that God would perform his Covenant with them.

These are the chief of those many Revelations that God was pleased to vouchsafe to *Abraham*; and as this is what we might reasonably expect to find in a History of so great a Man, chosen out by God for so great an End, this makes this Relation very credible.

Before I proceed to the third Thing required in a History of *Abraham*, it may not be amiss, because these several Revelations to *Abraham* are the Hinge of the succeeding History, to make some particular Remarks upon them, as being such as will give some Confirmation to them, and add a further Credibility to the Relation.

Remarks upon these several Revelations to Abraham.

1*st*, Then as God was not wanting to *Abraham* in suitable Encouragements according to his several Occasions, so the Land of *Canaan* was promised him after he was come away from his Country and Kindred

dred, as the proper Motive to keep him separate from them.

But since this Promise was not to be fulfilled till after the Space of four hundred Years, one may naturally conclude from hence, that he understood something more to be meant by the Promise of the Land than barely the Land itself.

What this was we are not told, but it was probably explained by *Abraham:* And as he had been bred up in the Faith of the Saviour promised, and lived in the Hope of the Pardon of Sin, and everlasting Life implied in that Promise; so this land might be given as a Pledge to assure him of those Advantages he hoped for, not only to himself, but his Posterity, that would make themselves capable of them by treading in the Steps of *Abraham.* And if so, it was a powerful Consideration to attempt any Enterprize whatsoever.

2*dly*, As *Abraham* had the Promise not only of a numerous Issue, but that *in his Seed all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*, 'tis worth our Notice here, how credible the Story is in this respect.

For as the Promise of a Saviour was of the highest Importance to Mankind, so 'tis natural to conceive it would be looked upon as a particular Privilege to any Family to have this Saviour descend from them: And upon this Account, as it was natural for all Mankind eagerly to desire Children, in hopes that this Saviour might be of his Posterity, so no Motive could so much work upon them, as to be assured of these Things.

And therefore when *Abraham* was first called to dwell in a strange Land, as he stood in need of the strongest Motives to support him under the Difficulties he was exposed to, so 'tis agreeable to see he is assisted by the most prevalent Consideration that could be offered him.

3*dly*, We have observed before, that God told *Abraham*, how his Posterity should become a *Nation*; that

that *they should be Strangers in a Land that was not theirs, where they should serve and be afflicted, and after four hundred Years God would judge the Land, and bring them out with great Substance.* And there was a Necessity of some such Prediction.

For since God foresaw this People would, and his Wisdom intended they should be afflicted, it was necessary they should know this, and how long they should continue so: Because this was a most effectual Means to comfort them under their Sorrows, and keep them in a constant Dependence upon God: Because this Affliction having been foretold by him, was of itself a Proof of God's Promises to them; and though this was a grievous Burden, yet it brought its own Remedy along with it, in that it gave them assurance, that the whole Prediction should be fulfilled, and should one Day end in the Enjoyment of the Land of *Canaan*, and whatever else was meant by it.

And certainly *Abraham* taught them to understand more by it than the Land itself. For otherwise, what Motive could it be to them to bear such Afflictions upon the Prospect of a Country they could not live to enjoy. And therefore 'tis probable they were taught, that the Intention of this promised Land, was chiefly to assure them of a State of Happiness; and if so, whenever they should afterwards be possessed of that Land, it was the most engaging Motive possible to a future Resignation to God, and an entire Dependence on him; as it was also a Confirmation of their Hopes of the Happiness intended by that Land, as they were they sure of the Land itself.

We may further observe, that since they had the Promise of the Land of *Canaan*, it was likewise very suitable, that they should be sometime told how long they must expect the fulfilling of it.

For they might expect it sooner than was intended; and as by this means they would meet with many Disap-

Disappointments, so they might be tempted to lay aside their Hopes; and since they were to be afflicted, this might add to the Temptation.

But besides they might doubt of the Possibility of the Thing, whilst they saw the Land inhabited by others;

So that there seems a Necessity of a proper Revelation in this Case, to inform them how and when they should be possessed of it; and we must look upon this as a very credible Relation, that tells us of such a seasonable Prediction made, as accounts for all their Doubts and Difficulties.

4*thly*, Another Thing to be observed in this Story, is, that God is set forth as entering into Covenant with *Abraham*, for the Performance of his Promises to him, and Circumcision is made the Sign and Seal of that Covenant.

Which strange Ceremony, as it would hardly have ever been thought of by Man, it would never have been submitted to, but upon a thorough Persuasion of its being appointed by God; and it was a very wise Appointment to keep them a separate People to himself, being such a Mark in the Flesh, as no other People would voluntarily conform to them in.

And if it shall hereafter appear, that as this promised Land in this Covenant did represent to them a future State of Happiness, so Circumcision did likewise represent that Purity, which is required of those who would make themselves capable of that Happiness; and as no uncircumcised Person should enter into *Canaan*, so no one should enter into everlasting Happiness, but they who crucified the Flesh with the Affections; then we see a greater Wisdom in the Appointment of this otherwise odd Ceremony.

Thus we see how *Abraham* was provided with proper Encouragements, and assisted with suitable Motives, as Reason might expect to find in a credible Account of him. Which was the second Thing required in a credible History of *Abraham*.

The

The third Thing required in a History of Abraham.

Another thing to be expected in a History of *Abraham*, is, to be told how he became a Nation; and this we have set before us in a very rational and affecting manner in this History.

'Tis not easy to conceive, how the Seed of one Man should become a distinct Nation, whilst the World was inhabited, unless they were settled in some desolate Country; but since 'twas necessary for the Benefit of the World, that they should converse with other People; so 'tis very agreeable to see how this was brought about by their going into *Ægypt*, and that in such a Manner as is here represented.

One cannot but admire God's Wisdom, that since they were to become a distinct Nation, and must necessarily have some Place to live together, 'till they should be fit to be removed into the promised Land, that *Ægypt* should be the Place provided for them; a Place particularly fitted to keep them separate, the *Hebrews* being such an Abomination to the *Egyptians*, in that they would not so much as eat with them.

How it fared with them here, we are particularly told; and as my Design is to shew the Credibility of the Story, I will examine every part of it, and shew the Wisdom of God in every Instance.

History of the

The Credibility of the Children of Israel, and of their Afflictions.

The first thing observable here, is, they were miserably afflicted, as was foretold. And as this Story gives a very natural Reason why they were so, so 'twas a great Instance of God's Wisdom, that they should be so, in order to the keeping them a separate People, and removing them to another Land.

For if they had not been afflicted, they could have had no Inclination to remove from thence.

The next Thing to be observed, is, how they came out, and this, the Story says, was by the Execution of strange Judgments on the *Egyptians*. This

alſo was foretold to *Abraham*; and it gives a great Credibility to the Story, when we can diſcern a particular Wiſdom, in ſuiting thoſe Judgments to the Circumſtances of God's choſen People, and the End they were choſen for.

As this People were infected with the Idolatry of *Egypt*, it was neceſſary they ſhould be cured of it, before they went. And what could be more effectual to cure them of this, and convince them that the God of *Iſrael* was the only one God, than ſuch Works, as even the Magicians confeſſed, none but he could do?

And accordingly we read, *Ex.* vi. 6. that God requires *Moſes* to inform the *Iſraelites*, *that he was the Lord, the God of* Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob; and as a Proof of this, that *he would bring him out of Bondage.*

Again, when we conſider this People were bred up in mighty Notions of their Privileges, as the Seed of *Abraham*, and when they found themſelves perſecuted upon this Account, they might naturally expect that God would appear in their Behalf; and what could more effectually demonſtrate this, than to ſee ſuch Judgments on the Land of *Egypt*, whilſt themſelves were entirely free?

And when we conſider, as it appears by this Story, that *Moſes* was the Perſon ſent by God to bring this People out of *Egypt*, a Perſon unqualified without the Aſſiſtance of an almighty Power; here is a particular Aptneſs in theſe Judgments, not only to convince the *Iſraelites* he was ſent by God, and was able to effect what he propoſed, that they might be willing to come away with him; but alſo to work upon the obſtinate *Egyptians*, and oblige them to let them go. And accordingly theſe were the Ends of thoſe Judgments. [*See Exod.* vi. 6, 7, 8.] And if we add to this that the *Egyptians* might be not only ripe for Vengeance upon Account of their Enormi-

ties,

ties, but also wanted to be informed of the true God, what could be more proper for this End, than these Judgments? And accordingly we likewise read that this was one Intention of the divine Judgments on that People. (*See Ch.* vii. 17. viii. 22. ix. 14. vii. 3, 4, 5.)

And as they were intended for the Punishment of that Nation, it is probable, that every Punishment might have had some relation to some particular Sin. The Author of the *Book of Wisdom* has in several Instances endeavoured to shew this. Ch. xi. 15. xv. 18, 19. xvi. 1. xvii. 2, 3. xviii. 5. But tho' the Observations may not be just in all Respects, yet the Death of every First-born of the *Egyptians*, carries so lively a Remembrance, and has so natural a Relation to their Sin, in destroying every Male of the *Israelites*, that one must think it a Punishment for their Cruelty.

The next Thing observable in this Story is, the Success of these Judgments, and the *Israelites* coming away, with *Jewels of Gold, and Silver, and Raiment.*

This was likewise foretold *Abraham*, that *they should come away with great Substance*; and this is not only a credible Relation for this Reason, that the *Egyptians* were afraid of being destroyed, and so were glad to get rid of them at any Rate; but also as it is said to be so ordered by God. (*Exod.* xi. 2.) For considering what this People had suffered by the *Egyptians*, here is a natural Suitableness and Equity in this Appointment, and it may be considered, not only as a Kind of Recompence for their Sufferings in general, but as a particular Satisfaction for what they had by Right due to them for their Labours; for it is very probable, that as they had been oppressed with Labour, so they might have been in their Wages.

And therefore when they had Power to right

themselves, they *demanded of the Egyptians Jewels of Gold*, &c. For the Word which we ill translate *borrowed* signifies *demanded*.

And it is very observable, that God is not only said to have given them Orders to make this Demand, but also to have given them Favour in the Sight of the *Egyptians*, that it might appear to be his Work, thereby to let them know that he was as just to them in recompensing their Losses, as he was to the *Egyptians* in avenging their Oppressions, on whom this might be likewise inflicted, as a further Punishment. So that the *Israelites* were only God's Instruments to take from that People, what they held only by the Bounty of his Providence, and had now forfeited by their Transgressions.

The next Thing observable in the Story of this People, is their going through and continuing in the Wilderness forty Years. One Reason of their taking that Way, we read *Exod.* xiii. 17.

But further, if we consider, that this People were chosen for the Preservation of the true Religion, and yet were very much addicted to Idolatry. If they had gone immediately into the Land of *Canaan*, they would have worshipped their Gods, and so defeated the Design of Providence. And therefore God led them through the Wilderness, where they could converse with no other People; and as they could not there be provided with Necessaries in a natural Way, so it was by Consequence a proper place to convince them he was the only true God, by the daily Instances of his Power and Goodness; and for this Reason he kept them in the Wilderness, till a new Generation had sprung up, that had never seen any other People, and knew no other God but him, whose Wonders they daily saw, and by whose Miracles they lived.

And when thus God had raised himself proper Inhabitants for the Land of Promise, he gave them

Possession

Possession of it. Thus we see how this People became a Nation.

The fourth Thing required in a History of Abraham *and his Family relating to their Laws and Government.*

This is what we find in our History in a very extraordinary Manner. Soon after this People came into the Wilderness, the first Care of Providence is employed in giving them a System of Laws to govern themselves by, in their moral, religious, and civil Capacity, which Laws as they came from God, so this People were immediately governed and protected by him.

And tho' God gave them all sufficient Evidence, that those Laws they received were given by him, yet it is worth our while in this Place to reflect, how he manifested his Wisdom in the Laws themselves, in adapting them to the Circumstances and Disposition of that People, and the End they were chosen for.

The Wisdom of God shewn in the Jewish *Law.*

As 1*st*, 'Tis evident they were a very stupid People, having been bred up in hard Labour under the Oppressions of Tyranny, which is apt to break Men's Spirits; and considering this, how graciously does God condescend to their weak Capacities, by reducing his moral Precepts to ten short Commands, and representing the most important Truths to them, under such Figures as they had been accustomed to, that he might instruct them the better in those Things, and imprint them more deeply on their Minds?

2*dly*, If we consider them as a People prone to and corrupted with Idolatry, here was a wise Provision in this Case also, not only in employing them in a great Number of Observances, but also in appointing them such particular Ceremonies, as were directly contrary to the idolatrous Rites of the Heathen.

3*dly*,

3*dly*, If we consider them as a People separated from other Nations, here likewise we may observe a wise Provision made to keep them so, not only by continuing Circumcision, but also by forbidding them to conform to the Rites of other People, and injoining them such a Distinction of Meats, and Sacrifices, as must keep them from all other People. [*See Lev.* xx. 24, 25.]

Lastly, If we consider the End of their Separation was, that they might be a holy, and peculiar People to the Lord. *Lev.* xx. 26. *Exod.* xix. 6.

It is worth our Observation to see how every Part of it is wisely fitted for this End.

I need not observe this in the moral Law, for every one sees how it tends in its own Nature to make Men like God, and happy in the Enjoyment of him. The same Design is likewise visible even in the judicial and ceremonial Part of it.

As for the judicial Precepts they are calculated for the Encouragement of Virtue, and the Prevention of Vice; and tho' some of their religious Ceremonies seem only to be so many arbitrary Forms, and tho' they might be proper for the low Estate of that People, as outside Forms of Pomp to affect their Minds, yet they have anciently been understood to have been appointed to instruct these ignorant People in moral Duties.

Thus for Instance, their Sacrifices of *Expiation* might be intended to put them in Mind of the sad Consequence of Sin: their *Eucharistical* Sacrifices were proper to keep up a Sense of their Dependence upon God; their *Circumcision* was not only a Sign of their Covenant with God, but also of their Necessity of parting with their Lusts; their legal *Washings* shewed them how pure a God they served, and how pure every Person ought to be, that would come into his Presence or hope for his Favour: And the Prohibition from Swine's Flesh might teach them to avoid

the brutal Nature of that Creature, that as he wallows in the Mire, so they should not wallow in the Filth of Sin.

When they are forbid to eat Birds of Prey, it is to teach them to abstain from Rapine; and by Fish without Scales they were taught to avoid all earthly Mindedness, and mean Practices.

And that this was one Intention of the legal Ceremonies has been the current Sense of ancient Times; and the Scriptures themselves shew us, that they were esteemed fruitless, and unacceptable to God, unless they were accompanied with the Fruits of Righteousness, which looks as if this was the Intention of them. [*See Isa.* lxvi. 3. i. 13. lviii. 45. &c. *Prov.* xv. 8. xxviii. 9. *Zach.* vii. 5. *Psal.* li. 16, 17. xl. 8, 9. *Jer.* vii. 3, 4, 5, &c. xxi. 22, 23, &c. *Hosea* vi. 6. *Micah* vi. 6, 7, 8.]

And as this was the Design of the Law, so it had proper Motives to enforce it.

They were a People bred up in the Hopes of a Saviour, and in that Promise was implied everlasting Happiness. The same Thing I have shewn, was understood by the Promise of the Land of *Canaan*, *viz.* a future State of Rest and Comfort, of which that Land was a Pledge. So that when they were in Possession of that Land, they had thereby an Assurance of the future Enjoyment of what they hoped for.

This was some Part of their Encouragement; but as they were to continue separate from others for the Preservation of the true Religion, they stood also in Need of temporal Promises. For since the *Heathens* imputed all their worldly Successes to the Worship of their Idols, there was a Necessity, that God should shew himself as gracious to his Votaries, as the false Gods were supposed to be to theirs; and therefore it is a particular Instance of the Wisdom of this Law that it abounds with temporal Promises. Thus

Thus we see the Wisdom of the *Jewish* Laws, and thereby the Credibility of this History of *Moses*, so far as it relates to them.

What may be naturally expected in a History of Abraham *and his Family, relating to the Preservation and Propagation of the true Religion.*

The next Thing we may expect to find in a History of this People is, that, since one great End God had to serve by them, was the Preservation of Religion, they were thoroughly instructed in the true Religion, and that this was also kept pure amongst them.

2*dly*, That some Means were made Use of from Time to Time, to bring their Religion to the Knowledge of other Nations.

By true Religion we must understand two Things.

1. A right Knowledge of the true God, and how we are to behave ourselves to him, considering the Relation he bears to us, which is the Sum of natural Religion.

2. A true Faith in the promised Saviour, through whom God had promised eternal Happiness to all that would obey him faithfully; which is the Sum of Revealed Religion.

This is true Religion, and it is remarkably provided for in this History.

While the *Israelites* were in *Egypt*, one great End of God's Judgments upon that Nation, was to shew that he was the only true God.

And when they were in the Wilderness, God let them know, at the Delivery of the Law, that there was but one God, and that he was that one God; and for a Proof of which he appeals to his Works in bringing them out of *Egypt*. [*See Exod.* iv. 5. vii. 17. viii. 10, 22. ix. 14, 16, 17. x. 2.]

And as they are required to have no other Gods but him, so they are taught to resemble him by nothing that they saw.

That they ſhould never uſe his holy Name without the utmoſt Reverence; and to preſerve this holy Awe of him in their Minds, they were commanded to ſet apart one Day in ſeven to his Honour, and apply themſelves therein in ſuch holy Offices, as he himſelf appointed for that Purpoſe; ſo that, as they had ſufficient Proofs of his being the Governor of the World, by his *bringing them out of Egypt*, they might not forget that he was the Creator of it too. This was all done upon their firſt coming into the Wilderneſs; and afterwards that they and their Children may be kept in a continual Senſe of all this, God was pleaſed to keep this whole People for forty Years in a conſtant Dependence upon his miraculous Power for their neceſſary ſupport of Life, and let them ſee ſome remarkable Puniſhments upon thoſe who would not ſubmit to his Authority.

And when he had led them into the Land of *Canaan*, he did it ſo, as to let them ſee, that he was the true God, and that the Heathen Gods were but the Works of Men's Hands.

And to keep up the Remembrance of all this, he appointed three Feſtivals to be obſerved every Year. The *Paſſover* in Memory of their Deliverance from the deſtroying Angel in *Egypt*; the *Feaſt* of *Penteceſt* in Memory of their receiving the Law; the *Feaſt* of *Tabernacles* in Remembrance of their dwelling in Tents in the Wilderneſs.

And that they might not want living Witneſſes of theſe Things, ſome *Egyptians* were permitted to come along with them; and afterwards, when they entered into the Land of *Canaan*, the *Gibeonites* were preſerved among them, that their Poſterity ſhould be a ſtanding Memorial, to teſtify how the Children of *Iſrael* got Poſſeſſion of the Land.

But that theſe Things ſhould not be forgot, Providence took Care that the Hiſtory of theſe Things ſhould be put into Writing, and required every Family

mily to have a Copy of it, and to read it continually at Home; and also commanded it to be read every Sabbath Day in Public; and every seventh Year it was done in a more solemn Manner before the whole Congregation of that People, who during that Year, had nothing else to do but read it.

And as God took Care they should have Leisure; so it was their Concern to improve themselves in the Knowledge of this Book; for as there was no Action, which it had not some Rule for; so the Law made it Death to act contrary to them, out of Obstinacy or Presumption: Nay, even those Transgressions which were committed out of Ignorance, could not be forgiven without certain Sacrifices.

And when we consider all these together, no Method could establish the true Religion in their Minds so well as this; and that it might be kept pure, we read that they were forbidden so much as to enquire how the *Canaanites* served their Gods; and are threatened by *Moses* with dismal Judgments whenever they should conform to them. And the historical Books that were wrote after *Moses* gives us many strange Instances of the fulfilling these Threatnings. But notwithstanding all, they frequently fell off from their Duty. And as their Circumstances then called for new Dispensations, so God sent his Prophets to declare his Will to them.

What the particular Occasion of every Prophecy was, we are not told expresly; but as the *Israelites* were very prone to Idolatry, God had Regard in all his Dispensations to convince them, that *he was the Lord their God:* and therefore, when he decreed to punish them for their Sins, he gave them Notice of it by his Prophets, as he did, on the other Hand, of their Deliverances from Afflictions, or other Mercies he intended them.

Something relating either to Favour or Punishment is the Subject of every Prophecy, and this

might be proper to keep up a Sense of the true God amongst them. But it was more particularly necessary in Case of Punishment, and especially when the Punishment intended was Captivity.

For had they been given up into their Enemies Hands without being first told the Reason of it, they might have suspected that they might have been subdued by the Gods of their Enemies: That their own God was not able to protect them, and so might have been tempted to fall away. And therefore to prevent this, God all along forewarned them of their Punishment, and foretold the particular Reason of it. And that he might thoroughly convince them of it, he always adds, that whenever they should forsake their Sins, they should see a further Proof of his Power in the Removal of their Punishment. And as it is very remarkable in this History to find, how the Vengeance threatned, and the Mercy promised, never failed to come to pass; so what can we imagine more effectual to affect their Minds with a Sense of their Duty, than this?

By these Things we see what Care was taken by the all-wise Providence of God for the Preservation of true Religion among this People, as it relates to the Knowledge and Service of the true God.

What Means were made Use of for the Preservation of the Faith of the promised Saviour.

As for the other Part of true Religion, the Belief of a Saviour, one can hardly imagine they could want any Information in this Respect, the Hopes of this being the great Encouragement that supported *Abraham*.

Of Types.

But however, they could not be better instructed in it, than was provided by the Law, if the ceremonial Part of their Religion was, as the *Jews* assert it was, an emblematic Representation, of the Dispensation of the *Messiah*, and the Qualifications necessary

necessary to such, as would be Partakers of the Benefits of it. And if it was so, a little Hint would enable them to find it out, and when once discovered, those Types would not only convey a more lively Idea to their Minds of the Things represented by them, but would more effectually preserve them in their Memory.

But how probable soever this may seem, 'tis hard to know certainly whether it was so, and we can never have such Evidence of it, as to build any Argument upon it. But thus much is certain, that there is a great Resemblance between some of these Ceremonies and some Parts of the Christian Dispensation, which we call the Dispensation of the *Messiah*.

But be this as it will, there were not wanting other Means to preserve the Idea of the promised Saviour in the Minds of the People.

They had been bred from *Abraham*, not only in the general Promise, but in a great Desire and Expectations of the Blessings they were to reap from it. 'Twas upon this Account that they valued themselves upon their being the Seed of *Abraham*, and 'tis natural to imagine, that every Parent would inform his Children of the Privileges they were entitled to.

But notwithstanding this general Notion of a Saviour, they had not yet had any Information of the Character of the Person, any further than of his being the Seed of *Abraham*; nor did they know any Thing of the Manner how this great Blessedness they expected from him was to be conveyed to Mankind: And as 'twas necessary to be made known to them one time or other, so we read how from a particular Occasion given, God here vouchsafes them a Revelation of that Matter, *viz.* That whereas they were so terrified at his speaking to them, as to desire he would not speak to them in that Manner any more, he promises, that he would speak unto them by *a Prophet, like unto* Moses, *one from among their Brethren,*

whom, if they refused to hear, he would require it at their Hands. [See *Deut.* xviii. 18, 19.]

The literal Meaning of this Passage is plain: Here is evidently a single Person spoken of, who was to be sent to this People: And as he was to be a Prophet like unto *Moses*, 'tis natural to conclude, that he should bear the same Characters. And if it be reasonable to infer, that he was to be a Deliverer, as *Moses* was, this is the very Idea we have shewn to be understood, by *bruising the Serpent's Head.* And if the Redemption intended by bruising the Serpent's Head, can be reasonably thought to be that Blessing, which God designed to be convey'd to all Mankind thro' the Seed of *Abraham*, it is naturally implied, that this Prophet, who was to come, should be the Person.

And if by being a *Prophet like unto* Moses, it is reasonable to infer, that he should be a Law-giver, and a Mediator of a new Covenant, and indued with a like Power of Miracles with him, this intimates, that this Salvation was to be effected by giving them a new Law, and a new Covenant, confirmed by Miracles, as the *Mosaic* Covenant had been.

And whereas I have shewn, that by *bruising the Serpent's Head* was meant, the recovering the World from the Wrath of God, and restoring them to Holiness, Happiness, and Immortality; it is here implied in these Words, if this Prophet was to be that Seed of the Woman, that this Covenant of Salvation, which he was to open to Mankind, was to be a Covenant of Reconciliation, and the Laws he was to give were to be Laws of Holiness, under the Promise of a Resurrection to everlasting Happiness.

And whereas the coming of the *Seed of the Woman to bruise the Serpent's Head*, was a Blessing to Mankind, if this was to be effected by the Means of a Covenant of Reconciliation, and Laws of Holiness, it is hereby implied, that this Covenant and these

Laws,

Laws, which this Prophet was to deliver, should be such as should be calculated for all the World.

And as the Reason of this Promise to the People at that Time was in answer to their own Request, that they might not be terrified by the Voice of God, so it is thereby naturally implied, that this Law and Covenant should not be attended with those Circumstances of Terror, that the Law of *Moses* had been.

And *Lastly*, whereas it is said, that if they *did not hear this Prophet*, *God would require it at their Hands*, that is, severely punish them; by this it seems to be naturally implied, that this Law and Covenant delivered by this Prophet, should be the last that he would vouchsafe to them.

And if so, as this was a wise Provision at that Time to prepare the Minds of this People beforehand by this general Hint, for that Change which should be wrought by this Prophet, when he should come; that however highly favour'd *Moses* was by God, and what Regard soever they had for him, they must remember, that there was a Prophet to come after him, who should be prefer'd before him, from whom they must expect another Set of Laws, and a better Covenant: So it shewed them, what Ideas they were to carry along with them of this Saviour to come, and the Redemption to be wrought by him, *viz.* that it was a spiritual Redemption, as it was to be effected in a Prophetic Way, by a Law, and Covenant of Holiness, on Obedience to which their Redemption would so intirely depend, that without it, they would have no Benefit by him, but be exposed to the greater Condemnation.

Corollary.

And if this Interpretation of this Promise of a future Prophet be allowed, this teaches us what we may naturally expect to find in a further History of this People.

For, as here is a Revelation of several Things,

which were to be fulfilled in this great Prophet; and as these Things were imperfectly hinted at in general Words; so we may from hence conclude, that some Provision would be made in after-times, for the Preservation of these Ideas among them; and that some time or other they would be more fully explained.

And as this requires Prophecy, so we may not only expect to read of Prophecy in a regular History of this People, but also of such Prophecy as particularly related to these Things.

And as it will be a great Addition of Credibility to this Scripture History, if we find it agreeing in this Instance; so it will likewise be a strong Confirmation of the Sense we have taken this Promise in.

But to pass this by here; I will take Notice of another Thing necessary to be provided for.

The Law about Virginity accounted for.

As by the Seed of the Woman was intended, that this Saviour should be the Seed of a Woman only, and that Woman a Virgin, there was a Necessity that this might be certainly known.

And if any Method was provided for this Purpose, it ought to be of a public Nature, because of public Concern: And if so, then as a Thing of this public Nature must be naturally prescribed as a standing Rule, and therefore have the Authority of a Law, which every body should be obliged to submit to; so 'tis natural to expect this Method should be prescribed, when they received their Laws.

Now, that this was the Design of that Promise, will appear hereafter: And tho' it does not appear that *Moses* knew this, yet we see a wonderful Provision made for this Purpose, not only in the Laws relating to Virginity, but also in the Appointment of the Waters of Jealousy, by which it was provided, in case of Doubt, that their Innocence might be tried by a standing Miracle; so that whenever the promised Saviour should be born, this Character of him might be evidently proved.

The

The Reason of the Law about Genealogies.

As we have observed, there was a Necessity some time or other, of some Means to be provided for the Distinction of Families, that the Pedigree of the promised Saviour might be certainly provided: So we may here observe a wonderful Provision made for this Purpose in the Law of *Moses*; which obliged every Family to keep their Genealogies in the most exact Manner.

And thus we see what Care was taken thus far, for the Preservation of the true Religion amongst this People, as it consists in the Knowledge of the one true God, and Faith in the promised Saviour.

Various Revelations necessary after Moses's *Time.*

What these were we have already in a great Measure discover'd, and it will be a remarkable Instance of the Consistence and Credibility of these Writings, if the Revelations hereafter delivered in them be such, as we have before shewn, might one time be expected, as necessary in the Nature of Things.

The first Thing necessary to be known, was the Time of the promised Saviour's coming, and the Characters he should be known by: And as this was necessary to be made known to the World; so we read of several Prophecies relating to it. The first of these is in *Gen.* xlix. 10. *The Sceptre shall not depart from* Judah, *nor a Law-giver from between his Feet until* Shiloh *come, and to him shall the gathering of the People be.* That is, that the Government to be erected in the Tribe of *Judah*, shall continue, till *Shiloh*, (which signifies, *he who is sent, or the Expectation of all Nations*) shall come; and that at his coming, this Government of *Judah* shall be dissolved, and the People, or *Gentiles*, shall come in to him.

So that according to this Prophecy, the Time of the promised Saviour's coming should be before the Destruction of the *Jewish* Common-wealth.

A second Prophecy of the Time of the promised Saviour's coming.

Another Prophecy we read in *Haggai* ii. 7, 8, 9. That he should come while the second Temple was standing, which he should adorn and glorify by his Presence, and that he should come when all Nations should be in a great Expectation of him.

A third Prophecy of the Time of the promised Saviour's coming.

We have another Prophecy relating to this Matter in *Malachi* iii. 1.

In which Prophecy there is a Person spoken of under the Character of the *Lord* whom the *Children of* Israel *sought or desired*, a Person who was to be *their Delight*, one, who was to be the *Messenger of the Covenant*; and that he was to come during the second Temple, but not till a Messenger should have prepared his way.

A fourth Prophecy of the Time of the Saviour's coming.

We have another Prophecy of this, *Dan.* ix. 24, 25, 26, 27. In which Prophecy there is a Period fixed of seventy Weeks, which, according to the Language of the *Jews*, is to be understood of Weeks of Years (*Levit.* xxv. 8.) that is 490 Years. And that after seven Weeks, and sixty-two Weeks, the *Messiah* (the known Character of the promised Saviour) shall come and be cut off; and in the following Verses it is plain that it was to be before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*.

These are all plain Predictions of the Time when the expected Saviour was to come: But as all this would signify but little, unless he could certainly be distinguished at his coming from Impostors; and as this required Prophecy, so this History gives us from Time to Time, a Series of Prophecies relating to this Matter.

The Characters by which the Saviour was to be known.

The first of these is, that he was to be *a Prophet like*

like unto Moses, and as such, not only as a Saviour, or Deliverer, but also a Law-giver, and a Mediator of a new Covenant: That his Salvation was to be a spiritual Salvation by the Means of a Covenant of Reconciliation, and Laws of Holiness, which he should receive from the Mouth of God, and confirm by his Power, and all this intended for all the World.

As this was imperfectly hinted at in the general Promise of *Moses*; so we find it afterwards confirmed and explained by the succeeding Prophets. (See *Isaiah* xi. 1, 2, 3. xlii. 1.---7. lx. 1, 2, *&c.* *Jerem.* xxxi. 31, 32, 33, to 36. *Isaiah* lxi. 8, 9. ii. 2, 3. *Micah* iv. 1, 2, 3. *Zephaniah* ii. 11. iii. 9, 10. *Zachariah* ii. 10, 11, 16. viii. 20, 21, 22. *Malachi* i. 10, 11. *Isa.* xi. 20. xlii. 1, 2, 3. *Malachi* iii. 1.)

The promised Saviour to be a King.

Another Character of the promised Saviour was, that he was to be a King sitting upon the Throne of *David*.

This is an Idea of him that runs thro' the whole Scripture. (See 2 *Sam.* vii. 12, *&c.* *Isa.* lv. 3. *Hosea* iii. 5. *Jerem.* xxx. 9. *Ezek.* xxxiv. 23, 24. *Jeremiah* xxiii. 5. *Zach.* ix. 9. *Isa.* xi. 1, 3, 4, 5. *Jerem.* xxxiii. 14, 15. *Dan.* ii. 44, 45.)

The promised Saviour to be a Priest.

This is another Character by which the promised Saviour was to be known. (See *Zech.* vi. 13. *Psalm.* i. 10. *Dan.* ix. 24, 26. *Isaiah* liii. These Passages are plain Marks of his Priestly Function, and what Sacrifice he was to offer.

But as the promised Saviour was not to be of the Order of *Aaron* but *Melchizedek*, and therefore was not to be subject to the Rules of the legal Institution, relating to the Priesthood; (*Levit.* xxi. 7, 13, 14.) and as he was not to produce any Qualifications relating to his *Father*, and *Mother*, or Genealogy, nor was confined to any time for the *Beginning* or *Ending* of his Ministration, as the *Jewish* Priests were; so his

his Prieſthood was to continue as long as he lived, called in Scripture *for ever.*

Thus we ſee the ſeveral Offices of the promiſed Saviour deſcribed.

And as all theſe Things that are ſaid of him muſt be conceived, as being ſpoken by the Inſpiration of God, to conſiſt with the general Deſign of his coming, which was to *bruiſe the Serpent's Head*, and to be a *Bleſſing to all Nations*; ſo we muſt conclude that what was before ſaid of his Prophetic, muſt be equally true of his Kingly and Prieſtly Offices, that they were originally appointed, and muſt be ordered ſo, as beſt to anſwer theſe Intentions.

And therefore, that his Kingdom ſhould be ſuch, as, in its Extent, to include all Nations, and ſo order'd, in its Nature, as to deſtroy the Works of the Devil, and by conſequence muſt be not only an univerſal, but a ſpiritual Kingdom.

And likewiſe that the Reconciliation he was to make, as a Prieſt, ſhould be ſuch, as ſhould not only be ſufficient for, but actually extend to all Mankind.

This is a natural Inference, and an Argument of the Credibility of the Scripture Hiſtory, that we find it conſiſtent both with Reaſon and itſelf. For we find all this taught by the Prophets. (See *Iſaiah* lii. 10. *Pſalm.* lxxii 8. *Dan.* vii. 27. ix. 24. *Pſalm.* lxxiii. 17.)

And we read throughout the Prophets, that the Time of the Meſſiah is all along repreſented, as a Time of univerſal Love, and Peace, and Godlineſs: *Iſa.* xi. *Ezek.* xi. 19, 20.

Theſe are ſome of the many Promiſes that relate to the promiſed Saviour in the Scripture:

But beſides theſe, there were ſeveral other Intimations given of him, relating to the Place of his Birth, *Mich.* v. 2. Of his Life, *Iſa.* liii. Of his Death and Reſurrection, *Pſalm.* xvi. 10, 11. Of his Aſcenſion into Heaven, *Pſalm.* cx. 12. Of his

ſending

sending down various Gifts on the *Gentiles*, and after that a terrible Day shall come, *Joel* ii. 28, 29, to 32.

And now when all Things were thus laid open, that were necessary for them and future Ages to know, relating to the Nature of the Redemption promised, the Person by whom, and the Manner how it was to be effected, and no further Revelation was wanting in these Respects:

And when the *Jews* were throughly purged from their Proneness to Idolatry, which so often called for Revelation, and therefore there was no longer need of it; then God withdrew the Spirit of Prophecy, from them, the End and Reason of it being ceased.

But between the last Prophet, and the coming of the *Messiah*, God provided them with proper Supports, that their Hopes might not droop. For he had already foretold them of great Changes, which they should see in the great Empires of the World.

And as these were to happen at distant Periods; so when they should afterwards live to see any Part of the Prediction fulfilled, the evident Accomplishment of it in that Instance would be a certain Earnest of the rest:

And as every new Change, which appeared to be foretold, would be a new Assurance given to their Faith; so from these they might be as sure of the coming of the *Messiah*, as they were, that they saw these Empires overturned.

And as these Things were sufficient to keep their Hopes alive, and therefore no further Revelation could be necessary for this; so this might be the Reason why there were no further Revelations made to them.

Thus I have led you thro' the Scripture History, and shewn you what Methods were taken throughout, for the Preservation of the true Religion in the World.

We are now to consider this People in another View,

View, as not only set up for the Preservation of true Religion among themselves, but as a Canal, whereby it was to be conveyed to others, that all Nations might be brought to the Knowledge of the Truth.

And as there was a Necessity of some Methods of Providence, in order to bring about this End; so it will be a great Addition to the Credibility of Scripture History, to find it agree in this respect.

Whether it does this, is our next Enquiry: But before I proceed to this, there is one Thing to be settled, *viz.* how we know we rightly understand the Prophecies and Revelations in Scripture, when we apply them to an expected Messiah, and that they were really Prophecies relating to that Person, and delivered with that View, and have not been fulfilled in any other.

The Scripture Prophecies to be rightly understood by us, proved.

First, That the Sense, we take the Prophecies in, is most likely to be the true Sense of them, as being allowed by the *Jews* before Christ's Time. For as this Book was writ in their Language, they may reasonably be supposed to understand their own Phraseology best.

And as their Ancestors were the People to whom the Prophecies were spoken, 'tis reasonable to think they were let into the Knowledge of them in some Degree, where they could not otherwise be understood:

For whatever distant Aspect these Prophecies relating to a Saviour had to future Times, 'tis certain that each of them had a particular Relation to those Persons or People, to whom they were severally spoken, and were intended for some particular End at that Time, which those Persons or People were then immediately concerned in:

By which I do not mean, that they were all spoken in a double Sense; but only that they were intended to supply some Necessity, that called for such Re-

Revelation at that Time, when they were delivered. And if ſo there was a Neceſſity of their being underſtood in ſome meaſure, or elſe the preſent End could not have been attained.

And if there was a Neceſſity of their being underſtood, either they muſt have been delivered in ſuch a way of Speaking, as the People were capable of underſtanding themſelves, or elſe they muſt have been explained to them by the Prophets, ſo far as that Explanation was neceſſary.

That they might be ordinarily capable of underſtanding them of themſelves, is very reaſonable to think however difficult they appear to us.

And accordingly we find in the *New Teſtament*, that the People were well verſed in the prophetic Writings in our Saviour's Days; He appeals to thoſe Writings for a Teſtimony to himſelf: He bids them *ſearch the Scriptures*, manifeſtly implying that the Prophecies relating to the *Meſſiah* were ſuch as they did or might underſtand.

'Tis true indeed, ſome Prophecies were dark and intricate for a time in ſome Particulars, and 'twas neceſſary it ſhould be ſo: For otherwiſe they would not have been fulfilled, as depending on the Actions of free Agents.

But what was neceſſary to be known, was neceſſary to be explained, if it could not be known without it.

And if they had any ſuch Explication given them, 'tis natural to conceive that thoſe Ideas would be handed down from Age to Age.

And though ſome Things might be miſtaken, and ſome Traditions corrupted, yet we cannot ſuppoſe but they would be right in fundamental Articles.

And therefore when we find the Tradition of a Saviour univerſally received amongſt them, and that built upon the Authority of Scripture Prophecies, and thoſe very Texts, we make uſe of, applied to him,

we have no Reason to doubt but this was the true Sense of them, though we at this Time should not be able to make the Thing out so clearly as we could wish, and as cavilling Men may expect.

But this is not our Case, nor do we depend upon them alone, for we have sufficient Reason for our Interpretation of most of the Texts I have here made use of, had we never known what the *Jews* had thought of them. For,

Prophecies of the Messias *understood in their natural Meaning.*

Secondly, The Sense we take them in is such, as the plain Meaning of the Words themselves, or other like Expressions of Scripture direct us to, considered and compared together.

To make this appear plain, let us begin at the first Promise to our first Parents, that *the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head*; 'tis plain here is a Person foretold to come, and from the Occasion of the Words, I have given you a natural Interpretation of them, *viz.* that whereas the Devil had brought them into a State of Sin, and Misery, and Death, this Person should defeat the Cunning, and destroy the Works of the Devil, by procuring Pardon for them and restoring them to a State of Holiness, Happiness, and Immortality:

And as this was the greatest Blessing that God could bestow upon them and their Posterity, and by consequence the Person who was to do this, was to be an universal Blessing to all Nations: So 'tis reasonable to think that this might be the general Character under which he might be expected, and ordinarily spoken of: However when we afterwards read of a Person promised to come, *in whom all Nations should be blessed*; 'tis very natural to understand this of the Person spoken of before.

And as a great Desire would be excited in all the World for the coming of this Person: And as

he was to be born of the Seed of *Jacob*, and would therefore be more particularly desired and looked for by the Children of *Israel*; so 'tis natural to conceive that he might be commonly spoken of, *as he, who was to come, the Desire of all Nations, the Expectation of the People*; or, *the Delight of the Children of* Israel. However, when we read of *Shiloh coming*, which signifies, *he who is to be sent*, and that the gathering *of the People or Gentiles should be to him:* And in another Place of one who is, by way of Emphasis, called the *Desire of all Nations, the Delight of the Children of* Israel, is it not natural to understand this of that Person, *in whom* all Nations were to be blessed? *Mal.* iii. 1.

But be this as it will; nothing can be plainer than what we read afterwards of a Promise, of *a Prophet like unto* Moses.

And as these Words denote a single Person, so they may naturally imply, that he should bring a new Covenant and new Laws as *Moses* did. And if so, then as no one could be this Prophet, who did not come to them with the Offer of a new Covenant and new Laws; so if we read of a Person who is represented as to come under this very Character, is it not reasonable to think that he is the Man?

And if it be reasonable that this new Covenant and Laws should be offered to all the World, then, when we read in *Isaiah* xi. of a time when *there should come forth a Rod out of the Stem of* Jesse: And when 'tis said of him, *Ver.* 10. that he should *stand for an Ensign of the People, &c.* And when we afterwards read of a Person, on whom God would put *his Spirit, &c. See Isaiah* iv. 1. 3. 5, 6.

And when this Person is called the Servant and Elect of God, are not these Tokens that these Places refer to the same Person? For are not the Characters the same?

And when we afterwards read [*Jeremiah* xxxi. 31.] of a new Covenant, that was still to be expected:

And when we afterwards read (*Malachi* iii. 1.) of a Perſon called by way of Excellence, *the Meſſenger of the Covenant*, is not this reaſonable to conclude that this was the Covenant promiſed by *Iſaiah* lxi. 9. and *Jeremiah* xxxi. 31, 32, 33?

And as 'tis natural to conceive that theſe Promiſes ſo often repeated would excite a ſtrange Deſire of the fulfilling of them, and particularly in the Children of *Iſreal*; ſo when we ſee this Meſſenger of the Covenant is called the *Deſire of all Nations*, *the Delight of the Children of* Iſrael, theſe are plain Tokens that this Meſſenger and this Covenant were the ſame that thoſe Promiſes related to.

And ſo again further; if this Meſſenger of the Covenant, and the Branch of the Root of *Jeſſe* in *Iſaiah* xi. be the ſame Perſon, as appears, when we read in another Place of a Perſon who was to come, called *the Branch*, the *righteous Branch*, *the Saviour*; and when 'tis ſaid of this Branch, that he *ſhall reign as King and proſper*: and when *this King*, the *Branch*, is alſo ſpoken of as a *Prieſt upon his Throne*, and that even after *David* and *Solomon* were dead; is it not reaſonable to think, that the Perſon meant is the ſame in both Places?

And when we read (*Dan.* ix. 26.) of a Prince expreſsly called the *Meſſiah*:

And when we read in *Iſaiah* liii. of the *Servant the Elect of God*, &c. is it not reaſonable to underſtand the *Meſſiah* in *Daniel*, to be the ſame Perſon with the *Elect*, the *righteous Servant* in *Iſaiah*, and the ſame Thing to be aimed at in both?

And if ſo, then if our Interpretation of the firſt Promiſe that the *Seed of the Woman ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's Head* be true, *viz.* that the Perſon meant was to procure Pardon and Reconciliation for Mankind, and to reſtore them to Holineſs and Immortality, when we read of the *Meſſiah* in *Daniel*, as a Perſon who ſhould *make Reconciliation for Iniquity*, *make*

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an end of Sin, and bring *in everlasting Righteousness*, is it not natural to conclude, that this Messiah is that *Seed of the Woman?*

Nothing can be more reasonable than this Interpretation from a Parity of Ideas in different Places. And if these Texts be rightly understood, this teaches us how to interpret a Thousand other Places.

Thus for instance, since we see here was a new Covenant promised, which seems to imply an Abolition of the old one; when we afterwards read of Sacrifices spoken of, as of no Esteem with God, even while the Law was in force; 'tis reasonable to understand such Expressions as relating to the Time of the new Covenant, when these Things were to be done away.

And whereas this Covenant was to include all Nations, wherever we find any such Expressions, as relate to an Union of all People in the Worship of the true God, 'tis no force upon those Texts to understand them of that Time when this Covenant shall be delivered to them, and of that Person who is to be the *Messenger of it*.

And so we may interpret a vast multitude of Texts. And thus the Prophecies were understood by the antient *Jews*.

But, *thirdly*, we have still further Reason to understand them in our Sense, as this has been confirmed by Christ and his Apostles, who gave sufficient Proof of their being sent from God. And they have not only confirmed us in this general Notion, that there had been a Promise given of a Saviour to come, but that many Prophecies of the *Old Testament* were spoken of him.

Thus, the Promise to *Abraham* that in *Isaac should his Seed be called*, is directly applied by St. *Paul* to the Messias, *Gal.* iii. 16. As likewise that afterwards to *Moses* of *a Prophet to be raised up like unto him*, is understood in the same Sense by St. *Peter*. *Acts* iii. 22, 23, *&c.*

The cxth *Psalm*, where *David* speaks of *his Son*, as *his Lord*, is applied by our Saviour and St. *Paul* to the Messiah; and by the former is said to be spoken *in Spirit*, that is, by a Prophetic Inspiration. *Heb.* vii. 17. *Mat.* xxii. 43.

And when he speaks (*Psal.* xvi.) that *his Soul should not be left in Hell*, he is expressly said to have spoken this by prophetic Foresight of the Resurrection of the Messiah, promised, and that by this Resurrection he was to be advanced to the Throne of *David*. *See Acts* ii. 25, *&c.* *Psal.* cxxxii. 11.

And so again, when our Saviour says that he would *send the Promise of the Father* upon his Apostles, to enable them to *be Witnesses of him*; and in the next Words intimates that this *Promise of the Father* was to be fulfilled in their being *endued with Power from on high*; and when by this *enduing them with Power from on high*, was apparently meant his sending the Holy Spirit upon them, it is from hence plainly to be inferred that the sending the Holy Spirit in that manner had been *promised by the Father*. *Luke* xxiv. 48, 49.

And when those Words of *Joel*, wherein he speaks of God's *pouring out his Spirit upon all Flesh*, *&c.* *Chap.* ii. 28. are applied by St. *Peter* to this very Event, we cannot reasonably doubt, but that this was one of those Texts, wherein this extraordinary Gift had been *promised by the Father*.

The Prophecies not fulfilled before Christ.

Indeed there are several Texts that we apply to the Messiah, which the modern *Jews* endeavour to evade by shewing the Completion of them, in some other Person before his Time. But 'tis evident to every impartial Man, that there is not any of those Prophecies, whose Completion they contend for, that agrees to the Person they apply them to.

Had any of them been fulfilled before our Saviour, the antient *Jews* would have been the best Judges of it:

it: But they are ſo far from thinking ſo, that they underſtood them as we do. And at the very Time of our Saviour's appearing there was not only an univerſal Expectation of a Saviour, promiſed by the Prophets, but alſo of a Saviour under thoſe very Ideas repreſented by the Scriptures. [*See* Mat. xi. 3. John vi. 14. xi. 27. i. 19, 20. iv. 25. Mark xi. 10. John iv. 42. Mat. xxii. 42. John vii. 41, 42. i. 49. xvi. 12, 13.]

And as theſe Things do evidently ſhew, that they thought theſe Scriptures not fulfilled; ſo if we and they rightly underſtand them, it is certain they could not have been fulfilled.

For we have already ſhewn that they all depended upon one another, and have Relation to the ſame one Perſon, and therefore they cannot be fulfilled by any one, who has not fulfilled them all.

Now ſuch a Completion we Chriſtians think we have in Jeſus Chriſt; but whether this be ſo or not, ſhall be conſidered by and by.

The laſt Thing required in a Hiſtory of the Children of Iſrael, *found in the Scriptures.*

Which is, what Methods have been taken from Time to Time, for the Conveyance of the true Religion to other Nations, which had ſo carefully been preſerved among this People. The great End of raiſing up this People, and keeping them a ſeparate Nation, was, that the true Religion being preſerved amongſt them, the reſt of the World might be ſo enlightened by their Means as to worſhip the true God, in the true Faith and Expectation of the Benefits of the Saviour promiſed.

And as it was reaſonable to expect, that ſome Methods would be taken, that would naturally contribute to this End; ſo we find by this Hiſtory, in the Account of this People, that God deſigned this in all his Diſpenſations towards them.

If we begin at *Abraham*, we find him and his Family continually moving from Place to Place.

By this they became known, and as we read how God remarkably blessed them, and made them so considerable in the People's Eyes, that they were afraid of them and sought their Friendship. This would make Men naturally enquire what God they served, and the Manner how, to entitle them to so great Blessings from him. And by this Means every one of this numerous Family might be an Instrument of promoting true Religion where-ever they came.

It was for the same End probably that God raised up *Joseph* to such Dignity in *Egypt*, and brought *Jacob* and his Family thither. And it was for the same End, that he afterwards brought them out thence with such miraculous Judgments, and carried them into the Land of *Canaan*; that *all the Earth might be filled with the Glory of the Lord.*

These things must naturally convince all People, that this God who could do such mighty Things, must be the only great and true God:

For as it was the Practice of the *Heathens*, to put their several Nations under the Protection of some tutelar Deity, so God by rooting out the *Canaanites* by the Sword, lets them see in their own Way, that he was as much above other Gods, as his Power was greater than theirs. *Exod.* xviii. 11.

It was for the same End, that God afterwards raised up this Nation to such eminent Dignity and Glory, as we read he did in the Days of *David* and *Solomon*, that other *Nations* might have Knowledge of this People with their Manners and Religion.

The falling off also of the ten Tribes could not fail to disperse the Knowledge of their Religion to *Egypt*, *Syria*, *Babylon* and other Countries with whom they were often at War.

But the most effectual Method for this, was God's punishing

punishing his People with Captivity; by which their Religion was dispersed over the Provinces of the *Babylonian* Empire.

I might add to this the Progress that the *Jewish* Religion made afterwards under the *Grecian* and *Roman* Empire;

But these Instances are sufficient to confirm us that God was not wanting in his wise Providence to carry on this great Truth over all the World.

To this we owe probably all the fine Things that are so much magnified among the *Heathen* Philosophers, which they picked up in the several Countries they travelled through, and which they either received from the *Jews* they happened to find there, or from Traditions they left behind them, or from the Books of the Old Testament.

The fabulous Inventions of the *Heathen* Poets are evidently built upon Scripture Stories in Disguise. And it is from a Corruption of the Ideas they derived from thence, that a great Part of their Religion may be accounted for.

Their Notion of the supreme God, as *the Father both of God and Men*, seems to have been taken from those Expressions in Scripture, where the Angels and Princes, are called *Gods*, and the *Sons of God*.

And their setting up *Dæmons* and famous Men as the Objects of their Worship, may probably have arisen from the Corruption of the Tradition of a promised Mediator, thro' whom God would be reconciled to Mankind, which prompted them to find out Mediators of their own, according to their own Imaginations.

But as the Light of true Religion encreased, these Superstitions were seen thro' by the more thinking Men, and by Degrees the World was brought into a proper Disposition for that Reformation God intended for them. For as some Men had attained to juster Notions of God, and discerned the Folly of

Idolatry

Idolatry, so all the World were in Expectation of the Saviour promised, and probably of that Reformation he was to bring with him. [see *Tacitus cap.* XIII. *Suet. in Vesp. Cap.* IV.]

And therefore when the World was so far enlightened by the *Jews*, as to know the only true God, and in some Measure, to see the Vanity of the then established Superstitions, and a general Expectation was raised amongst them of a great Prince, that was to come, who was to introduce a new and glorious Scene of Happiness over all Mankind; here was the End of this Dispensation accomplished: This was what this Nation was raised up for, and this End being attained, there was now no longer Need of their Separation, nor of those Laws, that were appointed to keep them separate.

And therefore this seems to be a proper Time for the Appearance of the promised Saviour: And whether he came or not, and who he was is the next Thing to be enquired into.

That the Time for the coming of the promised Saviour appointed by the Prophets is expired by the Consent of the *Jews* themselves.

The *Sceptre* is long since *departed from* Judah; the second Temple has been destroyed near 1700 Years, in which he was to have appeared; and it was about that Time, that *Daniel*'s Weeks expired; and yet these were the Rules to calculate his coming by.

And now the Question is whether there was any Person appeared at that Time, who answered the Prophetic Characters, and might reasonably be supposed to be the Person they designed:

There were many Pretenders set up about that Time appointed by the Prophets.

But the only Person that has been able to make his Pretences good, that he was the Person the Prophets aimed at, was *Jesus Christ*. And that he has done

done this, is our next Business to prove. And in doing this, as I have before shewn the Connection of the Scripture Prophecies concerning him, so I will here shew the Connection there is between *Jesus Christ*, and those Prophecies. And that we may be able to make the Comparison the more easily, I will run them over in the Order I have before considered them.

The first Prediction of a Saviour fulfilled.

The first Prediction was, that *the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head:*

This has a wonderful Completion in *Jesus Christ*, if by this Expression was intended, that the Person meant by it should be the Seed of the Woman only, by being born of a Virgin-Mother.

As this was a Circumstance so extraordinary, that we can hardly imagine any sensible Impostor would have laid such a stumbling Block in the very Entrance of his Design, had it been a mere Delusion, so we have Reason to believe it was intended in the Promise, from the natural Relation it bears to those Laws about the Trial of Virginity, of which there can be no reasonable Account given, but that they had an Eye to the Birth of the Redeemer; so that when he should come as the Son of a Virgin, there might be some approved and authentic Proofs, by which such Pretences might be legally determined. And as *Jesus Christ* was conceived in so miraculous a Manner, as to be *the Seed of the Woman*, so it will hereafter appear that he was that very Seed, and was to *bruise the Serpent's Head.*

By *bruising the Serpent's Head* is meant as I have shewn, his defeating the Devices of the Devil. And if this be the proper Meaning of the Words, for this End *Jesus Christ* is said to have *appeared, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil.*

And as the Design of the Devil was to deprive our first Parents of the Favour of God, and that Happiness they were made for; So

So this Design is defeated by *Jesus Christ*, as he has reconciled Mankind to God, and procured Pardon for their Sins, and has taught them the only Way to it, by Repentance. And as he laid down his Life to confirm his Doctrine, so God was pleased to accept of his Death as a Sacrifice of Expiation, to which, if we repent, we have Liberty to appeal for Pardon; and to assure us of his Acceptance of this Sacrifice, God raised him from the Dead.

And so again, he has not only promised a Resurrection to everlasting Life, to all that will make themselves capable of it; but he has given us his own Resurrection, as an Instance to shew the Possibility of the Event.

And lastly, he has not only promised Happiness to us, but he has taught us the only rational Way to attain it, which is by Holiness.

And as he has given us such Ideas of our Happiness, as are suitable to a rational Nature; so he has given us such Rules of Holiness to attain it by, as are not only the indispensible Condition of it, but such as are the necessary Qualifications for it.

And he has likewise not only given us the most proper Motives to work upon a rational Creature; but he has promised us such Assistance as will enable us to live accordingly.

And whereas the Happiness he proposed is in Heaven, to assure his Disciples, that there is such a Place, he ascended thither: And gave them Evidence of his being arrived there, by sending down those Gifts upon them from above, which he had before promised to endue them with.

And as he has given us this Assurance of a Resurrection to Life, so he tells us it shall be for ever.

And as he is now in Heaven where all Things are made subject to him, so he has given us Assurance that he will one Day come again *to judge the World in Righteousness*, and will reward good Men, and punish the Wicked.

This

This is a general View of the Christian Religion, and what is there wanting here to compleat this Character of the Saviour promised, as he was to *bruise the Serpent's Head?*

The second Prediction of a Saviour fulfilled.

Another Promise we read of the Saviour to come was, that he should be one *in whom all Nations should be blessed.*

And as he was *sent to bless us in turning every one of us away from our Iniquities.* And in Order to this End as he has done all, that is consistent with a rational Nature, to work in us both *to will and to do according to his good Pleasure*;

So he has done all that is necessary to make us happy, not only in a future, but this present World: He has furnished our Understandings with Light, and Knowledge of all useful Truth: he has taught us how to regulate our Passions; and the Laws he has given us to walk by, are such, as are really for our Good considered in every View.

And that there might be nothing still wanting to compleat our Welfare in this World, so far as we are capable of it, whereas we are all liable to many Evils, he has provided us with proper Assistances and Comforts under them, so as either totally to remove them, or take away the Sting and Burden of them.

And as we are all certain one Day to die, which of all Things is most terrible to human Nature, he has furnished us with a sufficient Remedy for this, by assuring us of a better Life.

And now when we consider all this, what is there still wanting to be done to make himself a Blessing to all Nations?

The third Prediction of a Saviour fulfilled.

Another Character given us of the promised Saviour, was, that of a *Prophet like unto* Moses; by which I have shewn you was meant, that he should not

not only be a Prophet, but a Redeemer, and a Lawgiver, a Mediator of a new Covenant, confirmed by Miracles, as that of *Moses* had been. And that this Redemption should be a spiritual Redemption; the Laws such as are written upon the Heart; and the Covenant, not such a Covenant as *Moses*'s was, but a Covenant of Peace and Reconciliation between God and Man, and this calculated for the Benefit of all the World.

This is all implied in this general Promise;

And what is there wanting in *Jesus Christ* of all this?

As a Prophet, he has brought us a perfect Revelation of the Divine Will in such a manner, as no one beside him ever did.

As a Saviour and Deliverer of God's People, he did not deliver them from a bodily Slavery, as the *Egyptians* was, but he delivered them from the Power of Sin, and *Satan*; this was such a Salvation as the World wanted; this was what he came into the World for; for this he had his Name; and this was his Work.

As a Ruler and Lawgiver, his Laws did not consist in burthensome Rites, and costly Ceremonies, and occasional Institutions, but they were Statutes founded in Reason, suitable to the Nature of God and Man; worthy of God to give, and necessary to the Welfare of Man to observe.

He came as a Mediator of a new Covenant, as *Moses* was, but such a Covenant as was of a better and more perfect Nature, and built upon better Promises, than his. And all this he confirmed by Miracles, as *Moses* did, and with such Force of Evidence that they not only extorted Confession from the Multitude, that *he was a Teacher sent from God*, but that *he was that Prophet that was to come into the World.*

And, *lastly*, as we have before shewn, that the promised Saviour was to be one, *in whom all Nations*

should

should be blessed, and therefore all he was to be, or do, must be so ordered, as to be a Blessing to all the World; so was it here in *Jesus Christ*: The Revelation he delivered, the Salvation he wrought, the Laws he gave, and the Covenant he made, were such, as were not only intended for, but, according as the Prophets had foretold they should, be adapted to the Condition of all Mankind.

And as the Benefit was intended for all the World, so Christ took care to have it preached to all Nations. And as he chose out proper Persons for this Work, so he endued them with proper Powers for it.

And when they had preached the Gospel to all Nations as our Saviour had foretold, that the End should come, that is the End of the *Jewish* Dispensation; and as God himself had likewise told the *Jews*, that when he should *send a Prophet like unto* Moses, *if they did not hear*, and receive *him*, *he would require it at their Hands*; so 'tis very remarkable that God then destroyed *Jerusalem*, the Temple and the Government of the *Jews*.

A fourth Prediction of a Saviour fulfilled.

But, *fourthly*, as the promised Saviour was to be a Prophet unto *Moses*, so he was to be a King, like unto *David*, having *the Heathen for his Inheritance*, *and the utmost Parts of the Earth for his Possession*.

And in this likewise *Jesus Christ* agrees, tho' he was not to have a temporal Government; as being inconsistent with the Character of the Messiah in other respects.

He was to *be a Blessing to all Nations*; but this was not the Way to be so, to make them all Vassals to one People. He was *to bruise the Serpent's Head*, and to deliver Mankind from Sin, Death and Misery, into a State of Holiness, Happiness, and Immortality.

And every Thing ascribed to him, must agree in this; and in order to this, some Things were to be taught and reveal'd from God, for which he usually made

made use of the Prophets; and other Things to be done in the Way of Expiation, which belonged to the Office of a Priest; so he is represented in Scripture, under these Characters.

And as there were Laws to be given, and Judgments to be executed, and the like; so on this Account, he is represented as a King.

But then, as all this is only for the one great End of *bruising the Serpent's Head, and bringing in everlasting Righteousness*, this Kingdom must be evidently a spiritual Kingdom.

And 'tis upon this Account that 'tis called the *Kingdom of David*, and represented *by sitting upon his Throne.*

For, tho' the Kingdom of *David* was a Kingdom in this World, it was erected with a Spiritual View: It was a Government set up for the Protection of the Children of *Israel*, a People chosen out of the World, as *holy to the Lord*, and whom he kept separate from them for the Preservation of the true Religion, in Opposition to Idolatry:

And therefore when 'tis promised that the *Messiah* should sit upon *David*'s Throne, it can be meant only, that he should rule over the *Israel* of God, his elect and chosen People; and that, as from his Kingdom all Idolatry should be banished, and the true God only worshiped in it, so his Subjects should be a People *holy to the Lord.*

And as they only are *the true Israel*, the *chosen and elect of God*, who serve him faithfully; so this Promise of the *Messiah*'s Kingdom, seems to imply that there shall be a Time when all the World shall be of the same Religion, and all the People *holy to the Lord*; *when the Will of God shall be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven:* And then his Kingdom will come; which is that Kingdom our Saviour seems to have taught us to pray for; *a Kingdom that shall*, as the Prophet says, *be possessed by the Saints, for ever and ever.*

If this be the Meaning of the Kingdom of the *Messiah*, it is yet to be fulfilled.

And as this *Kingdom of the Saints* was given *to the Son of Man*, when *he came with the Clouds of Heaven before the Ancient of Days, sitting in Judgment*; so we may conceive there will be a Time, when, as God will call the World to Judgment; so the *Son of Man shall come in the Clouds of Heaven*, and shall enter into his Kingdom; that is, shall be appointed Judge over all, and then shall he reign over the Saints for ever, which agrees with what we are taught to believe of *Jesus Christ*, that he shall be the *Judge of Quick and Dead*, and then he will give the Kingdom *to the blessed of his Father*, that was *prepared for them from the Beginning of the World*; by which is to be meant that Happiness, which was promised by the coming *of the Seed of the Woman*.

This is the full Completion of our Saviour's Kingdom and Glory:

But he has a Kingdom even now, in which he was invested at his Ascension into Heaven, God having then *exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name*.

And as the preaching the Gospel was an Introduction to this Authority, and was an actual Promulgation of those Laws which he required every one to obey, that would be entitled to his Favour here, or the Glory of his Kingdom hereafter, so this is frequently called in the Gospel, *the Kingdom of Heaven*, as it is the Beginning of that Dispensation, which was to go on by Degrees, till all Nations should become the Subjects of *Christ*, and enjoy the Privileges of the Gospel here, and such as would fit themselves for it, should be afterwards admitted into his Kingdom of Glory with all the Saints hereafter.

A fifth Prediction of the Saviour fulfilled.

Fifthly, The promised Saviour was to *be a Priest*:

That he was to *give his Soul an Offering for Sin*, *the Just for the Unjust*, that *by his Stripes we are healed.*

All which agrees with *Jesus Christ*, who came into the World to *seek and save that which was lost*, and laid down his Life, that *we might have Redemption thro' his Blood.*

And as he did this by God's own Appointment, he had by Consequence paid the Price of our Redemption, which he had now a Right to: So he then *ascended up into Heaven*, as the High-Priest used to do at the great Expiation, to present the Blood of his Sacrifice in the holy Place. And by thus shewing himself before God in that Body, in which he suffer'd, and by that suffering had performed the Condition of our Reconciliation: As he did then by that Act intercede for us, and, as it were, claim that Redemption, he had by his Suffering purchased, so, as *he lives for ever at God's right Hand*, *he lives for ever to make Intercession for us.*

And thus you see how he fulfilled the Character of a Priest.

The Prediction of the Time of the promised Saviour's coming fulfilled.

First, As it was foretold by *Haggai* ii. 6, 7. that he should come, whilst the second Temple stood; at a Time when the World should be in Expectation of him; and after great Changes in the Kingdoms of the Earth; so we find all these agree to the coming of our Saviour Christ.

Every one knows, that as the *Assyrian* Empire had, at the Time of this Prophecy, been transferr'd to the *Medes* and *Persians*, and the *Persian* Empire not long after was overturned by *Alexander*; so was this Empire by Degrees swallow'd up by the *Romans.* and when after various Wars the whole Empire of the World was reduced under *Augustus*, and settled in a perfect Peace, then was *Jesus Christ*, the Prince of Peace, born into the World.

He

He was born whilst the second Temple stood, and at a Time when there was a general Expectation of him.

So that nothing can more punctually agree than this.

But, *Secondly*, The Time of the promised Saviour's coming was determined by *Daniel* to the Expiration of seventy Weeks, after the going forth of a Decree to build *Jerusalem*.

And as at this Time he appeared, the general Expectation of his coming at that Time, when he appeared, is a Proof that that Generation understood the Prophecies, on which they built their Expectation, were then to be fulfilled. And 'tis remarkable, that however the Calculation of this Time be made, it wonderfully agrees to *Jesus Christ*.

Thirdly, *Malachi* tells us, Chap. iii. 1. iv. 5. that he must have a Messenger come before him, one in the Power and Spirit of *Elias*, to prepare his Way, and then suddenly he should appear. And,

How aptly does this concur with the Preaching of *John Baptist*; who not only professed, that he came for that End the Prophet had foretold, *viz. to prepare the Way of the Lord*, but also declared, that *Jesus was the Person, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World.*

And, *Lastly*, He was to come before the Sceptre should depart from *Judah*, and so *Jesus Christ* did:

But soon after his coming, when the *Gentiles*, as *Jacob* had foretold they should do, *had gather'd themselves to him by the Preaching of the* Apostles, then the End of that Dispensation came. The *Jewish* Government was destroyed, and the *Romans took away both their Place and Nation.*

And as this was a strong Testimony to *Jesus Christ*; so it is also of the Wisdom of that Providence, by which it was effected, at that particular Time.

For as the *Jewish* Ceremonies had been instituted

by God for the Cure and Prevention of the Idolatry of that People, who had been set up by God for the Preservation of the true Religion, in the Knowledge and Service of the true God, in the Faith of the promised Saviour, for which he gave them several Injunctions to keep them separate from the idolatrous World, and several Revelations from Time to Time to correct their Notions and support their Faith.

And as they were likewise intended, notwithstanding their Separation, to be a Means of communicating Light and Knowledge to the rest of Mankind; so when the *Jews* were no longer prone to Idolatry, and therefore there was no longer Reason to continue them a separate People:

And when that Saviour was come, the Expectation of whom they were to propagate, and when the Knowledge of the true Religion was imparted to all Nations by the Apostles, there was then no need of continuing the *Jews* a separate People; and therefore God put an End to their Polity: Intending, no doubt, that as he designed that they, and all Mankind, should be but one People, so it should not be in their Power to keep themselves separate, and observe that Dispensation any longer, by which they were obliged to meet and worship at *Jerusalem* only.

Thus you see, how the Prophecies agree to *Jesus Christ*, in respect of the Time, in which the promised Saviour was to come.

But further, our Saviour not only came at the Time appointed by the Prophets, but he came at the most suitable Time, that could be imagined.

For Learning was, at that Time, arrived at its utmost Perfection; and as this qualified them to understand Truth, so there was a noble Spirit of Curiosity reigning among them; and tho' this arose probably out of Vanity, yet it was a proper Disposition for the opening of Christianity to them.

There was likewise a general Peace throughout the World;

World; and as there was by this Means an easy Passage open'd for Commerce from one Kingdom to another, so there could be no Time more seasonable for the opening the Gospel.

But what is more than all this, there was at that Time an absolute Necessity of a Revelation both to *Jew* and *Gentile*.

The Necessity of a new Revelation to the *Gentiles*, at that Time when our Saviour came, I have already shewn. And there can be as little doubt of the same, in respect of the *Jews*, if we consider that notwithstanding all the Methods God had taken for the Establishment of true Religion and Virtue among them, they still needed a Reformation. As to their Religion, it was reduced entirely to a mere Formality.

And as to the Duties of Morality, they thought that the punctual Observance of some one Duty, would exempt them from an Obedience to all the rest.

And with this, there was then a modern, but prevailing Sect among them, that not only rejected a great Part of the holy Writings, but maintained, that there was *no Resurrection*, *nor Angel*, *nor Spirit*:

Whether they meant by this, that there was no separate State of Spirits, I am not sufficiently informed; However that be, there does not seem to have been at that Time a sufficient Revelation of a future State.

'Tis true indeed the Principle of a Resurrection is said in the New Testament to have been believed by the *Pharisees*; but upon what Foundation we are not told: But *Josephus* (*lib.* 18. cap. 2.) tells us, they had very gross Notions of it.

These things being thus, this plainly shews, how ineffectual all former Methods had proved, and how necessary a new Revelation was at that Time, for the Reformation both of their Notions and their

Manners: And particularly to give them a better Idea of another Life, built upon a better Bottom.

And since the promised Saviour was to come at this Time, and to bring a new Covenant with him:

And since *Jesus Christ* not only came at this Time, but came with a new Covenant to the World, and such a one as was in all Respects suitable to their Circumstances; what stronger Proof can we have, that he was the very Person the *Jews* expected, that God had promised, and the Prophets had foretold?

And when he had actually made an Offer of this Covenant to the *Jews*, and was rejected by them, this gives us another Reason for the Destruction of that Nation: As being a People unworthy of the Continuance of God's Favours, who would not hear the Prophet he had sent to them.

And thus you see how all Things agree in *Jesus Christ*, in every Circumstance foretold. And as the Completion of them in him, is a full Confirmation of our foregoing Interpretation of them; so this will likewise give us a Key, by which to explain several other Places:

For if there be, as we have shewn, real Prophecies of a Saviour to come, which have been literally fulfilled in *Jesus Christ*, from hence we may infer,

That whatever is told of *Jesus Christ* in the New Testament, that has a natural Relation to what we read in the Old, we have Reason to think that Relation might be intended, and may reasonably interpret one by the other.

Thus, when we see a manifest Resemblance between the *Serpent lifted up in the Wilderness*; *the Scape-Goat*; *the paschal Lamb*; *and the High Priest's going into the Holy of Holies once a Year to present the Blood of the Atonement before the Lord*; and *our Saviour's being lifted up upon the Cross*; *his bearing our Sins on his own Body*; *his dying for us*; *and after that of his going up to Heaven, with his own Blood, to appear*

pear in the Presence of God for us: Is it not reasonable to think, that these Institutions might be designed, as Types of those several Things that are so manifestly represented by them in the Gospel?

So, *2dly*, When we read of *Jesus Christ's being born of a Virgin*, and are from thence sure that God always decreed it should be so; when we find the Promise of *Isaiah* quoted by the Evangelist, as fulfilled in him, where 'tis said, *a Virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son, and shall call his Name Emmanuel*, is it not reasonable to conclude that this Prophecy might relate to him, and be spoken of him, tho' the Prophet did not know it? Especially when the Characters there mention'd of the Person to be born, could belong to no other Person but him, being described not only by such wonderful Titles, as *Emmanuel*, *Wonderful*, *the Counsellor*, *the Father of the Age*, *the Prince of Peace*, but also as one, *who should sit on the Throne of* David *for ever*, which is an apparent Character of that King, who was *to come of the Seed of Jesse*, whom we have already shewn to be the *Messiah*.

And so, *3dly*, When we read the History of our Saviour's Death, and the several Circumstances of it;

And read in the xxii *Psalm* the very same Things spoken of there, tho' they seem to be spoken by *David* of himself, yet as they do not appear to have been fulfilled in him, and therefore cannot properly belong to him; so considering *David* as a Prophet, it is not unreasonable to think he might have spoken with a Prophetic View of some other Person; and since they all concur in *Jesus Christ*, and are actually fulfilled in him, it is natural to conceive they were spoken of him.

Thus we may conclude of a vast Multitude of Texts, which will open a great Part of the Scripture to us;

But as such Interpretations are of use only to our

selves, since no Argument can be drawn from them for the Conviction of others:

I have therefore made use of not any Prophecies of this Nature, but such only as are plain to every impartial Reader; and I think there is nothing wanting beyond what I have urged, to shew that they agree in *Jesus Christ*; which was the Thing to be demonstrated.

THE

Dr. *BERRIMAN*'s

BOYLE's LECTURES

ABRIDG'D.

THE GRADUAL REVELATION OF THE GOSPEL.

THE Writers of Infidelity endeavour to propagate their Notions by two Ways. One is, by extolling the Sufficiency of *Natural Light*, as a competent Guide in Matters of Religion, which neither needs, nor ought to have any Aſſiſtance. The other is, by making Exceptions to the *Chriſtian* Scheme in particular, as being either abſurd in itſelf, or inſufficiently atteſted. In anſwer to which I propoſe,

I. To obſerve the Defects, and Inſufficiency of *natural Light*, to anſwer the Ends and Purpoſes of Religion. Then,

II. To collect from hence the great Need Mankind ſtood in of *Revelation*; of ſome ſtated Scheme of *Religion* to be given by God, in order to beget an aſſured Hope, and Expectation of his Favour. And,

III. To aſſert the Reaſonableneſs of receiving that *Syſtem* of *Religion* which is revealed in Scripture, as being every way qualified to give us the moſt ſolid Satisfaction.

I. To obſerve the Defects and Inſufficiency of *natural Light* to anſwer the Purpoſes of Religion. And here I muſt remark, that Men very often impoſe upon themſelves by aſcribing all that to the Diſ-

covery of *natural Light*, which they perceive to be agreeable to Reason, without distinguishing by what Steps they arrive at that Perception. We find the Gospel has prescribed some Instances of moral Duty; which our Reason now readily approves; which yet without Revelation, it either would not have perceived at all, or but imperfectly. The like is to be said of the Motives to Obedience. And is it then not perverse in Men to argue against the Need of Revelation, from the Experience of that Knowledge they receive from it, and to take an Estimate of the Strength of their Faculties, from that Measure of Understanding they enjoy by the Addition of those Helps they labour to exclude? This is applicable to that Degree of Light which is to be observed in the more civiliz'd Heathen Nations, which did not arise from the Strength of their Faculties, but from Tradition darkened, it may be, by Length of Time, and Obscurity of Conveyance; but again improved by Conversation with the *Jews*. (*See* Jenkins's *Reasonableness of the Christian Rel.* Vol. 1. part. 3. c. 5. § 2.) But if we would judge what human Reason can do without these Advantages, view the *Negroes* and *Hottentots*, and they will shew us the Insufficiency of human Faculties to guide us without the Addition of superior Light.

But supposing the Light of Reason able to discover all by itself, which it now sees and approves with the Advantage of former Revelations; yet even in this View the Rule of *natural Light* would labour under signal Defects, particularly in these four Respects.

1. As to the Instances and Measures of our Duty.
2. As to the Rise and Origin of Evil.
3. As to the Assurance of Pardon.
4. As to the Motives, and Inducements to Obedience.

1. As to the Instances and Measures of our Duty;

ty; who ever advanced their Schemes of *Morality*, to such a Height of Purity, as the Gospel of *Jesus* has done? The Prohibitions of Revenge, and the Virtue of loving Enemies, how amiable soever they appear in the Christian Scheme, yet, who will say the Obligation to them would have appeared without that Revelation? They might have been admired as heroical, but would not be insisted on as Matter of strict Duty.

To *honour* the divine Image *in all Men*, to endeavour their Happiness, and to requite good Offices, appears indeed extremely agreeable to Reason, when once 'tis prescribed; but who could have discerned the Obligation without further Aid? Or to reproach those with Transgression, who fell short of it?

Now, if we could suppose it true, that any Particular taken by itself, might have been discover'd by *meer natural Light*, yet when we find every Part of the System so free from Absurdities, as not to admit any Thing into it that is vain or superfluous; there will be Reason to own, that the *Light* of *Nature* could not have taught even the Doctrines of *Nature* with that Clearness, but is beholden to the brighter Light of Revelation for the Perfection of its own Precepts.

For in Fact the Knowledge of natural Duties grew more clear and evident in Proportion as the Light of Revelation has shone out with a brighter Lustre. Thus *Seneca*, *Epictetus*, and the later Moralists exceeded their Predecessors, the ancient Philosophers, in their *Ethicks*, by vertue of that Help they received from the Brightness of the Christian Institution. Now that which has given so much Light, even to those who disclaim it, may be presumed to do it more abundantly to those who receive it.

2. The next Instance in which I would note the Insufficiency of *natural Light*, is with respect to the Origin of Evil.

That there has been not only *natural* but *moral* Evil

Evil in the World, has been the Complaint of observing Men in all Ages; or if there be some that deny the Distinction between moral Good, and Evil, they will be puzzled to account for the natural Evils, consistently with the Wisdom and Perfection of the Creator, which are super-added as the Punishment of what we reckon Immoralities.

The Doctrine of *Transmigration of Souls* was invented to solve these Difficulties which arose from the Miseries of human Life, that they might be represented as the Punishment of Transgressions in a former State, to save the Honour of divine Justice and vindicate the seeming Inequalities of Providence. But this did but shift the Difficulty. For still the Question recurs, whence had the Evils of that former State their Rise? How came the Works of the supreme Being otherwise than good? To which we find these two Methods of Solution; one is taken from the Doctrine of a *fatal Necessity:* The other from a Supposition of two opposite Principles of Good and Evil. Both which are injurious to the Honour of God.

As to the first of them, the Doctrine of a *fatal Necessity*, that must either be independent upon God, or else resulting from his Will. The former Supposition is an unworthy Abridgement of his Power, and the latter of his Goodness. In both Cases all Grounds of Trust, Worship and Obedience to God are subverted. We cannot depend upon his Help, who is either subject to superior *Fate*, or has himself induced Men by a compulsive Influence to offend against the stated Rules of Duty.

As to the Doctrine of *two* opposite *Principles*, it is incompatible with the Immensity and boundless Extent of the divine Perfections. For so much independent Power, as is ascribed to the evil Being, must be taken from the good one; which destroys Infinity, and represents a Deity unable to do all the Good that

He

He desires, or restrain the Evil that he hates. Besides this Hypothesis does not solve the Difficulty, there being plainly the same Objections against making Creatures liable to be corrupted by some other Principle, which lie against making them capable of corrupting themselves.

How then is the Difficulty cleared up by *Revelation?* Not by any nice and philosophical Deductions, but by a plain Matter of Fact, sufficient to preserve the Honour of God, and the Influences of Religion: We have a plain Account of the Temptation and Apostacy of Man: From which we learn that Sin was introduced by the Abuse of Liberty; that the first Author and Promoter of Sin was himself the Creature of God and subject to his Government. So that God cannot be charged as the Author of Sin. Nor can we suppose an independent Principle of Evil; since the Liberty of Will, which is a valuable Blessing, and without which there could be no Virtue, has put it in the Creatures Power to be guilty of Vice. And if this does not solve the Difficulties in Speculation, yet it solves them enough for the Direction of our Practice, and to preserve a religious Fear and Reverence for God.

If our modern Infidels pretend to found the same Answer upon the Principles of Nature, yet the Defects of antient Philosophy convince us, they never could have done it without the Help of *Revelation*:

For who shall assure us of the Reality of such original Liberty, and the actual Abuse of it by a Voluntary Disobedience, if we have no authentick History of the Fact, nor its Memory preserved by the Doctrine and Tradition of succeeding Times? By looking into ourselves we may perceive some Degree of Liberty, but not without a great Byas to Sin; so that the Difficulty cannot be cleared up without supposing Man to be created at first in a more perfect State. And this we are only assured of from revealed Religion.

3. The

3. The *third Defect* of *natural Light*, is, that we have no Assurance of Pardon.

Forgiveness, without question, is a Matter of Favour, and as such cannot be relied upon but in vertue of some Promise. Repentance, indeed, would appear to be the most likely Method for averting the Effects of God's Displeasure, and conciliating his Favour towards us.

But whether any Thing in our Power could be effectual, might at least be doubted; and if it were, yet still it would be difficult to state the Measures and Effects of such Repentance, especially in Case of repeated and habitual Wickedness. And after all our Deductions could only be probable.

Such Repentance, without Doubt ought to include a forsaking of those Sins which we profess to detest. And if this could be done without any Charge of Defect, it still would be nothing more than Matter of strict Duty. And how should that atone for past Offences? much more if this cannot be done to such Perfection, but is followed by many new Violations of Duty, the Sinner then seems to be left in a most hopeless Condition, under a Sense of Guilt, without Assurance of Pardon.

The Practice of sacrificing was anciently observed with a View to give some Relief in this Particular. And if this was done as the Result of *Tradition*, originally founded in Appointment with a Promise of Acceptance, in vertue of a future perfect Sacrifice; it is a Witness of the Defect of *natural* Principles, and the *Need* of a *Revelation*. But if it be consider'd as it obtain'd generally in the Heathen, where the Light of such *Tradition* was lost, then there was no Comfort to be drawn from it.

The Life of *Religion* consists in the Hope of the divine Favour; and that Hope must languish, unless supported by divine Promise, which we cannot be assured of but by Revelation: And if upon Enquiry

we find that there is a *Revelation* which assures us that God is ready to pardon, and has himself provided an effectual Method for this Purpose, in accepting of the Sacrifice of *Christ* as a full Ransom of Sin, upon Condition of true Repentance, with an humble Confidence in his Merits; we ought to rejoice for this Favour, and endeavour to qualify ourselves for receiving it.

4. The last Instance of the Defect of *natural Light*, is taken from the Motives and Inducements to Obedience.

The Motives to Obedience must arise either from the Prospect of some Benefits design'd for its Reward, or from the escaping of such Penalties as are due to Transgression, or from a Conjunction of both these together.

Now since it is evident, that Providence does not with an even Hand dispense forth such Rewards and Penalties, it remains, that either a future State must be supposed for the adjusting of these present Inequalities; or else our Duty will want its most proper Inducements. I conclude therefore that there will be such a State. But had we no other Proof of that Conclusion, besides what arises from this sole Consideration, that the present State of Things requires it, in order to the full Vindication of the divine Honour; I fear the Hurry of our sensual Appetites, which are so hardly restrained under the clearest Convictions, would go nigh to give up the Honour of the divine Attributes, rather than be controuled from Principles that are no otherwise supported. And there must be need of some higher Principle than *natural Light*, which brings me in the

II. Second Place to collect from hence the great Need Mankind stood in of *Revelation*, in order to beget an assured Hope of God's Favour.

If the Strength of our own Minds be plainly insufficient, let us see what other Help can guide us in

this Obscurity. Will the Wisdom and Authority of other Men be a competent Succour to our own Weakness? No, for in Matters of Religion there are some Points in which human Reason either cannot see at all; or not without great Doubt, and Uncertainty; and in Relation to them, whatever any other Man shall maintain upon the Force of Reason, will still be doubtful, unless we can suppose that his Conclusions should be clearer, and better founded, than the Principles themselves from which he concludes.

Or if some should be supposed to have argued right from the Reasons of Things, yet their Authority could be pressed no further than the Reasonableness of their Assertions appeared. And consequently the Bulk of Mankind, whose Faculties were too gross to perceive, or their Attention too backward to go through such Disquisitions, would still be at a Loss where to fix their Foot.

Shall we then have recourse to Tradition? Agreed; but then how shall we know whether the Persons from whom it was derived did collect the Matter by the meer Strength of their *natural* Abilities? or from divine Revelation? If the first should be the Case, there is no Ground to suppose the Faculties of Men in former Times could qualify them for those Disquisitions in Matters of Religion, which we have shewn to be above the Reach of human Penetration.

And if they had supernatural Assistance, the Point in Question is admitted. So that there seems no *Medium* between resting on the incompetent Authority of *human Reason*, and admitting the Need there is of *divine Revelation*, to prevent a State of endless Scepticism, which must utterly destroy the Influences of Religion, and cast us into the wildest Confusion.

In Answer to this it will probably be urged, that the *Revelation* we boast of as the only Expedient to preserve a Sense of Religion, has appeared to be as insuffi-

insufficient for this Purpose as a State of Nature itself. That the World is as wicked, and Christians commit all Sorts of Lewdness with as little Regret as ever they can be pretended to have been in any civilized Nations of the Heathen World.

But this Objection is of no Weight because it mistakes the external Profession, for *Christianity*, or *Religion* itself.

The Christian Religion does, in its own Nature, tend to make Men good; but then in order to attain this Effect, that Religion must be inwardly received, as well as outwardly professed. And when Men are not in Earnest in their Professions, there can be no Wonder, if its Influences should be weak.

And yet whatever Exceptions may be made to the Behaviour of particular Persons, the Precepts of the Christian Morality are much superior to those of Heathen Moralists, who admitted of some Practices that to the Christian is shocking to be thought of. [See *Jenkin*'s *Reas. of the Christian Religion.* Vol. 1. Part 3. C. 4. And after all, those who would persuade us to give up Christianity, ought to give us something better in its room, which they have not done. Such Zeal against Christianity can hardly be acquitted from the Charge of Pride and vain Glory. For if Nature is insufficient to answer the Ends of Religion, and that divine Revelation, which alone appears equal to those Purposes, is nevertheless opposed; for whence can this proceed but from Mens utter Aversion in some Respect, from the Impressions of real Piety? But this will appear further, when

III. I proceed to assert the Reasonableness of receiving that System of Religion, which is revealed in Scripture, as being every way qualified to give us the most solid Satisfaction.

I need not here undertake the Defence of our Religion, as no way contradictory to *natural Light*; it

will be Time enough to do that when our Enemies have objected some Instance of this Kind.

There is one Particular indeed, in which Infidels have lately endeavour'd to convict our Religion of Falshood. They rightly observe that Christ and his Apostles do undertake to establish themselves upon the old Foundation, and maintain Christ to be that Saviour promised in all former Ages. But then they insinuate, that there is no such Person promised in the antient Scriptures; that the Belief of a *Messias* was invented not long before the Age of *Jesus*, unsupported by any literal Predictions: And only countenanced by Men, who indulged their Fancy to find out mystical Interpretations. Moreover, that this Belief of a *Messias*, ill supported as it is, was a quite different Thing from the Christian Doctrine. The *Jews* expected a temporal Deliverer, who was to establish a great Empire over them.

As to this latter Observation, if the Doctrine of a *Messias* can be shewn to be contained in the Scriptures, it can but little concern us how the *Jews* mis-represented it. It will be easy to distinguish the fundamental Matter of their Hope from their own vain Fancies.

Mean while it seems extraordinary, that our Enemies should censure this Doctrine of the ancient *Jews*, as supported only by what is figurative; and yet ascribe to them those Expectations of a temporal Kingdom, which were founded on the literal Interpretation.

They should either be acquitted from the Charge of *Allegory* in this Instance, or else their Opinion should be reckoned nearer to the Christian, concerning the spiritual Reign and Offices of the *Messias*.

With respect to that other Part of the Objection, our Enemies are unreasonable in requiring us to shew, merely from the *Use of Language*, and the *Rules of Grammar and Criticism*, that the *Christian* Sense of the Prophecies must be the true one; for tho' this might be

be done, yet besides the common Usage of Speech, and express Import of Words, there is another way of arguing from *Authority*. Suppose then we should not, by a bare Consideration of the Text of the Old Testament, be able to defend the Christian Interpretation; yet if they who did anciently interpret in such Manner, did work Miracles, this Proof of a divine Attestation will abundantly establish the Sense in Question, and evince it to be the genuine Meaning of the Scripture. Such therefore is the Evidence of the Christian Doctrine, and consequently of its being foretold in the Writings of the Old Testament. And if besides this Proof from Miracles, there should be a Concurrence of other Circumstances that give Light to such Interpretation, 'tis unreasonable to reject it, because perhaps a bare Inspection of the Passage might suggest another Meaning, for that would be to rest the Matter on one Method of Inquiry, and that liable to great Uncertainty.

It shall then be my Endeavour to lay before you the Plan of the *Christian Scheme*, as it was delivered to our first Parents, and gradually unfolded thro' the succeeding Periods of Time, till at last it was displayed with the clearest and most radiant Lustre upon Christ's Manifestation in the Flesh.

The *divers Manners* in which God *spake in Time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets*, may have Reference to those different Methods in which God imparted his *Revelations*; but will, no doubt, be very justly extended to take in the different Import of those *Revelations* themselves, whether deliver'd in *express* Terms, or *figuratively*. The Authority of both is equal, so far as their Meaning appears; for if both alike were imparted by divine *Revelation*, and appear to have been intended in our Sense of them, whether literal or not, then they must both of them have the same divine Authority to support them, and be alike capable of inferring those Conclusions, that

are argued from them. So that in stating of this Matter, I will join together the literal and the typical Predictions, as corresponding together, and tending alike to display the Harmony of the Gospel-Scheme, as taught from the Beginning, and design'd by the divine Wisdom for the only Method of Salvation.

If the Meaning of figurative Characters be not demonstrative, yet there are usually such Circumstances, as may suffice to point out the general Design. Thus if it appears suitable to the Genius of the *Jewish* Writings to have future Things shadowed out by Types, if, in assigning the Interpretation of such Types, we propose no other than a rational Scheme of Religion that is plainly answerable to the ancient Hopes of faithful Men, fulfilled by a correspondent Accomplishment in the Event of Things, and confirmed by other Passages, that are delivered in more express Terms, there is then no internal Evidence to be produced against this Argument from ancient Types, but Reason to own its Conclusiveness. And though we have no Need to rest the whole of the Cause on this Kind of Reasoning, so neither have we any to give it up, as inconclusive.

It is therefore a wild Attempt to set the Evidence of the Gospel merely upon this Foot; for that we have other Evidence, which is direct and *literal* cannot be denied. And on the other Hand, that even that which is drawn from *Allegory* may by a serious Attention to the Genius and Drift of Scripture, arise to a rational Degree of Evidence, and was moreover attested at first by innumerable Miracles.

Our Adversaries indeed have endeavoured to throw out the Evidence of *Miracles*, as impertinent, and alledge, that if the ancient Prophecies had no such Meaning in them, as the New Testament ascribes to them, no subsequent *Miracles*, can ever prove they had, which is very true: But the Ques-

tion is not whether Miracles may prove that Exposition to be true, which was false, but whether that Exposition, whose Truth had otherwise been less apparent, may not be cleared up by the Evidence of Miracles. In this View it is an Argument of great Importance; and sets that, which otherwise might be disputed, above Contradiction. So that taking the whole Proof together, we have such Reasons to embrace Christianity as render Infidelity without Excuse.

And as the ancient Predictions of the *Messiah* were dispensed in *divers Manners*, so they were delivered at *sundry Times*. The whole of our Religion was not discovered at one View, but in such Measure, as was fit to keep up in fallen Men an Hope of the divine Mercy, a lively Assurance of Pardon, and Reconciliation.

Nor was it necessary that the Prophets should perceive the entire Import of every Prediction. If they saw enough to preserve a Sense of Religion alive, it might be left to those of future Times, to discern the further Import of the same Prophecies, when either explained by new ones, or accomplished in the Event of Things. It is therefore allowed that the ancient Prophets were not able to explain the whole of their Prophecies; there was something latent which served as a continual Spur to excite their Zeal and Application, and made them labour for a further Discovery. It is for this Reason, that the Gospel as now preached in the World is termed the Mystery *that had been hid from Ages*. *See Col.* i. 26. 1 *Pet.* i. 10, *&c.* *Mat.* xiii. 17. *Luke* x. 24. Now where is the Absurdity of such a Supposition, that the ancient *Oracles* were not understood in all that Latitude which God has been pleased, by succeeding *Revelations*, to lay open, notwithstanding they had all the same End in View from the Beginning, and were

conducted with such Harmony as mutually to give Light and Confirmation to each other.

Let us then trace the Communications of Gospel Light from the earliest Ages, that we may see by what Degrees the Doctrine of Salvation was made known unto Men; how far they understood the Notices delivered, and how much of the Doctrine contained in their *Oracles*, was left to be cleared up by future *Revelations*, at the same Time making a Discovery of new Circumstances relating to this great Event, and giving further Illustration to the old ones.

Now there are two principal Divisions of Time before the coming of Christ; That before and That after the calling of *Abraham*.

In the first, Mankind were considered without Regard to any distinct Family or Nation. In the latter the *Promises* were made to the Posterity of *Abraham*, tho' with some express Intimations, that the Benefit of them should reach to other Nations. I will consider these Periods distinctly, and under the latter more especially observe with what *Gradation* of Prophecy this great Oeconomy was opened, and the *Messiah* under various Characters described, either as *the Son of* Abraham, or *Son of* David.

In the former of these Periods we have but little Remains of God's Correspondence with Mankind, and in what we have, the Notices of this great Event are very concise, but such as suit with the gradual Revelation of so great a Mystery, and are consistent with the more particular Discoveries of after Times. The first Promise was made immediately upon the Fall, when God denounced his Judgments upon all Parties concerned in the Offence, but in the *midst of Judgment* was pleased to *remember Mercy* towards fallen Man, and increase his Vengeance on the Serpent's Head by the Method used for Man's Recovery. As the Sentence of the

Man

Man and Woman was calculated to put them in Mind of their Apostacy, so was the Serpent doomed to such a Condition, to such Antipathy towards Men, as might serve for a constant Memorial of that sad Catastrophe. *See Gen.* iii. 14, 15.

But tho' the literal Acceptation has its Use, yet the Occasion must appear too solemn, not to suggest some higher View than this; and therefore it has been understood to have a symbolical Design, relating to Events of greater Importance. It is owned the Christian Exposition contains more than can be argued from the Words themselves, and requires some further Light to support it. Mean while there is nothing inconsistent in the Christian Exposition with the Terms, in which that *Prophecy* is delivered, or with any Principle of *natural Light*, or with any other Revelation, So that if it should appear to be supported by Authority, it ought to be admitted as the true Exposition.

That one should be born of the Posterity of that Woman who had been seduced, and should engage in a War with the Devil and his Followers, and sustaining a slight Damage in the *suffering of Death*, should thereby *destroy him that had the Power of Death*, and repair the Injuries he had done to human Race, is the Purport of the Christian Exposition, which contains nothing repugnant to the Words, and is consistent with the succeeding Oracles, which opened the Way for the *Christian* Dispensation; so that, upon taking a View of the whole Scheme together, there will appear no reasonable Objection to be made to this Interpretation.

How much of this Mystery was understood by our first Parents we cannot know. But as the literal Sense is too low to be mistaken for the whole Design of it, so God's frequent Intercourse with Men by his Prophets, might supply fuller Explications of what seemed to be obscure; and give them a further

Insight into the Design of the divine Counsels, than we can now perceive. It might be necessary to have the Point cleared up to them, lest the great Design of Religion should be lost in such Obscurity. But it was not necessary that those Explications should be transmitted to us, because we have other sufficient Means for discovering the genuine Sense of the Prophecy. As then it is not on one Hand to be insisted, that our first Parents understood this Prophecy in all that Extent in which it appears to us by Means of subsequent Revelations; so neither is it to be denied, but that they might be favoured with such Explications, as gave them a clearer View of this important Doctrine, than the Words unexplained could do.

I will now see in what Sense the Words might be taken by our first Parents, and then see whether the religious Notions, which are found in the earliest Antiquity, be not most agreeable to such a Sense.

It is not to be imagined that they should take the Serpent for no other than that brute Creature they saw before their Eyes, incapable of sinning, and therefore no fit Subject of Punishment. They would rather suppose his Form usurped by some evil Spirit, tho' this for want of Experience might not appear to them at the Beginning of the Temptation. Consequently the Threatnings which are denounced against the Serpent, though they have a literal Completion in the Properties of that Reptile, must yet be understood to denote something of a higher Concern, and accommodated to the Nature of a spiritual and intelligent Being. As then there must be something of this Notion conceived from the Beginning (tho' not with all that Lustre and Advantage in which we now perceive it) so we have Reason to believe it might be cultivated and improved by *Enoch* and other holy Men of old, who being endued with the Spirit of Prophecy, would be most probably enlightened

lightened with such Knowledge of this important Doctrine, as was proper for the Age in which they lived. What they delivered of this Kind the Holy Ghost has not transmitted to us, because we have other Means of Knowledge; and whilst we enjoy a more abundant Light, we can have no Ground to complain of the Removal of such, as was comparatively faint and glimmering. However from the short Hints which do remain of the Notions and Sentiments of those Times, we may collect a reasonable Confirmation of our first Parent's Sense of this ancient Prophecy, and of its being figuratively explained and understood by pious Men from the Beginning, who did look for a Deliverer, expressed by the *Seed of the Woman*, who should repair the Damage of the Fall.

The Allusions in Scripture that are made to it under the Character of that *old Serpent*, (*See Revel* xii. 9. 3, 4. *Rom.* xvi. 20. 2 *Cor.* xi. 3. *Isa.* lxv. 25. 23. *Psalm* lxxii. 9. *Mic.* vii. 17.) may serve for Intimations that the mystical Interpretation of that Passage was anciently received among the *Jews* as a settled Principle. And tho' it be no unreasonable Presumption, that they derived it by Tradition, yet the Method I proposed obliges me to look into the little Remains of those Times for what Hints we can pick up of the same Interpretation; concerning which I have one *Postulatum* to premise, that in so short a Narrative of Things, it is reasonable to suppose the Sayings of those ancient Patriarchs, should be such as contain some Matter of real Consequence, and ought not to be restrained to the lowest Sense, which the Words may admit.

Upon this Presumption I proceed to consider the Speeches of those ancient Patriarchs, and see what Reference they bear to this Promise of Redemption.

Imme-

Immediately after God had denounced the Sentence of Mortality on Mankind, alleviated however with the Promise, that the *Seed of the Woman* should finally destroy the Serpent, it immediately follows, *And* Adam *called his Wife's Name* Eve, *because she was the Mother of all Living*; this is commonly understood to denote that she was first Mother of all Men. But this Interpretation is too low, and not answerable to the Dignity of the Occasion, and the Connection of this Passage with what went before.

But if we look back on the divine Sentence, but just before recited, where *Adam* stands as the Head and Representative of fallen Mankind, brought into a State of Death and Condemnation, and the *Seed of the Woman* is promised to repair the Inconvenience, and restore Life and Immortality; we shall then perceive the Beauty and Propriety of this Appellation. She was the *Mother of all Living*, because he who is the Author of our *Life* and Salvation, as well as all they who do partake of the spiritual *Life*, by Vertue of their Union with him, were to descend from her, and reckoned for that *Seed of the Woman* mentioned in this Promise.

As *Adam* then by this first Sentence, expressed his Faith of Life and Salvation by the *Seed of the Woman*; so did *Eve* upon the Birth of *Cain*. *I have gotten a Man from the Lord*, or as it may be more grammatically rendered from the *Hebrew*, *I have gotten a Man Jehovah*, or, *the Lord*. She had fresh in her Mind the Promise of a victorious Seed, and understood it of a single Person, who tho' of human Nature, should yet have the Fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him, from whence she ascribes to him the incommunicable Name of God. And tho' *Eve* mistook *Cain* himself for that *promised Seed*, or at least that Son from whom that *blessed Seed* should come; or if she only looked upon his Birth as an Earnest of that future Multiplication of Mankind,

which

which in Time ſhould produce the promiſed Redeemer: Yet either Way it argues her Acceptation of that original Promiſe to be ſuch, that one of her Poſterity ſhould repair the Damage of the Fall.

When *Cain* by his Wickedneſs had fallen ſhort of the Character of the *promiſed Seed*, and had moreover killed *Abel*, *Eve*'s Faith did not fail; but at the Birth of *Seth* ſhe ſpeaks of it as the Appointment of God, which could not fail, that this ſhould be *another Seed* inſtead of *Abel*. (*Gen.* iv. 25.) therefore not to be ſlain childleſs, but to preſerve a Seed in the Earth, till He ſhould come, who is, in a more eminent Senſe, that *Seed of the Woman* that ſhould *bruiſe the Serpent's Head*, and put an End to his Oppreſſion.

And in his Time, indeed, the Diſtinction between the *Seed of the Woman*, as including the collective Body of faithful Men; and the *Seed of the Serpent*, as denoting the wicked, came to be further cleared up by the Experience of their different Manners.

The former were called *Sons of God* as retaining a ſtedfaſt Faith in his Promiſes; the other were the *Sons* and *Daughters of Adam* or of *Men*, who, having no Principle of ſpiritual Life, are denominated only from their fallen Anceſtor. This Diſtinction is mentioned ſo early as the Birth of *Enos*, the Son of *Seth*; *then began Men to call upon the Name of the Lord*, or rather, after *the Name of the Lord*, that is, to diſtinguiſh themſelves as his Children in Oppoſition to the irreligious Part of Mankind, who being reckoned for the *Seed of the Serpent*, are therefore termed, under the ſofteſt Character, the *Children* of *Adam*, or of Man, conſidered in his fallen State. The mention of this Diſtinction at the Birth of *Enos*, hath inclined ſome to think that the *Sons of God* were only of the Family of *Seth*. But ſince we read that *Adam* had other Sons and Daughters, there can be no Need of confining the Diſtinction ſtrictly to thoſe Families,

Families, tho' they might be considered as the principal.

However it were, we find that in Process of Time, the Sons of God did so far decline that God destroyed them with a Deluge, when only the Family of *Noah* was preserved. The Name of *Noah* had been given him by his Father *Lamech*, in Token of that Consolation which was expected from him. *This same*, says he, *shall comfort us concerning our Work and Toil of our Hands, because of the Ground which the Lord hath cursed.* Here is a plain Reference to the divine Judgment denounced after the Fall; and therefore the Evils of which he complains, and in which he hopes for Comfort, may well be understood to intend those Evils consequent upon the Fall: From which even the pious Part of Mankind are not exempted.

The *Curse* upon the *Ground* was doubtless more considerable before Men had found out the Art of cultivating and manuring the Earth. But by the gradual Improvements in Husbandry, and Invention of Tools for that Purpose, this *Toil* was greatly mitigated in a natural Way. And it might be probably in this View, that *Lamech* promised himself *Comfort* from his Son *Noah*, who is called an *Husbandman*. Gen. ix. 20.

But since the Things of this Life are usually put, in the Books of *Moses*, to point out to another; and since the Dispensation of *Noah* is set forth 1 *Pet.* iii. 19, 20. as a *Type* of the Gospel State, this Speech of *Lamech* may refer to something of a spiritual or religious Nature. And thus what he terms our *Work*, or Actions, that *Work*, in Respect of which he wanted Comfort, may well be paraphrased the Evil of our own doings. And then the *Toil of our Hands* may be well interpreted to denote the Fatigue and Miseries of this mortal Life. Among which, that is not the least which he proceeds to mention,

mention, that the Earth is accurſed for the Sake of Man, not only to be unfruitful without Pains, but tō be, as it were, a Place of Exile from the divine Preſence. The oppoſite Advantage which *Lamech* promiſed, was not the Removal of theſe Evils, but Conſolation under them; ſuch as aroſe from the Proſpect of Pardon, and an Aſſurance of a better State, in Conſequence of that Victory, at laſt to be obtained over the old Deceiver.

But how could *Lamech* aſcribe theſe Bleſſings to *Noah*, *this ſame ſhall comfort us*, without ſuppoſing him that extraordinary *Seed* that was foretold? Why, he might mean to aſſign a farther Limitation of the Family of *Noah*, as the Line from whence that *Seed* ſhould ſpring: And withal to point him out as a Type of that *Seed*, both as he was a *Preacher of Righteouſneſs* and Repentance; and likewiſe as he was a Means of preſerving a Remnant in the Ark, and doing many Things to figure out the ſpiritual Benefits, which we receive by Chriſt.

In his Time God deſtroyed the Earth for the Wickedneſs of Men. And as the bleſſed Seed had been limited to his Family, ſo now againſt the Diſtribution made of the Earth among his Sons, it ſeem'd proper to diſtinguiſh in which Line that Expectation ſhould be kept up. This he has determin'd to the Line of *Shem*, *Gen.* ix. 26. tho' without excluding his Brethren from the Benefits of that Promiſe, provided they ſhould continue in a State of Warfare with the *Serpent and his Seed*. Thus to *Japheth*, *Gen.* ix. 27. it is engaged not only that God ſhould *enlarge Japheth*, but likewiſe that he ſhould *dwell in the Tents of Shem*, which implies his partaking of the Privilege aſſured to his Brother in having the *Lord* for his *God*, and ſo being entitled to the Bleſſing of the ſame Promiſe, which was fulfilled when the Poſterity of *Japheth* were grafted on the Stock of the *Jews*.

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As for *Ham*, he is not expresly included in this new Promise; yet neither is he excluded from it; but when a Sentence of Malediction is denounced against his Son *Canaan*, *Gen.* ix. 25. it may be observed, that it reaches only Temporals, that he should be a *Servant to his Brethren*; whilst that *Servitude* itself might occasionally conduce to his spiritual Advantage. Indeed as his Crime may typify others of a grosser Kind, so might the *Servitude*, to which he was adjudged, figure out the wretched State of wicked Men, from that Conquest which the promised *Seed of the Woman* should obtain over the *Serpent* and his *Seed*. But in this View the Sentence is not personal, but belongs to the *Children of the wicked one*, who were meant to be pointed out, whilst the Persons both of *Ham* and *Canaan* with many of their Descendants might be saved from that extreme Malediction.

Thus far I have considered the several Expressions which have been preserved to us of pious Men before the Times of *Abraham*, which shew the Sense those Ancients had of the Damage of the Fall, and their Expectation of Deliverance from it by Means of him, who was first promised as the *Seed of the Woman*, and in Process of Time was limited to the Line of *Seth*, of *Noah*, and of *Shem*.

Nor is there any Thing from which this Religious Expectation may be more fairly argued, than the universal Practice of *Sacrifice* as an Atonement for Sin. For what Congruity is there in Nature or Reason, between slaying a Beast, and expiating the Sin of a Man?

So disproportioned an Effect must be owing to the Intervention of some positive Law; and since we find that God was pleased with the Oblation of such Sacrifices, *Gen.* iv. 4. we have Reason to conclude they were performed in Obedience to his own Appointment: and when duly performed had an expiatory Vertue, and made Atonement for Sin. As

As the Race of Men increased, we have Reason to believe that the Practice of Sacrificing prevailed among them, since by the Time of *Noah*, there was a known Distinction of Animals into *clean*, and *unclean*, which seems to have Reference to their Fitness or Unfitness for Sacrifices. As the whole Earth was over-spread of his Posterity, so was the traditional Use of Sacrifices universally preserved. Now what Ground can we imagine for this so universal a Tradition, less than divine Appointment, and that for a standing Memorial of the Covenant made upon the Fall, and a Type of the Benefit contained in it. Or if we could suppose it of human Invention, yet the divine Approbation of it would argue the same Reference to the divine Promise, and consequently its being thus far explained and understood from the Beginning.

Nor does it signify that this Practice of Sacrificing was retain'd by many Nations, who knew nothing of Man's Apostacy, nor of the typical Relation of such Sacrifice to the Redeemer. For the Practice of Sacrificing, as an outward Rite, could not easily be overlook'd. But the mystical Design of it was deliver'd in obscurer Terms, and less suited to the Taste of sensual Men, and then no Wonder, if they transmitted not to their Posterity the Reason of the Rites, which they retained.

Having consider'd the Notices which appear of the *Messiah* from the Fall of Man to the Vocation of *Abraham*; and having seen how the *blessed Seed* was gradually determined to the Line of *Seth*, of *Noah*, and of *Shem*. In a direct Line from him, we find *Abraham*, to whom again the Promise was made, with a Limitation to the Family of *Isaac*, as afterwards of *Jacob*, with a Limitation to his Son *Judah*, and so continued till upon the Erection of the Monarchy, the Royal Family was pointed out for the Birth of the *Messiah*, and *David* for his great Progenitor.

nitor. This is the received Doctrine and Opinion of the Jews; and therefore it was highly expedient that some of the Evangelists should shew that *Jesus* did not want that necessary Qualification to the Messiahship.

With this View St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke* has each of them inserted the Genealogy of *Christ*; the one from *Abraham* to *Christ*, the other from *Christ* to *Adam*: There are indeed some difficulties in these Genealogies. And because some of them do plainly affect the Application of those Prophecies to our Saviour, which speak of the *Messiah* as coming of the Seed of *Abraham*, with a special Limitation to the Family of *David*: I will endeavour to clear up the Matter before I go on to consider further of the Prophecies themselves.

Since then the principal Promises of the *Messiah* were made to *Abraham*, who was the Founder of the *Jewish* Nation, and to *David* who was Head of the Royal Family, to whom those Promises were made, which respect the *Messiah* in his regal Character; it is no Wonder if St. *Matthew* chose to insert these two Names in the Title of his Genealogy. *The Book of the Generation of* Jesus Christ, *the Son of* David, *the Son of* Abraham. Withal it may be noted, that their Sons, *Isaac* and *Solomon*, were eminent Types of the *Messiah*; the one being born against the Rules of Nature, and then intentionally sacrificed; the other in being exalted to a peaceable and ample Government, and magnificently building the material Temple, a Figure of the mystical. How significantly then is the *Messiah* reckon'd for the Son of *Abraham* and *David*? For the same Reason he is elsewhere described by the Name of *David*, because *David* was an eminent Type of him.

In the Genealogy itself there are two considerable Difficulties: One is concerning the Extraction of *Joseph*, the Husband of *Mary*, whom St. *Matthew* makes

makes to be the Son of *Jacob*, and so deduces, by a lineal Succession from *Abiud* the Son of *Zorobabel*, whilst St. *Luke* makes him to be the Son of *Heli*, and so deduces him from *Rhesa*, another Son of *Zorobabel*.

The other is, concerning the Extraction of *Salathiel* the Father of *Zorobabel*, whom St. *Matthew* makes to be the Son of *Jeconias*, or *Jehoiachin*, and so deduces him from *Solomon*; whereas St. *Luke* represents *Salathiel* to be the Son of *Neri*, and so descended from *Nathan* another Son of *David*.

The Difficulty of both Questions is considerable. But the Difference between these two Pedigrees is owing to the different Methods in which they were deduced, and not to any Want of Truth in either of them. For, 1. The *Jews* allow'd that *Jesus* was of the Family of *David*; so that there was no Occasion to use Artifice to prove it. And, 2. Had the Evangelists design'd to falsify, they would have avoided all Variation in their Account.

These Considerations are of greater Weight to defend the Integrity of the Evangelist, and our Lord's Pedigree from *David*, than the Difference between them can be to overthrow it, even tho' we were not able to conjecture the Reason of such Difference.

But there have been offer'd two Schemes for the reconciling this Difference.

The first is of *Julius Africanus*, who supposes that the two Evangelists have drawn out the Pedigree of *Joseph* in two different Views, St. *Matthew* in the *natural*, St. *Luke* in the *legal* Method. It was provided by the Law of *Moses*, (*Deut.* xxv. 5.) that where a Person died without Issue, the Brother of the deceased should take his Widow to Wife, and the *first-born* upon such Marriage, should succeed in the Name of the Deceased; and where there was no Brother, this Right devolved to the *nearest of Kin*. Ac-

cordingly the Children issuing from such Marriage, might justly be referr'd to two different Fathers. By Nature they were the Children of the latter Husband, by Law they were the Children of the deceased.

But if it be thought with some others (*vid.* Grot. *Annot. ad* Luc. iii.) that St. *Matthew* observed the *legal* Line, and St. *Luke* the *natural*, still the same Scheme will account for the Differences between the two Evangelists, if we suppose, only in two Instances such substituted Marriages. Thus particularly King *Jehoiachin*, whom *Jeremy* pronounces *childless*, (*Ch.* xxii. 30.) is yet by St. *Matthew* said to have begotten *Salathiel*. Upon this Scheme then it is supposed, that *Jeconiah* or *Jehoiachin* leaving no Child, his Widow was married to that *Neri* that is mentioned by St. *Luke* as the Father of *Salathiel*. And so *Salathiel* might naturally be the Son of *Neri*, but legally the Son of *Jeconiah*. This Solution is liable to little Objection, except it should be thought harsh that two, so nearly related as to come within the Law of the *Levirate*, should not meet in some common Ancestor, at a Degree less remote than *David*.

Suppose then, (to avoid this Objection) that the Sentence pronounced against *Jeconiah* were not, *write this Man childless*, but——*write* him *destitute*, or *stripped*, or *spoiled*, and then it will be lawful for us to take *Salathiel* in St. *Matthew*'s Account, and in the *Chronicles* (1 *Chron.* iii. 17.) to be the genuine Son of *Jeconiah*. Suppose again that *Salathiel*, and *Zorobabel* in the Pedigree drawn by St. *Luke*, and mentioned in the Books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, (*see* Kidder *Demonst. Part* 2. *c.* 11.) to be different Persons, from that *Salathiel* and *Zorobabel* mentioned in St. *Matthew*, and in the *Chronicles*, then the two Difficulties are reduced to one, *viz.* how *Joseph* should be reckoned by one Evangelist the Son of *Jacob*, and so descended by the Line of *Solomon*: And yet by the other should be reckoned the Son of *Heli*,

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and so descended from *David* by the Line of *Nathan*.

And here it is that *Africanus* supposes *Heli* to have died without Issue, and then *Jacob* marrying his Widow, to have begotten *Joseph*, who was therefore naturally the Son of *Jacob*, but legally the Son of *Heli*. And to avoid the Difficulty of Persons so nearly related being derived through so long a Line of different Ancestors, he supposes *Jacob* and *Heli* to have been Brethren only by the Mother's side; but to have had different Fathers, the former in the Line of *Solomon*, the other in the Line of *Nathan*.

If this Scheme be admitted, the Evangelists are easily reconciled. But then there is this Objection will lie against them both, that they give us only the Descent of *Joseph*, not *Jesus*. For since *Joseph* was no more than his reputed Father, it may be thought to little purpose towards proving him to be of the Seed of *David*, to observe, that those Characters were fulfilled in *Joseph* who contributed nothing to his Nativity, whilst his Mother, (as might be suspected from their Silence) was of a different Extraction.

This some have Thought not material, because it was the Manner of the *Jews* to denominate the Family from the Male side only, so that the blessed Virgin, by being espoused to *Joseph* passed (as it were) into the Family of *David*, from whence her Son's Pedigree was deduced in right of her Husband. But though this might be sufficient to vindicate St. *Matthew* in deducing the Pedigree by *Joseph* when he wrote for the Use of the *Jews*, and in compliance with their Method; yet it cannot answer the ancient Prophecies concerning him to say that his reputed Father was so descended, unless his Mother had been so too.

It is therefore material to observe, that the *Jews* were careful to marry in their own Kindred; and there was a Law to oblige all such to it as were Heir-

esses, as *Mary* is reported to have been; so that in describing the Pedigree of *Joseph*, the Family was shewn, of which she descended. (*See* Heb. viii. 14. Rom. i. 3.) And at the Taxing of *Augustus*, when every one went to be taxed in his own City, the Virgin went to *Bethlehem* together with *Joseph* to be taxed, and therefore must have been of the House of *David*. As for *Elizabeth* being called her Cousin, that is easily accounted for, in that the Tribe of *Levi* having no inheritance, and therefore being not subjected to the Law of Heiresses, did more frequently make Inter-Marriages with other *Tribes*; so that either by taking a Daughter of *Judah*, unto them, or giving a Daughter of theirs into *Judah*, there might a Relation between *Mary* and *Elizabeth*.

Having all this Reason to believe, that the blessed Virgin *was of the House of* David; I come now to offer a second Scheme of Reconciliation; and supposing, that as St. *Matthew* has given us a Pedigree of *Joseph*, into whose Family the blessed Virgin was received by Marriage, so that her Son in Construction of Law must be reputed his; so St. *Luke* might chuse to give us the Genealogy of *Jesus* by his Mother's Ancestors; that so from both Evangelists we might have a double Pedigree from *David*, the first from the Line of *Solomon*, the other by the Line of *Nathan*. In Confirmation of which, it may be observed, that *Eli*, or *Heli*, which was the Name of *Joseph*'s Father in St. *Luke*, might probably be the Contraction of *Eliakim*; which being of the same Import is promiscuously used *Jehoiakim* or *Joachim*, which by Tradition is reported to have been the Name of the Virgin's Father. (*Vid. Epiphan. Hær.* 78. §. 17.) And it may seem no improbable Conjecture, that the Family of *Nathan* had been referred to by the Prophet *Zachary*, as the Line of the *Messiah*, when he describes the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* as *looking on him, whom they had pierced, and mourning*

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ing for him every Family a-part. See Zech. xii. 10, 12. Where the *House of* Nathan seems on purpose to be added for a nearer Restriction of the Line of *Christ*, which joined with the foregoing Consideration, makes it likely that the Pedigree which is drawn through the Family of *Nathan* is no other than the Family of the blessed Virgin.

It is true the Virgin *Mary* is not mentioned in St. *Luke*, any more than in St. *Matthew*, because it was not usual to derive Pedigrees by Women; but *Heli*, if her Father by Nature, might well be deemed the Father of *Joseph*, who was really become his Son in Law by Marriage. Thus there is no Difficulty in these Words, Jesus *being, as was supposed, the Son of* Joseph, *which was the Son of* Heli. Namely by this Marriage with his Daughter. It cannot be said indeed that this Phrase is used in any other Article of this Pedigree; but then it is evident, that it is not used throughout in the same Acceptation: For when *Adam* is termed the *Son of God*, it must then at least be used in a different Sense from all the other Degrees of this Genealogy. And if we admit of this Variation in the last Article, I see not what can be objected to the Admission of another in the first.

By this Scheme indeed, Christ's Descent by his Mother was neither naturally nor legally derived from *Solomon*; nor was it needful that it should. It was sufficient he came from the *Loins* of *David*. The Right of Succession to his Throne will be equally secured, if *Joseph* be supposed only the last in the Line of *Solomon*, and the blessed Virgin to be the Heiress of the Line of *Nathan*. Though I cannot say it was necessary that Right should devolve on him from the eldest Line; for as *Solomon* was not himself the eldest Son of *David*, so I see nothing to hinder, but the *Messiah* also might be descended of a younger Line, especially since the temporal Kingdom was abolished and his Throne removed.

Having shewed, that *Jesus* was, as the *Jews* expected their *Messiah* to be, of the Seed of *David*, as well as of *Abrahram*; I may the better proceed to consider those Prophecies of the *Messiah*, which fall within the Compass of the second Period, namely, such as were subsequent to the Call of *Abraham*.

The general Corruption of Mankind being not cured by the Flood, God thought fit to select a single Family, for the Preservation of his Worship, and for a nearer Limitation of that Line in which the *blessed Seed* should be expected, affording new and clearer Revelations of that Matter.

That *Seed* had already been determined to the Line of *Shem*; and among his Descendants we find *Abraham* singled out, to receive a Confirmation of the ancient Promise, and ascertain the Completion of it in some of his Posterity. And God in a peculiar Sense had engaged to be a *God unto him, and to his Seed after him.*

But we must not suppose that the Original Covenant with Mankind was meant to be vacated by this special Engagement with the Family of *Abraham*. All Nations were to have an Interest in the Benediction that was bestowed on him. *In thee, and in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed.*

From hence it is reasonable to collect that People of *all Nations* were to be grafted into his Family, in order to receive the Blessing which was promised him as *Father* of them *all:* And that whatever was specially engaged to his natural Posterity, had a typical Relation to the Days of the *Messiah*, and the Privileges of the Church to be gathered by him out of all Nations.

It has indeed been pretended that this Promise undertakes for nothing more than *temporal* Blessings; and such, as would induce all Nations to *bless themselves* (as we say) by wishing for like Prosperity with the Seed of *Abraham*; or else to use it as a Form of

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Benediction, when they wished well to other People that they might be as the *Seed of Abraham.* But if this had been all that was intended by so solemn a Promise and so many times repeated, and upon which such Stress is laid as the principal Part of the *Covenant established with* Isaac, it seems strange that *Ismael*, should be judged to stand excluded, who in respect of Matters merely temporal, seems to have received Promises but little inferior. Nay if we consider how many Years his Sons enjoyed a Settlement before the *Israelites*, there can be little Ground to understand this Blessing of *temporal* Acquisitions, and there could be little Comfort from such Interpretation to those Persons who had no hope to live so long a Period. But if they saw Christ promised for the Deliverer of Mankind this was matter of great Joy in all Ages of the World, and upon this Foot it was that *Abraham* himself *rejoiced to see the Day* of Christ, for *he saw it and was glad.*

This then was the material Difference between the Blessing of *Isaac*, and that of *Ismael.* In respect of Matters temporal, there was no great Inequality between them, except that the very temporal Blessings of *Isaac* were made Types of spiritual Blessings, whilst those of *Ismael* were referred only to worldly Views: from whence he came to represent those Persons in the Line of *Isaac*, or of *Jacob*, who rested only in external Promises without looking to the spiritual Meaning of such outward Privilege. The Case was plainly this: There were two Covenants with *Abraham*, or two Parts of the same Covenant, the temporal or spiritual. Both Parts were clearly conveyed to *Isaac*, but *Ismael* received but one. And as there were many in the Line of *Isaac*, who attended only to the temporal Part, and neglected the spiritual; these were still in a State of spiritual Bondage, and therefore fitly referred to the Treatment, and Covenant of the Bond Woman's Son. And so the

Apostle

Apostle has explained this Matter, that *Abraham had two Sons*, whose different Estate figure out the different Hopes and Dispositions of Men, who looked to be saved either by Faith in the *Messiah*, or by ritual Services. These *two Sons* were, *one* of *a bond Woman*, the *other* of a *free Woman*, to denote on one Hand the Servitude of those, who are guided only by temporal Motives, and look to be accepted for ritual Services; and on the other Hand, the generous Liberty of those, whose Hearts are purified by Faith, and taught the Duties of an inward and spiritual Obedience. And to shew that the *Son of the Bond-Maid* did represent those who rested in the *Sinaitical* Covenant when literally taken, and without a typical View to the *Messiah*, she had the Name of *Hagar*, which Word signifies a *Rock*, and is from thence made the Name of a City built upon rocky Mountains, which is otherwise called *Sinai*. From which Allusion of the Name, it was easy to consider her as a Type of the Old Testament or the literal and external Precepts deliver'd from Mount *Sinai*, while the Son of *Sarah* denotes those who walked by Faith and could see the spiritual Meaning of the Law.

But what, it may be asked, was not the *Sinaitical* Covenant dispensed to the Descendants of the Line of *Isaac*? Yes certainly. But then, as there were two Parts to be considered in those Promises and Precepts, *viz.* the external Matter, and the internal Design, so there were two Sorts of People, whose Views were different, in Proportion as they attended more to the one, or to the other.

The Land of *Canaan* was figurative of a *better Country*, that is, an *heavenly*, in Prospect of which the Patriarchs were supported through a Life of Travel. The Promise had been made to *Abraham* in Person as well as his Posterity. (*Gen.* xiii. 15.) And yet he had no Dominion of his own. How then was this Promise made good to him? Why, besides the literal

literal Possession of that Tract of Ground, which his Family possessed in due Time, it had moreover a typical Respect to that *Recompence of Reward* which the Gospel proposes to the Faithful. So again, *long Life* in that Land of Promise was typical of the *everlasting Life* which is proposed to those who are sanctified by *Jesus Christ*. Thus the City of *Jerusalem* with its legal Privileges and ritual Worship did set forth the spiritual Privileges of the Christian Church, whether in its present State of Grace, or in its future State of Glory.

The whole Nation of the *Hebrews* did figure out the collective Body of Christians; and those Nations that were at Variance with them denote the Enemies of the Christian Religion. From hence it often comes to pass that those Prophecies which literally refer to the Nation of the *Hebrews*, have yet such Characters intermixed, as typify the future State of the Church; and the Judgments denounced against the Enemies figure out that heavier Judgment of the last Day.

This will appear the more remarkable when it is remembred that the Church at first to be gathered from among the *Gentiles* (*Deut.* xxxii. 21.) was only to succeed in the room of unbelieving *Jews*; that God might have still a peculiar People in order to *provoke them to Jealousy*, and induce them to return to him, that all at last might be united in one common Faith and Hope of Salvation. In this State of the Case, the Church of the *Gentiles* being thus considered as substituted in the Place of the *Jews*, it is natural to conceive that the Predictions, which respect this State of Things, should often make mention of the *Gentiles* so called, and so incorporated under the Title of the *Sons of Abraham*, and describe their Privileges by those of that peculiar People in whose Place they stand.

And as the Blessing of the *Messiah* was plainly the principal Thing contained in the Promise made to

Abraham; so from hence it may appear, that even the temporal Privileges annexed to it, had a typical View to this grand Blessing, and were meant to betoken something of a higher Nature, to be conferr'd in vertue of the *everlasting Covenant*. In proportion to these Views, there were two Sorts of People observable in that Nation, the one carnal or literal, who looked for the external Promises; the other faithful or spiritual, who looked forward to the spiritual Blessings stipulated for in Christ. Of both Sorts we have a Type in *Ismael* and *Isaac*.

Nor is it therefore without Mystery, that the Scripture has recorded the Expulsion of *Ismael* as not admitted to partake of the same Privileges with *Isaac*. It might have seemed perhaps a Piece of Female Frowardness in *Sarah* to insist on such Expulsion. (*Gen.* xxi. 10.) Accordingly *Abraham* seems to have resented it. (*Ver.* 11.) But when we consider that the Matter met with divine Approbation (*Ver.* 12.) there will be reason to ascribe this Dispensation to a higher Cause, as mystically denoting the Worthlessness of mere ritual Services, and the Acceptance only of the Children of the Promise.

From all this we see that mere fleshly Extraction is not enough to entitle to the full Privilege of Sons of *Abraham*; that many who were sprung from him according to the Flesh, were yet Strangers to the spiritual Privileges of his Children; and that on the other Hand such as were received into the Church and imitated that Patriarch's Faith, of what Race soever they descended, were mystically united in Christ, who sprang lineally from him, and so to all spiritual Intents the *Sons of Abraham*. Of this the *Jews* themselves could not be insensible, when they admitted the Faithful from amongst the *Gentiles* as Proselytes, and received them as into one Body with themselves, by their initiatory Rite of Circumcision. But forasmuch as *Abraham* was accepted before Circumcision,

cumcision, and received it only as the *Seal* of his *Justification*, through the *Faith* he had before, they ought to have collected farther, that that Ordinance had no natural Virtue in itself, but God might admit the Members of his Church without it; that therefore when the *Messiah* should appear, this Difference should no longer be made *between the* Jew, *and the Greek*, but all Nations should be admitted upon easier Terms.

It was thus that the Blessing of *Abraham* was *to come on the Gentiles* through *Jesus Christ*. (*See* Gal. iii. 7, 8, 9.) And this is likewise implied in that other Promise made to that Patriarch, that he should be a *Father of many Nations*, *viz.* not only by Descent but Principle. *For if ye be Christ's then are ye* Abraham's *Seed*, that is, if ye be engrafted mystical Members of Christ's Body, then are ye through him reputed also for the *Seed of Abraham*, that spiritual *Seed* to which the Blessing is ensured, and therefore *Heirs according to the Promise*.

Thus we see how the New Testament was involved under the Old, and the same Scheme of Salvation has been regularly pursued through all Ages of the World. The Letter of external Privileges might belong to the natural Posterity of *Abraham*, but the mystical Meaning of them was no other than the Gospel itself, which extends its Benefits to *all Nations*, and unites them into one Body as the spiritual *Sons of Abraham*. And thus the Apostle declares him to be the *Father of us all*. (*See* Rom. iv. 16. xi. 12. ii. 28.)

And thus may be explained these Words: *To* Abraham *and his Seed were the Promises made: He saith not, and to Seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Christ*. Though *Seed* may be a Name of a Multitude, yet they are in some View or other collected into Unity, and referred to one Head. But *Abraham* having *two* Kinds of *Seeds*, the Promises

Promises could not be to both in the same Meaning; because *Abraham had two Sons*, that in one of them his *Seed* was to be called, and not in the other. His natural Posterity by *Isaac* was typified in *Ismael*, and as such, entitled only to the literal Matter of the Promises. But the spiritual Meaning belonged to the spiritual *Seed*, of which *Isaac* was himself a Type. And that *Seed*, says the Apostle, *is Christ*, *viz.* Christ principally, but withal considered as *Head* of that mystical Society, in which the Faithful of all Nations were gathered into one, reputed as Members of this mystical Body, and reckoned for that *one Seed of Abraham*, to which *the Promises were made*.

So were *all Nations* to be *blessed in Abraham*, and in *his Seed*; God's faithful People, of whatever Extraction, were to be spiritually united with Christ, and so grafted on the Stock of *Abraham*, that Stock in which his Seed was to be called, *that the Blessing of* Abraham *might come on the* Gentiles *through Jesus Christ*, and that they might be entitled to claim under him as Father of the Faithful. So that the *Seed of Abraham* is a Phrase of like Import with the *Seed of the Woman* formerly explained; and as *Adam* is set forth for the Representation of Mankind, considered in their fallen Estate, so is *Abraham* as the common *Father* of all those that are restored; though not by natural Descent, yet by vertue of their spiritual Union with Christ his Son.

How instructive is this View of the ancient Covenant, which makes Christ the Center of spiritual Blessings, and the outward Letter of temporal Advantages to contain an inward Meaning of much higher Concern! The *New Testament*, indeed, as distinguished from the *Old*, is said to be a *better Covenant and established upon better Promises*. But then the *Law* or *Old Testament* is taken only for the *Letter*, in which the *Jews* were too apt to acquiesce; otherwise, if we take in the spiritual Design of it, it differed nothing from

from the Gospel itself, but only in the Manner and Circumstance of its Delivery. The Gospel does only more explicitly unfold what the Old Testament had involved in greater Obscurity. *Christ's abolishing Death* is mentioned *as the Ground of Life and Immortality:* And what is that but the same Conquest of the *Serpent* which had been promised from the Beginning; the same Reparation of the Damages done by Man's Apostacy.

The *Blessing of Abraham* which had been assured to *Isaac*, (*Gen.* xxiv. 4.) was in the next Generation bequeathed to his Son *Jacob*; (xxviii. 4.) and with him God renewed the same Covenant. (xxviii. 14.) And though *Esau* had likewise the Promises of many temporal Advantages, (xxviii. 39, 40.) yet the Superiority was to *Jacob*. (xxv. 23.) Which Superiority was aptly figurative of those spiritual Privileges which are conferred as the Blessing of the *promised Seed*. This is what the Scripture terms the *loving Jacob* and *hating Esau*, because it figured out the Distinction God is pleased to make between those who continue in their fallen Estate, and those, who by vertue of their Union with Christ, do become the *spiritual Sons* of *Abraham*, and are entitled to the Promise of Redemption.

Not that either *Esau* or any of his Sons were absolutely excluded from the Benefit of that Promise.

For whilst God's not receiving them for his own People did foreshew the lost Estate of those, who are without the Covenant, they might nevertheless by Faith in that divine Promise, which extended to *all Nations*, be mystically incorporated in *Christ Jesus* and reputed for the *spiritual Seed*. There are indeed Flaws in the Character of *Esau*, but the Scripture lays the greatest Stress on that of *selling his Birthright*, (*Heb.* xii. 16, 17.) as slighting the Honour of the ancient Priesthood, or the *Blessing* of *Abram*, which how far soever it might be blameable in these respects,

respects, is yet chiefly censured under a typical Respect, namely, as it represents their Sin and Folly, who for the Sake of present Satisfactions, do give up their Title to the Privileges of the heavenly Inheritance.

In the next Descent all the Sons of *Jacob* were alike within the Covenant and received for God's peculiar People. Their Increase after this was such, that they soon grew considerable enough to be reputed a distinct Nation, and then their typical Relation to the Christian Church is more natural, as they figured out that mystical Body, which is collected out of *all Nations*, and spiritually incorporated in *Christ Jesus*.

Their Division into *Tribes* made them the fitter Emblem of that Variety of Nations, of which the Church should consist. And it was no doubt in View of this typical Relation of the Tribes of *Israel* that our Saviour promised his Apostles, that they should *sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel*, that is, the faithful Members of his Church prefigured by them.

In this typical Relation did God declare *Israel* to be his *Son* even his *first-born*. (*Exod.* iv. 22.) And when they were oppressed in *Egypt*, they were wonderfully delivered from thence by the Interposition of divine Providence conducting them into *Canaan*, to which *Hosea* refers in these Words. *When* Israel *was a Child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt*. In both Respects they figured out that mystical Society of which Christ is the Head, considered either as struggling under Hardships, or triumphing over them. And as this may be applicable, either to Christ, who is the Head, or to the Church which is his Body, it can be no Wonder, if the Evangelist reckons it to be fulfilled in the Infancy of Christ, when after having fled into *Egypt* from the Rage of *Herod*, he was restored to *Canaan* upon the Removal of so great a Danger.

The

The twelve Sons of *Jacob* being alike within the Covenant, they were all entitled to the Blessing. But because that included many Particulars, which could not be all engrossed by every one, it remained that a proper Partition should be made among them; and with this View *Jacob* undertakes to impart his Benediction to his Sons. (*Eccluſ.* xliv. 21, 22, 23.)

In this Partition it was necessary that the actual Descent of the *Messiah* should be limited to one. Which accordingly fell to *Judah*. See *Gen.* xlix. 8, 10.

By *Shiloh* in this Prophecy, the *Messiah* has been usually understood among *Jews* both modern and ancient. In the Book of *Chronicles*. 1 Chro. v. 1, 2. upon mentioning the Sons of *Reuben* the *first-born* of *Israel*, it is remarked that the *the Birthright was given away* for his Offence; so that the *Genealogy is not to be reckoned after the Birthright*. For *Judah*, (it is added) *prevailed above his Brethren, and of him is the Nagid*, the Prince, or *chief Ruler*, but the *Birthright was* Joseph's. The *Nagid* is a Term which *Isaiah* (ch. lv. 4.) and *Daniel*, (ch. ix. 25, 26.) apply to the *Messiah*. And as the Author of the Book of *Chronicles* wrote after them both, there is little Doubt but he had an Eye to the same Person, who he calls the *Nagid* as coming of the Tribe of *Judah*.

But whence had he this Knowledge of his being to descend of that Tribe? you will say, perhaps, because he was to be of the Family of *David*. But then I demand why this should be mentioned as an immediate Consequence of the disinheriting of *Reuben*? The Purport of that Remark leads us back to *Gen.* xlix. 4. where the Reason assigned for his being disinherited was, because he *defiled his Father's Bed*. And in Proportion to the two great

civil Privileges of the first-born, we find that a double Share of Possession was given to the Sons of *Joseph. Gen.* xlviii. 5. but the Superiority of Government was reserved to the Tribe of *Judah. Gen.* xlix. 8. before *whom* his *Father's Children should bow down*, (which the Author of the Book of *Chronicles* explains by his prevailing *above his Brethren*) and of whom *Shiloh*, (whom the same Author calls the *Nagid*) was *to come*. From hence we see how this Prophecy was understood from the Time of the *Babylonish* Captivity. And before that we find a constant Preference given to the Tribe of *Judah*, which should seem to be owing to this Expectation of the promised Deliverer. In the Journeyings of the *Israelites* in the Wilderness *the Standard of the Camp of the Children of* Judah *went first*. Numb. x. 14. And in their Dedication of the Altar, *Nahshon*, who was *Prince* of this *Tribe*, was the *first* to make his Offering. Numb. vii. 12. in their Wars. *Judg.* i. 2. this Tribe was appointed by God to go first against their Enemies. Nay, even when *Saul* was King, who was of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, the Members of the Men of *Judah* were taken separately from those of the Body of the People, that we may the less wonder in the Reign of *David* to find the *Men of Judah* distinguished from the *Men of Israel*. *David* was a King of God's own Appointment, of the Tribe of *Judah*, in whom, and in the Continuance of the Kingdom in his Family, he meant to figure out the everlasting Reign and Kingdom of the *Messiah*. And when the Kingdom was divided, the Tribe of *Judah* only is mentioned, as adhering to the House of *David*, from whence this *Shiloh* was expected.

What was the particular Privilege here assured to *Judah* has been much disputed. But thus much I think is evident, that here is promised a Continuation

tion of the *Tribe of Judah*, as a Body politic, untill the Coming of *Shiloh*.

That this was so understood appears from, *Isai.* viii. When *Ahaz* apprehended an utter Dissolution of his Government, by the Kings of *Syria* and *Israel*, the Prophet was sent to tell him, that both his Enemies should be quickly removed, which accordingly was fulfilled. The Kingdom of *Syria* was overthrown by *Tiglathpileser*, and *Pekah* was slain by *Hoshea*; and finally that *Ephraim*, or *Israel* should within sixty five Years be no more a People. And as a Sign of this he proposes the *Messiah*'s Birth of a *Virgin*, which was not accomplished till more than seven hundred Years after the Prediction. If it be asked how could that be a Sign of an immediate Deliverance? I answer, his Birth was necessary before the Dissolution of all Government in *Judea*; and therefore the present Designs of their Enemies must fail, at what Distance soever his Birth might be future at that Time. The *Tribe* of *Judah* must be preserved till *Shiloh* came, whatever became of the other *Tribes*. And how then should the King of the *ten Tribes* pretend to enlarge his Dominion by dissolving *Judah?* For this Reason the Prophet requires Faith, in those who should see the Proof of his Prediction. (*Isa.* vii. 9.) Had the Sign he gave been any present Miracle, no great Degree of Faith could have been requisite. But because it was future and received only upon the Credit of a prime Article of their Religion, therefore their *believing* was indispensably required, to give them Assurance. And tho' in Punishment of the present Despondency, he threatens that the King of *Assyria* should afterwards prevail against them, (*Isa.* vii. 17, 20.) yet at the same Time he calls their Land the *Land of Immanuel* (viii. 7, 8.)

and thereby teaches that it should not be finally destroyed before his Nativity.

This Expectation founded on a Promise that they were to continue, which the other Tribes had not, made the *Jews* treat *Jeremiah*, who prophesied of their Captivity, as an Enemy to the Government (*Jer.* xxxviii. 4.)

And this Objection the Prophets seem to guard against by express Promises of Restoration. (See 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 21. *Isa.* xliv. 28. and xlv. 1. *Jer.* xxix. 10. xxxii. 9. 15.) Their Genealogies were preserved and the Gift of Prophecy continued to assure them of Deliverance. So that though God might *make a full End* of other *Nations*, Jer. xxx. 11. *Yet* would he not make *a full End* of them. *Jer.* xlvi. 28. but having corrected them *in Measure* would be sure to *perform* his *good Word towards* them, in *causing* them to *return*, and *giving* them *an expected End.* Jer. xxix. 10, 11. The Meaning of which is, that their external Policy should not utterly be dissolved, till that promised Restorer should appear; but the Continuation of some external Form of Government was necessary in the mean Time. And upon what can that Necessity be so rationally founded, as on this Prophecy of *Jacob*, which assures the *Scepter* and *Lawgiver* to *Judah* till *Shiloh* shall appear? It may be added that even during their Captivity they seem to have some Sort of Government, and to have had Justice administered according to the *Law* by *Judges* and *Elders* of their own. (See *Bishop Sherlock's third Dissertation. p.* 329.)

The last Words of the Verse, ——*And to him shall the gathering of the People be*, have been differently referred either to *Judah*, who received the Blessing, or to *Shiloh*, who was the principal Part of the Blessing itself. They who take it in the former Acceptation, explain this *gathering of the People*,

People, to denote the resorting of some Persons out of all the Tribes to *Judah*, so as to be included in one Body with it. (See *Sherlock's third Dissertation*, *p.* 321, &c.) And this began to be the Case at the Time of the Defection of the ten Tribes, when there was a *Remnant out of all the Tribes of* Israel, (1 *Kings* xii. 39.) adhering to the House of *David*; but appeared more eminently after the Captivity, when the People of all the Tribes were incorporated into one Nation of the *Jews*. But if we look on this Prediction as conveying that Part of the Blessing of *Abraham*, which contains the *promised Seed*, there will be better Reason for interpreting that last Clause of it in the other Acceptation. The Blessing of *Abram's Seed* had been promised to extend to *all Nations* of the Earth. And so here *Jacob* foretels the *gathering of the People* or nations unto that *Seed* in Order to receive their Blessing. And this suits better with the Mind of the *Seventy*, that he should be *the Expectation of the Gentiles*, or Nations, which cannot well be applied to the Tribe of *Judah*, but seems clearly to refer to those Characters of the *Messiah*, *Isaiah* ii. 2. xlii. 4. lx. 5. And because this *gathering* was understood to be an Act of Submission agreeably to the Predictions of after Times of the universal Reign and Empire of the *Messiah*. Or if by the People we should understand those of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, as they were literally gathered into *one Kingdom*, against the coming of the *Messiah*; so they have been shewn in their typical Capacity, to represent the Church of Christ *gathered out of all Nations*; which still gives us the same View of this Prediction, as conveying in its full Extent, the Promise which was made to *Abraham*.

Thus far the Spirit of Prophecy had gone in fixing the Line of that *blessed Seed*. There were still

many Points relating to his Office and Character, which remained to be gradually cleared up in future Times. And this was to be done partly under Types and Figures, and partly by expreſs Predictions. For as it is not agreeable to the Method of divine Revelation to open every Thing at once; ſo neither was it neceſſary that the Revelations ſhould appear in their own Latitude to every inattentive Auditor, at the Time of their Delivery: It was enough that they who meditated on the Scriptures were able to derive ſome glimmering Light from them, till their final Accompliſhment ſhould fix their Interpretation, and diſplay the Harmony of the whole Oeconomy.

As then the *Seed* of *Abraham* according to the Fleſh, did figure out his *ſpiritual Seed* to be gathered out of all Nations; ſo it is reaſonable to believe that God's external Diſpenſations of Favour towards them ſhould be intended to foreſhew his future Diſpenſations of Mercy manifeſted to his Church. Their Slavery in *Egypt* did fitly figure out the ſpiritual Bondage into which Mankind are ſunk by their Apoſtacy; and their Deliverance from it, was a Type of that Redemption which was expected from the *promiſed Seed*. The *Paſchal* Sacrifice foreſhewed the Method of effecting Redemption by the *Sacrifice* and Death of *Chriſt*. And tho' the whole Analogy of that ritual Service might not appear with all that Beauty, as it does ſince the Accompliſhment, yet no doubt but holy Men ſaw through it ſome Glimmerings of the Goſpel Light, and underſtood it to point yet more directly to the ſame End with other Sacrifices. The like is to be ſaid of that Body of *Moſaic* Precepts which was ſhortly after delivered from Mount *Sinai*, they were generally intended as preparatory to the Goſpel Revelation, and prefigurative of the Privileges deſign-

ed to be conferred upon it. Thus the Tabernacle itself, and all its Utensils, &c. are understood to be *Shadows* of good Things to come. The singular Exactness with which God was pleased to prescribe these Matters to *Moses*, even in the minutest Circumstances, and his raising up of inspired Men to perform the Workmanship on that Occasion, affords a very strong Presumption, that those outward Services had some higher End in View, than what appeared from the bare Letter of the Institution. Their Unaptness of themselves for any spiritual Efficacy is moreover a substantial Argument, that they who used them were not to rest in the Letter.

These were such Reasonings as might be obvious to considering Men before the Coming of *Christ*. But if nothing deeper than the Surface, what Need had *David* of such constant Exercise in this divine Law, as to study and *meditate in it Day and Night?* When he prayed to have his *Eyes opened*, that he might *behold wondrous Things out of* that *Law*, can it be imagined, that he was not sensible of some mystical Meaning that lay concealed under the Letter? It is not pretended that he saw the whole of that stupendous Oeconomy, which is involved in the Types of the Old Testament, but he saw enough for the Support of his Faith, and to make him eagerly desirous of searching deeper. *(See to this Purpose, Mat.* xiii. 17. *Luke* x. 24. 1 *Pet.* i. 10, 11.)

The *Israelites* as separate from all other People, were observed to represent the *Christian* Church gathered out of *all Nations* to receive the Benefit of the promised Redemption, as distinguished from those that should reject it. From hence it is natural to expect that the *Law*, which was given to them in this typical Relation, should refer to something of a higher Concern in the future Dispensa-

tion; and that consequently, when such typical Relation ceased, and the *spiritual Israel* succeeded in their Room, then the external Use of those Ordinances having reached its End, could be no longer necessary; which indeed were many of them of such Kind, as shewed them to be only calculated for the Tract of *Canaan*, and could not be observed throughout the whole World.

In this View the Law was a standing Prophecy of *Christ*. But as I design to treat more at large of this Matter by and by, I will here drop it; and consider one or two Predictions of *Christ* during this Time of their Journey in the Wilderness.

One is that remarkable one of *Moses*, Deut. xviii. 15. *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy Brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken.*

Some have thought that this Prediction relates to a Succession of *Prophets* to arise among the *Jews*, tho' it may be more eminently applicable to the *Messiah*, as greater than the rest. But if it be not singly understood of him, I doubt it would be difficult to convince a *Jew*, of the Necessity of such eminent Application. Let it then be our Enquiry, what Ground there may be for such Interpretation; and whether that, or ours, does most naturally flow from a View of the Passage in Dispute.

What gave Colour to this Conceit, is the Prohibition contained in the next preceding Paragraph of consulting *Wizards* and *Diviners*; in lieu of which it is supposed God would raise up an Order of *Prophets*, who should suffice to answer all their Exigencies. Whereas it is thought that this Connection would be lost, if God promised only *one Prophet*, which could be no Remedy against their resorting to Sorcerers.

This

This Notion has been espoused by the *Author of the Grounds and Reasons*, pag. 28, 29. who asserts that the ancient Prophets were an Order of Men merely answerable to the *Heathen Diviners*, whose Business was to get a Livelihood either in *Money* or *Victuals*, by *telling Fortunes* and helping People to *lost Goods*.

In answer to this Interpretation there does not appear to have been any constant and uninterrupted *Succession* of *Prophets* constituted among the *Jews*, but they were an Order of Men, extraordinarily raised up, as God saw fit. Therefore if *one* future *Prophet* could not answer the Design of this Prediction, neither could that *Succession of Prophets*, which was not continued without Intermissions.

In the next Place, by whom was this Author taught, that there was such an exact Analogy between the *Jewish Prophets and Heathen Diviners?* We have nothing like it during the Life of *Moses*, and from him to *Samuel* there is no Instance pretended. (*See Bullock's Argument for Prophecy*, *p.* 234, 240.) What is afterwards delivered, concerns usually the public State of the Kingdom, which God was engaged by Covenant to support, or the Morals or Religion of the People. And if there be two or three Examples of Matters of private Concern, as in the Case of *Saul*'s Asses (1 *Sam.* ix. 20.) the Recovery of *Jeroboam*'s Son, (1 *Kings* xiv. 5. 12.) and of *Ahaziah* and *Benhadad*, (2 *Kings* i. 4, 16. viii. 10.) yet they plainly had a View to others which were more important.

The Ground then of that profane Sneer was this, that he might vindicate the Supposition of this Paragraph's being connected with the preceding, by feigning such a Set of *Prophets* as were fit to stand in the Place of *Heathen Diviners*. So that his Argument turns plainly in a Circle: This Text must foretell

foretell a *Succession* of *Jewish Prophets*, because it is connected with the general Prohibition of consulting *Diviners*; and those *Jewish Prophets* must be no better than *Fortune-tellers*, because if they were, there will appear to be no Ground for such Connection.

But this Promise of a *Prophet* has no Relation to the Prohibition of consulting Diviners. There is no Connection in the Text to join them. But as the Paragraph concerning *Wizards* is not itself connected with that which goes before it, concerning the Portion of the *Priests* and *Levites*; so for any Thing he offers, we are at Liberty to suppose, that neither has this Paragraph, of the *Prophet like unto Moses*, any Connection with the foregoing; and then his whole Reasoning is lost, the Passage will have an absolute Sense, and remain to be interpreted from the Phrase and Import of the Text itself.

However, in Regard *Moses* makes use of the same Form of Speech in recommending this *Prophet* as he had done just before in disallowing their *Diviners*, in that the Nations are blamed for hearkening unto them, whereas the *Jews* are required to hearken unto their Prophet, I admit some Sort of Opposition to be intended. But then it is to be consider'd, that the telling private *Fortunes* and *discovering lost Goods* was not the only Office of these *Diviners*; their principal Office was to acquaint the People with the Will of the Deities, and to prescribe the Rites and Offices of their Religion. [*See verse* 10.] And therefore it was natural when *Moses* was cautioning the People against them, and forbidding them to live among the *Jews*, to add that they should rest satisfied with the Precepts he deliver'd till a *Prophet like him* should arise to give them to new Directions, to whom they were to hearken. But either way the Phrase of the

Text

Text is not fairly applicable to a *Succession* of *Prophets*, but to *One* only.

There is mention of a Prophet in the singular, to arise of *Jewish* Extraction, a *Prophet from among their Brethren:* The Force of which Argument seems well to be understood by those *Jews*, who have supposed *Joshua* or *Jeremy* to be here intended. And tho' this Description does not certainly point out the very Person intended, but contains a Character common to many of their Prophets, yet it does in its literal Meaning, so evidently belong to some *one* of the Number, that one would wonder to see those, who profess such Adherence to the literal Sense, desert it in this Instance, for the sake of understanding a *Succession of Prophets*, which is not literally mentioned, and cannot, without Violence, be supported without a Figure.

For the better Distinction of that *Prophet*, there is this Note, that he should be *like unto Moses*. But there were none of the whole Succession of Prophets in the Old Testament *like unto Moses*, *Deut.* xxxiv. 11, 12. *Num.* xii. 6, 7, 8. The Prophet therefore *like unto Moses*, must be one, who was superior to all them, one who equalled at least *Moses*, in the Frequency and Freedom of his Intercourse with God, in the Greatness of that Salvation and Deliverance wrought by him in the Promulgation of the *Law*, for the Government of this *chosen People*, and in the Number and Nature of those Miracles, which gave Testimony to his Mission. So that this Character does not only restrain the Prediction of *Moses* to some single Prophet, but to him who was the *greatest* of all the *Prophets*, even to that *blessed Seed* which had been promised from the Beginning. Which Answer at the same Time defeats those *Jewish* Expositions that would make this Character explanatory of the former,

former, that the Prophet should be of their Brethren as *Moses* was, [See *Meinhart. in Dissert. ad Loc.* cap. 1. 11. Another Character which God inserts in this Prediction of a future *Prophet*, is this: *And I will put my Words in his Mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.* If we view this Character in Connexion with those that went before of one certain *Prophet*, in the singular, and eminently resembling *Moses*, there is Reason to conclude that it refers in this Place to his Delivery of a *new Law.* Now to which of the *Prophets* between *Moses* and our blessed *Saviour* could this Character be fairly applied? Their Business was to explain and inculcate the *Law* of *Moses.* But it was singularly foretold as the Office of the *Messiah*, *Jer.* xxxi. 31. to prescribe them a *new Law* or *Covenant*, not *according to the Covenant made with their Fathers*, which was not calculated only for a single Nation, but such as should extend to all Nations. [*Isa.* xlii. 4. li. 4, 5.]

I know some *Christian* Divines are unwilling to speak of Christ under the Title of a *Law-giver.* But I hope we may have Leave to use it as the Scripture has done, and make it the Ground of Comparison between *Christ* and *Moses.*

Moses had often spoken to the *Israelites* in the Name of God. But when the Law was delivered God spake with tremendous Pomp, *Exod.* xx. 18. This struck such Terror into the People that they *stood afar off*, they wanted to have one speak to them in their own Form and Nature. They said therefore unto *Moses*, *speak thou with us and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we dye.* To which God was pleased to declare, that he would deal with them in Time to come, according to their Request; he would no more issue out his Laws with such Terror, but *put* his *Words into* the *Mouth* of

a *Prophet*

a *Prophet* who ſhould be like unto *Moſes*, in Nature and Office, and deliver his Precepts in the tendereſt Manner. Agreeably to which the Apoſtle ſtates the Difference between the Methods of delivering the Law and the Goſpel. [See *Heb.* xii. 18, *&c.*] From all which we have Reaſon to conclude, that the *Words put into the Mouth of this Prophet*, were to be the *Words* of the *new Law*, which ſhould differ from the *old* One in the Circumſtance of its Delivery. And this can agree to nothing elſe but the *Law* of the *Meſſiah*.

Againſt this it is ſuggeſted, that the *Iſraelites* having then no Expectation of a *new Law*, their Deſire in this Place could relate only to *Prophets* raiſed up under the *old One*. And if God's Anſwer implies a Condeſcenſion to their Requeſt, it muſt be underſtood with the ſame Reſtriction. I anſwer, whether they expected any *new Law*, or not, they could not tell, but God might give them one. Again, their Deſire, tho' not determined preciſely to the Delivery of a *new Law*, yet plainly reach'd to it, that God would on the greateſt Occaſions, as well as in ſmaller, ſpeak to them by the Miniſtry of *Moſes*. To which God anſwers, that he would hereafter raiſe up *one like Moſes*, to deliver his *Words*. [See *Iſaiah* lxi. 1, 2. *John* iv. 25.]

Laſtly, 'tis added ---- *Whoſoever will not hearken unto my Words*, which that Prophet *ſhall ſpeak in my Name, I will require it of him.* Now tho' Diſobedience to God's Meſſages by *any* of *his Prophets* would be highly criminal, yet ſince there is no other of whom it is thus ſingularly foretold, we have Grounds to argue that this muſt be the greateſt of all the Prophets, and conſequently the *Meſſiah*. No ordinary Chaſtiſement is deſigned by this Expreſſion, but the inflicting of direful Vengeance. And this was ſo remarkably fulfilled on the Nation

of the *Jews*, from the Age in which *Jesus* was crucified among them, that the Application makes itself.

Such is the Description of the *Prophet like* to *Moses*, and such the Danger of neglecting to obey him. But lest vain Men should arrogate to themselves such a Commission, a Sentence of Excision is subjoin'd. [See *Deut.* xviii. 20.] And the People are ordered (*ver.* 22.) to look to the Sign which should be given in Proof of such Commission.

From hence some have objected, that the *Prophet like Moses* could not be the Character of a single Person, because the Rule laid down for trying his Credentials is levell'd against Pretenders to Prophecy in all Ages. And the Penalty prescribed for the *false Prophet* must be calculated with a general View, and could never be design'd for *Jesus* nor have any Relation to him.

Therefore it is argued, the Prophet here must mean the *Succession of Prophets* in future Times; and here was a Criterion given at all Times to distinguish between the *true* and *false*. But there is no Consequence in this Reasoning, because the Rule given plainly was not meant to attest the Mission of the *true Prophet*, but to detect the Imposture of a *false* One. And therefore tho' *Jesus*, who was the true Prophet, could not be concerned in the Penalty of *Imposture*; yet it might be of use to detect and punish all *Impostures*, that no one might pass for the true Prophet before he really came. It was not necessary, that all Prophets should produce Signs in Proof of their Mission, but only when their Message was extraordinary; and consequently this could be no general Trial of Prophets in all Ages. But since the *Messiah* was expected to work great Miracles, and others, besides the *true* one, might assume the Character, this would be a proper

Trial

Trial of their several Claims; and it was therefore very natural, even after this Notice of a single Prophet, to caution the People against bold Pretenders, and prescribe some Rule for detecting them.

Upon the whole, the Argument from this Prophecy is conclusive, and when it was urged by St. *Peter* and St. *Stephen*, the *Jews* had no Objection against it, which they would not have wanted, had the Description been understood to belong to the whole Order of Prophets, or could fairly be applied to *Joshua* or *Jeremy*.

Having thus stated the Prediction of a *Prophet like unto Moses*, and justified the Application of it singly to Christ, I will next consider that Part of *Balaam*'s Prophecy, which I take to contain the more immediate Character of *Christ*. *There shall come a Star out of* Jacob *and a Scepter shall rise out of* Israel, *and shall smite the Corners of* Moab, *and destroy all the Children of* Sheth.

That these Words relate to some eminent Person to arise among the *Jews*, may be gathered from the Preface introducing them. *I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh.* And then it must be the same Person, who is described by the other Prophets under the same Character of *Light* and *Glory*, and as holding the *Sceptre* and *Reins* of *Government*. This also both the ancient and modern *Jews* allowed, and acknowledged the *Messiah* to be clearly pointed out in some of the Phrases of this Text.

The *Corner* of a Place in Scripture usually signifies the Part of greatest Strength and Ornament; and therefore by the *Corners of Moab*, the Seventy have understood the *Princes* of that Country.

But then as the People of *Israel* nationally consider'd did typify the spiritual *Israel* of *God*, that Church which was to be gather'd out of *all Nations*;

so

so here the *Moabites*, as they were the Enemies of that People, must in Proportion be understood to prefigure all those Enemies of the Church of *Christ*, who refuse to submit to his Authority.

By the Children of *Sheth* has been explained the whole Race of Mankind. But then there is this Difficulty to be accounted for, in what Sense the *Messiah* is said to *destroy all the Children of Sheth*, and how this can be consistent with the End of his Office, which is to save and redeem. But there are two Things to be offer'd for our Satisfaction. 1. That the Word here render'd to *destroy*, does also signify to *rule*; or else, 2. That the Destruction here threatened should reach no further than to secure their Subjection to him; spoiling on the one Hand, as well the *Principalities* and *Powers* of *Darkness*, as all those among the *Sons of Men*, who are confederate with them.

It has been thought by some, that this Prediction was fulfilled in *David*, who might fitly be represented under the Figure of a *Star*, and a *Scepter*, as his Reign was victorious, and his Conquests extended over the Land of *Moab*. But since the Prophet *Jeremy* alludes to it, Chap. xlviii. 45. as a Matter still future in his Time, 'tis necessary to suppose it had some farther View, than any Thing which had happened long before in the Time of *David*. And if moreover in considering the Prophecies of after-Times, it shall appear that these Characters are usually applied to one, who should arise in later Ages of the Family of *David*; and that *David* himself, the *Man chosen* of God after his *own Heart*, did eminently figure out that glorious Successor, it will at least be necessary to refer it to him in a typical View, as the Person whose Kingdom was figur'd out by that of *David*. And if the latter clause be understood rightly of his *destroying* or

ruling

ruling over all the Children of Men, it will be impossible ro apply that Part of the Character to *David* in his own Person, it will be necessary to explain it of that *Son of David*, whose *Kingdom ruleth over all*, and has brought in the believing *Gentiles* into one common Enclosure with believing *Jews*.

These Reflections naturally lead me to take a View of those Promises of the *Messiah* which concern his regal Character, which relate to that last Limitation of the Line from which he should descend, and propose him as the Son and Successor of *David*.

Though the whole Succession of Kings in the Family of *David*, was meant to figure out the spiritual Empire of *Christ* over his Church, yet was it more eminently typified in the Reign of *David* and *Solomon*. In their Time the People of *Israel* were united in one Body, and had but *one* King to rule over them, which did more appositely fall in with the prophetical Descriptions of the Days of the *Messiah*, than when the *ten* Tribes had revolted. In their Time therefore the Kingdom was in its most flourishing Condition; and as the warlike Reign of *David* did figure out the *Messiah*, partly in a State of Trouble, and partly in his Victories over his Enemies, so did the peaceful Reign of *Solomon* figure out the Glories of that Tranquillity, which are the proper Consequences of complete Victory.

Both these are the Subjects of many rapturous Descriptions in the Book of *Psalms*, which are not applicable to those Times, but must reasonably be understood to have a farther Prospect to the Times of the *Messiah*.

I know Infidels treat this Way of Reasoning with Scorn; but if there was a Redeemer promised from the Fall; if the Posterity of *Abraham* was chosen on purpose to keep up this Hope; if the national Privileges conferr'd on them were figurative of the

greater Privileges to be conferr'd by the *Messiah* on his chosen People; then the Erection of the Kingdom might fitly shadow out his regal Character, and those Passages, which could not literally be applied to *David* or *Solomon*, might justly be understood to have their Accomplishment in him. Above all, if it appears that the Christian Scheme does rationally account for these several Descriptions, and that that Scheme has been confirmed by Miracles, there will remain no Doubt with Men of humble Minds, but this is the true Key for interpreting those *Psalms* and other *Prophecies* which draw out such illustrious Characters as cannot strictly be referr'd to any Thing of those Times.

In this Manner St. *Peter* reason'd concerning *Christ*'s Resurrection. From that Text of *David. Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see Corruption.* Tho' this was spoken in the first Person, yet since it could not belong to *David*, *who saw Corruption*, the Apostle made no scruple to conclude for the Necessity of *Christ*'s *Resurrection*. [See *Acts* ii. 29, 30.] In like Manner St. *Paul*, [*Acts* xiii. 36.] applied this Prophecy to *Christ*, in whom only it was literally fulfilled. Nor do we find any of their Adversaries were able to gainsay them.

For a further Proof of this typical Relation between *David* and *Christ*, he is not only promised *as the Son of* David *to sit upon his Throne*, but he is called by the Name of *David* himself. [See *Hosea* iii. 5. *Jer.* xxx. 9. *Ezek.* xxxiv. 23, 24. xxxvii. 24, 25.]

As *David* was the immediate Son of *Jesse*, so *Christ* who descended from him, and is represented by him, is described as a *Rod* that *should come forth out of the Stem of* Jesse, *and a Branch that should grow out of his Roots*. Let any one read the eleventh Chapter of *Isaiah*, and he will see that that Character belongs

longs to some future Prince. And who should this be, but that same Deliverer, whom the Scriptures had constantly in View, as the Destroyer of the *Serpent*, and his *Seed*, and the Redeemer of the Faithful among *all Nations*. And yet because the Monarchy erected in the Family of *Jesse* was only meant for a Type of his future Kingdom, therefore he is called again the *Root of Jesse*, (*Isa.* xi. 10.) as being the real Ground of those Favours bestowed upon his Family. The same Person is both the *Root of Jesse* and a *Branch growing out of his Roots*. Which may explain, why he calls himself in the Apocalypse, at once the *Root and Offspring of David*; the *Root*, because the Authority conferr'd upon the Family of *David*, was derived from, and referr'd to the *Messiah*; and the *Offspring*, because he was descended of that Line.

If the Predictions of the Kingdom in *David*'s Family were to be fulfilled in *Christ*, as we shall hereafter see, then we have a clear Account of the Abolition of the temporal Kingdom, and a reasonable Inducement to attend to the Doctrine of the Gospel, which requires our Obedience of an heavenly King, who at present exercises a spiritual Discipline, and after the compleat Reduction of his Enemies, will receive his faithful Servants into endless Felicity.

When the *Messiah* was thus pointed out to descend of the Family of *David*, Providence wisely ordain'd that *Solomon* should more eminently, than the rest of *David*'s Successors, be made a lively Type of the *Messiah*. This was first of all notified upon *David*'s Declaration of his Design to erect a Temple unto God, by *Nathan*. *I will set up thy Seed after thee*, says God, *which shall proceed out of thy Bowels, and I will establish his Kingdom; he shall build a House for my Name, and I will establish the*

Throne of his Kingdom for ever; *I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son*; *if he commit Iniquity, I will chastise him with the Rod of Men*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 12, *&c.* This Prediction good Interpreters have thought is to be divided between *Solomon* and *Christ*. The last Clause, which mentions the *Chastisement* of his *Iniquity*, has been thought to belong to *Solomon* and his Successors: Tho' perhaps this may be applied to *Christ*, when we consider him, as standing in the Place of Sinners, and bearing the *Chastisement* of their Iniquity, tho' *sinless* himself.

That which concerns the eternal Duration of the Kingdom, could belong only to *Christ*. But the other Characters are common to both. To be a *King* in Peace and Prosperity was such an Instance of divine Favour towards him, as furnished a more lively Type of the *Messiah*.

To build a material *Temple*, was charged on the immediate Successor of *David*; but to erect a spiritual Kingdom this was typically shewn to be the Office of that celestial King, who was to be the Blessing of future Times, *Eph.* ii. 21. Both Kings had *David* for their Father; and both also were the *Sons of God*, but *Christ* only by Nature, *Solomon* by *Grace*. From whence St. *Paul* produces this Passage, as applicable in the strictest Manner to *Christ*, and so as no Creature had a Claim to it. *For unto which of the Angels said he, at any Time thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee?* And again, I will *be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son*, *Heb.* i. 5.

But here Infidels accuse the Apostle of falsifying Scripture, when to prove *Christ*'s natural Sonship and Superiority to all Creatures, he cites this Passage of the Old Testament, which has a plain Reference to King *Solomon*, who was only in an inferior Sense acknowledged for the *Son of God*. In answer

swer to which, I observe, that if these Men will take the Text as it stands in *Samuel* in Conjunction with the parallel Account of the same Fact in *Chronicles*, and compare it with other Predictions of the like Import in the 72d, and 89th *Psalms*, and other Places of Scripture, which describe the Amplitude and Duration of this Kingdom of the Son of *David* and *of God*, there will be Reason to conclude that there is some higher Character than *Solomon*'s drawn out; and that in divers of those Points, where both Characters agree, the Sense, in which they are applied to *Solomon*, is much below the Dignity of the Expression, and seems to require a sublimer Sense to compleat them.

As this Matter is stated in the *Chronicles*, there are two Characters which could not be applied to *Solomon*, and the People of those Times. One is the stable and secure Condition of the People. (See 1 *Chron.* xvii. 9.) which Prediction cannot relate to the Days of *Solomon*, or the ancient Establishment of the *Jewish* Monarchy, which has been destroyed many Ages since.

The other Character concerns the Person of this *Son of David*, of whom it is promised. *I will settle him in my House, and in my Kingdom for ever*, (*ver.* 14.) which Promise, as it can belong to no mortal Man, must lead us to acknowledge that illustrious Person, who was also in a more eminent Sense the *Son of God*, whose Throne and Kingdom will be explained farther by the Coincidence of other Prophecies.

Mean while tho' the People of those Times could not understand these Prophecies with all that clearness which the following Scriptures have thrown upon them, yet thus much might quickly be concluded, that some *future Son of David* was design'd in these Predictions.

But after all, 'tis possible, that they might look for more of temporal Prosperity than was really intended. So that if this Matter had not been further opened, perhaps they might have been few, whose Faith would have been strong enough to have supported them under those great Turns, which were to happen in the *Jewish* Polity.

For this Reason God by his Prophets foretold these Alterations, and renew'd his Assurance notwithstanding of a firm and inviolable *Covenant* with the *House of David.*

Thus about the Time of the leading away the Tribe of *Judah* into Captivity, the Spirit of Prophecy broke out in stronger Light than ever, to give timely Warning of these Alterations, and fresh Assurance of the coming of that *Son of David*, in whom alone the ancient Prophecies could justly be compleated. They were assured they should not be utterly destroy'd, but that God would unite his People in one *Kingdom* to enjoy perpetual Peace. See *Amos*, *Isaiah*, and *Hosea*, who gave Notice of these approaching Revolutions, and Assurance also, of the inviolable Certainty of the divine Promise to the *House of David.*

At their Return from this Captivity, when the People were in a low Condition, when they had no King, and when the Temple was not built with such Magnificence as before, then new Assurances were given them by the Prophets *Haggai*, *Zachary*, and *Malachi*. The *Lord* himself was to honour that Temple with his Presence, and make up for that Defect of Glory which made them uneasy. And a *Messenger* was designed *to prepare the Way before him*, and inculcate those Doctrines which might qualify the Minds of Men for his Reception.

Having shewn that Christ's Kingdom was prefigured by that of *David*, I will next consider those three

three Circumſtances, which are given of it by the ancient Prophets. *Viz.* 1. The Amplitude and Extent of this Kingdom. 2. Its Peace. 3. Its Duration.

I begin with the Amplitude and Extent of this Kingdom.

Look into the Book of *Pſalms* and you will find this Kingdom deſcribed in ſuch a pompous Manner as anſwers not to any Time of *David* or *Solomon*, but waited for a future Accompliſhment, (*See Pſal.* lxxii. 8. 11. 10.) and muſt belong to ſome Perſon far ſuperior to him, whoſe Dominion was not to be confined to *Canaan*, but was to have the *Heathen* given him for his *Inheritance*, *and the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth* for his *Poſſeſſions*.

And becauſe it could not be imagined that this Empire ſhould be ſo extended without Oppoſition, 'tis added, that the King, in whoſe Days it was to happen, ſhould be ſignally victorious. (*Pſal.* lxxii. 9. cx. 6.) And leſt we ſhould underſtand this to denote only temporal Succeſs, we are inſtructed farther, that beſides the Deſtruction of thoſe who are too proud to ſubmit, his Victories ſhould terminate in the Reduction of the reſt to the Faith and Worſhip of the true God. *Pſal.* lxvii. 2. lxxxvi. 9.

This Converſion of the Heathen is more clearly foretold by the ſucceeding Prophets to be effected under the auſpicious Reign of that *Son of David* they were taught to expect. And what they looked for as future, could not have happened in the Reign of *David* and *Solomon*; beſides their Deſcriptions do import the Converſion of *all Nations*, and conſequently could not be completed in the proſelyting only of a few People. *See* Iſa. xlii. 1. 4. 6, 7. xlix. 6. 22, 23.

That the Person, who should effect this, was the same glorious King that had been promised of the House of *David*, may be collected from that Unity of Character, which appears in other Passages of the same Prophet. *See* Isaiah xi. 10. lv. 3, *&c.* xi. 9. Mal. i. 11.

Yet still as the true Religion had long been professed only by the *Jews*, and when thus explained to greater Perfection, should from them be propagated thro' the *Earth*; for this Reason the Conversion of the *Gentiles* is very deservedly reputed an Accession to the *Jews*. It was an ancient Rule concerning any private Person who became a *Proselyte* to *Judaism*, that he should be as *one born among* them, *Levit.* xix. 34. entitled to equal Privileges with themselves; and correspondently to this, the proselyting of whole Nations was to be deem'd an Addition to their own.

There is a very remarkable Prediction to this Purpose, *Isa.* ii, 2, *&c.* *Micah* iv. 1, *&c.* *Isa.* lx. 3, 4, 5, 6, *&c.* And at the 12th Verse a severe Denunciation is annexed. *For the Nation, and the Kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish, yea those Nations shall be utterly wasted.*

The *Gentiles* being thus gather'd to *Israel*, we see a plain Reason why they are included in the Name of *Israel*; and the Descriptions which run in the Stile and Title of the *Jewish* Church, are applicable to the *Christian*. Tho' at the same Time it is acknowledged, that the greatest Part of the *Jewish* Nation should apostatise, whilst their Defection should be abundantly supplied by this Accession of the *Gentiles*. [See to this Purpose, *Isai.* x. 20, *&c.* xlix. 20, *&c.*]

Whilst thus the *Gentiles*, as grafted into the Church, are included in the Name of *Israel*, it must be reasonable to imagine, that the Character of those, who

who ſhould continue to reject and oppoſe it, is couch'd under the Character of the *Enemies of Iſrael*; and to what might in ſome Reſpects have a literal Relation to the State of the Nations round them, will be found to have a typical, but more important View to the Heathen World in general, upon this ſpreading of the Goſpel Light, denoting at once the utter Overthrow of ſuch as cannot be reclaim'd, and the happy Converſion of the reſt, and their Conjunction with the true *Iſrael*. [See *Iſa.* xi. 14. xiv. 1, 2.]

What is foretold of the Deſtruction of Idolatry, and the utter Overthrow of the *Heathen* Superſtition, deſerves to be conſider'd upon this Occaſion, as being plainly applicable to no other than the Goſpel times. (*Iſaiah* xix. 1, *&c.* *Jer.* xliii. 12, 13. *Ezek.* xxx. 13. *Jer.* x. 1. *Zeph.* ii. 11. *Zech.* xiii. 2.]

When the Heathen World is thus reduced to the Obedience of Faith, then the main Body of *Iſrael*, (which till then ſhall have perſiſted in their Infidelity) will join this Society of faithful Men in acknowledging their Prince and Saviour. (*Iſai.* xi. 11, 12. *compare it with* Luke, xxi. 24. *and* Rom. xi. 25, 26.)

Upon this Coalition of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, all ancient Animoſities ſhall ceaſe, and all falſe Worſhip ſhall be utterly aboliſhed. *The Lord ſhall be King over all the Earth*, Jehovah *ſhall be one, and his Name one*, without Competitor.

This Kingdom is denoted in the Prophecy of *Daniel* by the *Stone cut out without Hands*. Which put a Period to all other Kingdoms, and filled the whole Earth. [See *Dan.* ii. 34, 35. 44, 45.] which is expreſſed clearer, Chap. vii. 13, 14. The Unity of Character in theſe and many other Prophecies is ſuch as does oblige us to refer them to the ſame Period.

It

It is impossible to apply these Prophecies to any Events at the Time they were utter'd. But if they be applied to the Days of the *Messiah*, they will be found to fall in with the whole Scheme of Scripture Prophecy, and make up one harmonious Expectation. And it cannot but appear much more reasonable to admit of this Exposition, than either to leave those Prophecies without any determinate Meaning at all, or else to close in with the low and flat Interpretations of some great Men, who have run thro' the *Jewish* History, to pick up such Events as might seem to answer some or other of these Descriptions, without any uniform View preserved in the whole; as if they envied the ancient Church any Knowledge of the Doctrine of Redemption, and meant to confine its Hopes to earthly Satisfactions.

But admitting our Exposition of the Prophecies; how are they fulfilled in *Jesus* of *Nazareth? all Nations* have not submitted to his Religion; and those who could not be convinced, have not been destroyed; there are many Nations now *Heathen*. Nay, has not Idolatry itself been introduced into the *Christian Church?* And why then should we contend to explain the Prophecies in such a Sense, as would deny them any proper Completion?

In answer to all this, it is to be considered, that there is great Variety of Facts foretold to be accomplished in the Days of the *Messiah*. There is a Time of Struggle, as well as Triumph. And as 'tis reasonable to allow some Time for the effecting so great an Alteration; so neither was it necessary that the Scene should alter in all Places at once. Not but God could, if he pleased, have performed his Purpose with a quicker Dispatch; but it is not for us to prescribe Bounds to him. We do not then say that every Thing which was foretold of the *Mes-*

siah's Kingdom is already accomplished; it is enough to support the Christian Cause, if it be all accomplished in its due Time. Mean while we have the Satisfaction to observe that the spreading of our Religion by such unlikely Methods, has already answer'd in great Measure, to the ancient Predictions; and is therefore become an important Confirmation of that which remains to be accomplished.

In particular the Destruction of the *Heathen* Idolatry appeared in the utter Silence of its *Oracles*, (See *Clasen. de Orac. Gentil.* l. 1. c. 26. *Jenkins*'s *Reasonableness of the Christian Rel. Vol.* 1. *Part* 3. *Chap.* 3.) a Fact too notorious to be overlooked either by *Heathens*, or *Christians*.

The *Christians* looked upon this as a certain Argument of the Commencement of that Kingdom, which is spoke of by the ancient Prophets. And *Porphyry*, that Enemy of Christianity, himself confesses in the third Century, that from the Time that *Jesus* began to be *worshipped*, they had received *no Help or Favour from the Gods*.

Julian was perplexed to account for the Dumbness of the Heathen *Oracles*. He only hoped to retort the Difficulty on the *Christians*, by objecting that the Gift of Prophecy was ceased also in the Church, so that they had no more Oracles to boast of than the *Heathen* World. To this St. *Cyril* justly answer'd, that since Christ had appeared to be the End of the Law and the Prophets; and was sufficiently made known unto Men, not only by his settling a Canon of divine Revelation, but by sending the holy Ghost into our Hearts, it cannot be alledged that the Spirit has deserted us, but rather that we are translated into more abundant Grace.

So did the Spirit of Darkness fly before the Gospel Light; and if in some remote *Heathen* Countries, he still retains his Empire, and utters a less pompous

kind

kind of *Oracles*; yet we have it related by credible Authority, (*See* Wafer's *Voyages*, *p.* 38, 39.) that upon the coming of *Christians* into these Parts a visible Restraint is laid upon his Power; and the evil Spirits have been forced to confess, that such Restraint was owing to their Vicinity. But if this old Deceiver has insinuated himself into the *Christian* Church and led many Captive by a new kind of Idolatry and Superstition; as this is nothing more than the Scriptures had taught us to expect, so the same Scriptures give Ground to hope for its Removal in due Time, when the Church shall enjoy an everlasting Peace, which brings me to consider the second Circumstance of the Messiah's Kingdom, namely, its Peace and Tranquillity.

The Prophets have in most express Terms assured us, that the *Blessing of Peace* shall be given unto the People and Subjects of this glorious Son, and Successor of *David*. (*See* Isai. lxvi. 12. lx. 17. Hag. ii. 9. Isai. lv. 12. liv. 13.) Who is called the Prince of Peace, (*Isaiah* ix. 6.) and his *Ministers* the *Publishers of Peace*. (*Isaiah* xxxiii. 7.) Under his Reign *Ephraim shall not envy* Judah, *nor* Judah any more *vex Ephraim*; but both together agree *to seek the Lord their God*, *and* David *their King*. And as they shall have no intestine Divisions, so neither shall the Nations themselves have any from one another; but being incorporated into one Body, they shall have only one Interest to promote in obeying that *Law*, which should *go forth out of Zion*, and that *Word of the Lord* which should *issue from Jerusalem*. Their former Aversions shall cease, and they who were ravenous shall yield to the gentle Discipline of *Christ*, and put on the humble Spirit of his Followers. (*See* Isai. lxv. 25. xi. 6, *&c. and* Micah. iv. 2, 3, 4.)

These Prophecies had filled the *Jews* with such general Expectations of Peace, under the Reign of Christ,

Christ, as made them impatient of his coming, to free them from the *Roman* Yoke, and begin his triumphant Government. Their Disappointment was greater, and it hardened them in Infidelity, when they saw the blessed *Jesus*, who assume this Character of the *Messiah*, appearing in a low Condition and submitting to Death, and leaving both them, and his Followers in Miseries. This has kept them from us in all Ages and pushed them on to blaspheme the Saviour, they pretend to expect.

From hence, therefore, instead of convincing the *Jews* and other Infidels of the Truth of our Religion, we find a most formidable Objection raised against it. The *Jews* were reduced, soon after its Publication, to the utmost Necessity, and have ever since been Vagrants over the World, the Scorn and Derision of Men.

And the *Christians* were warned to expect *Divisions* and *Persecutions*. *Jesus* sent his Disciples to oppose the Corruptions, the Prejudices and Lusts of Mankind; and this would not fail to provoke those Persons, who were govern'd by them. He foretold they should be persecuted by both *Jews* and *Heathens*. *Luke* xxi. 12. 16, 17.

And meet with such outragious Malice, as would even extinguish the Flame of natural Affection. *Luke* xii. 53. and that Men would think they served God, by *killing* them. Nor were they to meet this Usage only from their Enemies, there should of their *own selves Men arise, speaking perverse Things, to draw away Disciples after them.*

All which Things, the History of the Church acquaints us, fell out accordingly. She was grievously distressed from without by the Persecutions of the Civil Power, and distracted within by numerous Heresies and Divisions.

Now

Now how do these Things agree with those Predictions which foretold the *Peace* and *Tranquillity* of the Reign of the *Messiah?* Or, how should that Character belong to him, who undertakes not, but *through much Tribulation*, to conduct them *to the Kingdom* of God? To which I answer, That tho' the Prophecies of *Peace* are of such different Sorts, some of them more general, others more particular, and pointing out the special Instances and Effects of it; some relating to one Period, and some to another; that there is no Solution, which will fit them all, or perfectly satisfy the Objection to be formed from them; yet upon a serious Consideration of the whole Matter, it will appear, that the Jews and Infidels are mistaken in the Management of this Objection, in one or other of these three Particulars; either,

First, In the Nature of that Peace which the *Messiah* was to give: Or,

Secondly, In the Persons on whom he should bestow the Privilege; or else,

Thirdly, In the Time from which it should commence.

1. Then, they are mistaken in the Nature of that *Peace*, which the *Messiah* was to give.

Their carnal Desires of temporal Prosperity, have given such a wrong Turn to their Expectations from this promised Redeemer, that what the Scripture intends to point out spiritual and eternal Priviledges, is by them restrained to sensual Ease, and Pleasures of an earthly *Canaan*. The *Jewish* Religion might instruct them better, that Sin has made a Separation between God and Men, and that the greatest Benefit they can expect, is to be at *Peace* with him. The Sacrifices of the Law were necessary to be often repeated. But they were to figure the Sacrifice of *Christ*, which being absolute in itself, should make those typical Sacrifices *cease*, and *bring*

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in everlasting Righteousness. (*Dan.* ix. 24. 27.) This, though as a *Priest*, he must offer up to God, yet, as a *King*, he should bestow its Benefits on Men; this being that perfect Peace which the *Law could not* give, (*Rom.* viii. 3.) and which Christ was promised to secure to us. It was founded in Acceptance of that Sacrifice he offered from whence he is said by *Isaiah* to have been *heard in an acceptable Time*, intimating that his Intercession is heard in our Behalf. *This is that Peace of God which passeth all Understanding*, vastly superior to all temporal Happiness, in respect whereof the *Messiah* was promised as *Prince of* Peace, and his Ambassadors, as they who should *publish* Peace and Salvation, and *bring good Tydings of good Things*. For this Reason it is farther explained to consist in such Assurance or Confidence towards God, as was to be the genuine result of that Righteousness introduced by the new Dispensation. *Isaiah* xxxii. 17.

Accordingly the New Testament applies the Matter without scruple. By *Faith we have Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Rom. v. 1. 11. And our Saviour says, *Peace I leave with you; my Peace I give unto you——— In the World ye shall have Tribulation, but in me ye shall have Peace.* However they were persecuted from without, yet the *Kingdom of God* was erected *within* them, which consists in inward *Righteousness and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.* In consequence hereof they were instructed to possess their *Souls in Patience. See* John xiv. 27. Rom. xv. 13.

Again as the Law could not offer this Peace, but only from the typical Relation, which it bore to *Christ*, so neither did it make its Proposals to any, but the *Seed* of *Abraham*, and to Proselytes to the Law of *Moses*. But under the *Messiah*, *the Blessing of Abraham* was to extend *to all Nations:*

Again

I have shewn before, how the other *Nations* were to *cleave to the House of Israel.* Which the Prophets insist upon as an Argument of *Peace* in the *Messiah*'s Reign. Nor do the *Jewish* Writers disown the Character, provided we suppose them to unite in the Observation of the *Law* of *Moses.* But since that Law was given for a Note of Distinction to one *Nation*, and for a Prefiguration of that Privilege, which should be granted to all, we insist that upon the actual Proposal of such Privilege to *all Nations*, that Note of Distinction was of course to be abolished: so that now *there is no* longer *Difference between the Jew, and the Greek.* Rom. x. 12. Eph. ii. 13, *&c.*

Lastly, It may be proper to distinguish between the Nature of his Doctrine, and the Success of it. He preached nothing but Unity and good Agreement of all Mankind: But if they chose to indulge such Passions as kept his *Peace* from ruling in their Hearts, this ought not to be charged upon the Doctrine.

And if the *Jews* now are so grievously mistaken in the Nature of that *Peace*, which the *Messiah* was to give, they are no less,

Secondly, in the Persons on whom he should bestow it. The *Messiah* being promised as the King of the *Jews*, they have from hence flattered themselves, that they shall receive the principal Favours of his Government. And tho' they own the *Gentiles* shall enjoy the same *Peace*, yet this they admit only in a subordinate Degree. This may in some Sense be allowed, it being certain, that the Law was to *go forth from Zion*, and the *Heathen* Nations, by being converted to it, were reckoned to *cleave unto the House of* Israel. From hence the Church of the *Messiah*, tho' consisting of *all Nations*, is sometimes described as the *Jerusalem* and *Israel* of

God; and consequently the high Characters and Privileges appropriate to it, are not literally to be understood of that City, or those Inhabitants of *Palestine*, but rather of those faithful Adherents of their Saviour, of whom the *Jews*, as a collective Body, were a Figure.

Mean while, the *Peace* which his faithful People should enjoy, hinders not but he and they might meet with Enemies, tho' not able to subdue him, yet should he have Occasion to use Acts of Hostility and Judgment over them. See *Psalm* cx. 5, 6. *Psal.* ii. 9. *Isa.* xi. 4. xlviii. 22. And therefore whatever Miseries are inflicted upon them, ought not to be judged inconsistent with the *Peace* of *Christ*'s Kingdom, but is rather what is necessary to secure the Quiet of his Reign.

Nor would the *Jews* dispute this with us, provided it might be allowed them, that the Enemies thus to be destroyed, were the *Gentiles*, and not so great a Part of their own Nation. And yet nothing can be plainer than that Prophets have actually foretold how their Land itself should be smitten *with a Curse*, and the greatest Part of the Nation should reject the *Messiah*, and be cut off. See *Zech.* xiii. 8, 9. *Mal.* iii. 2, 3. *Isa.* viii. 14, 15. *Isa.* x. 22. That finally that People should for a long Time *abide* without either *King* or *Sacrifice*. *Hos.* iii. 4, 5, before they should be persuaded *to return to seek the Lord their God and* David *their King*. These Passages referred to, do so aptly describe the State of that unhappy People, that the *Peace* of *Christ*'s Kingdom may not be judged inconsistent with the Miseries they endure. For if his Enemies are excluded from his Favour, and they are so clearly included in the Number of them; what remains but that there is no *Peace* belonging to them, and

that the *Peace* of his faithful Subjects will be best secured by the Overthrow of the *Jews?*

Yet after all, it is certain, that some Prophecies relating to this Matter, do presage a more general Call and Restoration of the *Jews*; and withal, such universal *Peace* as consists not with many Nations, subsisting upon Earth in a State of Enmity. But even here,

Thirdly, The *Jews* are likewise mistaken in the Times from which those Blessings are to commence. For it is no where said that the Church should enjoy perfect Peace upon the first appearing of the King *Messiah*. Besides the Conquests he was to make, it was moreover foretold, that his Enemies should be suffered sometimes to prevail over his Church. *Mic.* vii. 4, &c. We ought therefore to look for the Accomplishment of those Predictions which foretel Oppressions, as well as of those, which promise *Peace*, and not to look for all at the same Point of Time. The Persecutions were broken off, when the Princes of the Earth became *Christians*. So that then the Wolf was seen to *dwell with the Lamb*. And if the *Saracens* have since overrun some Parts of the Church; if the World is not brought to such a Temper that they need not *learn War any more*; if the Church be not perfectly at Unity in itself; if the *Fulness of the Gentiles* be not yet *come in*; if the *Jews* be not converted; nay, if the whole Church be extinguished by a general Apostacy; let us look upon this as nothing more than the Accomplishment of former Prophecies. Let it therefore be so far from shocking our Belief in the *Messiah*, or discourage our Expectation of the utmost Peace under his Protection, as to incline us rather more stedfastly to look for the Accomplishment of Prophecies not yet fulfilled. What we have accomplished is a just Confirmation of what

we

we still expect: And as it is most unreasonable in the *Jews* to object against the *Christian* Religion, upon Account of the Prophecies not yet fulfilled, except they could assign some Character of the Time for their Completion, which is already expired; so we have just Ground to argue against them, from those Prophecies which are actually fulfilled, that the *Messiah* is already come. Since we have Witnesses of many of those Events, which were foretold to happen under his Government, we are taught how he should *rule in the midst of his Enemies*, till at last, after a due Trial of his Servants, all the other shall be consumed by him: After this all their Rage and Opposition shall cease. *Jer.* xxiii. 6. *Psal.* lxxii. 3. *Isa.* xi. 9.

I presume not to say at what Distance of Time this glorious State of Things shall occur, *the Times and the Seasons* are kept by *the Father in his own Power*, and cannot be understood, but by actual Fruition. *Those secret Things belong unto the Lord, but the Things which are revealed, belong unto us*; and so far as they are fulfilled they may be urged to confirm our Faith, and to quicken our Obedience.

Thus much may suffice to have been said, for the clearing of those Prophecies of *Peace*, which occur in the Old Testament as a distinguishing Mark of the *Messiah*'s Reign: and withal to satisfy the Objection, which is made by *Jews*, and other Infidels against the *Christian* Scheme, as not having this Character to produce.

I come now to consider,

Thirdly, The perpetual Duration of the Kingdom of *Christ*.

The Expressions are very strong, which do assure the Perpetuity of the Kingdom to the House of *David*. See 2 *Sam.* vii. 12. &c. *Psal.* lxxxix. 3.

Heb. vi. 17. *Psal.* lxxxix. 28, 29. Which cannot be applied to *Solomon*, or his Successors, because the regal Power was greatly diminished at his Death, and quite lost in the Captivity. And we may find some Intimations of those Changes in the Terms of the Prediction itself, *Psal.* lxxxix. 30, 31, 32. Yet, God promised, at the 33d Verse, &c. that tho' the Kingdom might be cut off from the House of *David* for the Iniquity of his Successors, there should in due Time arise One of his Posterity, in whom this Promise of an *everlasting Kingdom* should be punctually fulfilled. Accordingly the Description is applied to one single Person, *Psal.* lxxii. 5, 7, 57. It were easy to add other Passages, in Confirmation of this Point, that the Kingdom was not to be perpetuated by a Succession of *many* Princes, but by the Continuance of *one*. See *Isa.* ix. 7. *Dan.* vii. 14.

It must however be acknowledged, that the Destruction of the temporal Kingdom was such a shocking Dispensation as the Faithful hardly knew how to reconcile with the Promises of *Perpetuity*, and tho' they expected their Accomplishment in due Time, yet they were grieved with the *Reproaches* of those who mocked at the Delay of them. See *Psal.* lxxxix. 38, 39, 49, 50, 51.

For this Reason the later Prophets enlarge much in giving Satisfaction to this Difficulty. See *Amos* ix. 11. *Jer.* xxiii. 5. *Isai.* ix. 7. Now tho' some of these Descriptions of *Perpetuity* are expressed in such Phrases as do allude to Things of a temporal Duration (*as long as the Sun and Moon endureth*, and the like) yet that may be imputed to a poetical Representation of a Fact, which could not be exemplified by any visible Thing exactly parallel; so that Things of a very long Continuance are put for a Figure of that which is properly eternal. Besides, if we understand this literally of his Kingdom's

dom's continuing to the End of the World, its eternal Duration will follow by an easy Consequence, there being no Ground to think of any Change after that. We may better trust to this Solution, when it is remembered, that the Matter is otherwise set forth in such Variety of Expressions, not only mentioning this Kingdom to be eternal, but expressly denying any *ending* of it.

But this Text, *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right Hand, untill I make thine Enemies thy Footstool*, the modern *Jews* would wrest to *Abraham*, or *David*, or to any Body, rather than to whom they belong. But he whom *David*, (who is the Author of the *Psalm*,) *in Spirit called his Lord*, must be his Superior, and not himself. And he who was possessed of *regal* Authority, and invested with eternal Priesthood, both which Characters are ascribed to him in this *Psalm*, could neither be *Abraham*, nor *David*, nor any other Worthy of the Old Testament. For which Reason when Jesus urged this Text to prove the Dignity of the *Messiah*, the *Pharisees* had nothing to answer. And tho' the present *Targum* upon the *Psalms* has otherwise explained it; yet that is known to be a Writing of no great Authority, which appeared not till the fourth Century, by which Time the *Jews* had their old Prejudices confirmed by new Forgeries.

It will be easily admitted, that to be placed *at God's right Hand* is a figurative Expression, and imports a State of Dignity and Power, not only of silent Dignity, but active Power, whereby the Reign of the *Messiah* should commence. For however some have conceived him to be here represented as sitting unactive, whilst God subdued his Enemies, and not beginning his Reign till they were brought under his Footstool, yet the *Apostle* dates it earlier: *For he must reign, till he hath put all Enemies under*

his Feet. The Words have a plain Reference to this Passage, *sit thou at my right Hand, until I make thine Enemies thy Footstool*, he must reign *till* then, and his Investiture with such Authority is set forth by his Exaltation *to the right Hand of God.* Nay, this regal Act of putting down his Enemies is indifferently ascribed in Scripture, either to God or Christ. See *Phil.* iii. 21. *Psal.* cx. 2.

But tho' the Phrase of sitting is too rigorously strained by them, who make it an Argument of Inactivity, yet it fairly imports, 1. That his Reign is quiet and serene, and secure. 2. That he *remaineth moreover a King for ever.* And as *Christ being raised from the Dead is to die no more*, so being now *at the right Hand of God exalted*, his Glory shall sustain no Decrease forever.

If it be objected that the *Psalm* does suggest that there will be a certain Period of his Government, when *his Enemies shall be made his Footstool.*

I answer that in the *Hebrew* Idiom the Word *until* is often used only inclusively of the Time before, without importing an Exclusion of that which is to come. So that it is a good Argument of Christ's reigning at present, and till the Consummation of Ages (in Opposition to the forementioned Conceit of his Silence and Inactivity) but not of his abdicating then, or ceasing to govern any longer. Rather the Phrase, which follows, does imply the contrary. For to what End should his *Enemies* be made his *Footstool?* Surely to increase the Glory of his Majesty, and not to put an End to it. A *Footstool*, though not honourable in itself, yet adds Honour to him it supports, and implies him seated on a Throne. And therefore since these *Enemies* are to be made his *Footstool*, it is unreasonable to suppose that his Empire ceases with their Opposition, when it will but shine forth with more Lustre.

From

From another Passage, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24, 28. some have concluded, (*Whitby in Loc. Outram. de Sacrif. in Fine*) that Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom shall be abrogated when the End of his *Mediation* is accomplished. And then what will become of those Texts which speak strongly of the eternal Duration of his Government. They would suppose that those Things, which are only of a long Duration, are represented as if they were eternal. But neither the Reason of the Thing, nor the Propriety of the Expressions, will lead us into this Solution.

Others again have attempted, (*Limborch. Theol. Christiana Lib.* 3. *cap.* 25. §. 14.) to reconcile the seeming Difference, by distinguishing between Christ's Kingdom considered as *Messiah*, and as *Mediator*, and have thought that the former should *have no End*, but the latter might. But this is a Distinction without a Difference, because he is called the *Messiah* in the same Respects, and for the same Reasons, as he is the *Mediator*, as being *anointed* to his sacred Offices, and so appointed to *mediate* between God and Men. His Kingdom therefore, as *Messiah*, and as *Mediator* is the same; and it must be vain to expect any Advantage from so groundless a Distinction.

But there are two other Ways of accounting for the Matter, which seem less liable to Exception. In the first Place it is certain that great Part of his regal Office will cease, when he shall have subdued his Enemies, rewarded his Servants, and done granting those Assistances which are necessary for this State of Trial and Temptation. Consequently he may in some Sense be said to deliver up his Kingdom, as forbearing to execute those Parts of his Office, which are proper only for the present Church militant. But still he may preside over the glorious Members of his Church triumphant, and

exercise such Acts of Government, as we cannot now fully understand.

This accounts in some Measure for the Surrendry of the Kingdom, without supposing it to be really abolished. Or in the second Place it may be said, that *by delivering up the Kingdom to the Father*, is only meant the referring it to him as Head and first in Order. And then as to that *Subjection* or Subordination of the *Son*, which the Apostle mentions, it is not to be imagined, that any *new* Subordination shall then commence. But as he was always subordinate to the Father as a Son, so will he then be also. And that Subordination shall be more amply displayed, when he shall have subdued all his Enemies, and shall bring all his Friends with him, *Then shall he reign in Peace, and of his Kingdom there shall be no End.* His Father also shall reign by him and with him, and be acknowledged still as his Head and Father, to whom he is referred. To this Purpose he is represented, as *sitting* on the *same Throne* with his Father; and it is accordingly proposed as the utmost Hopes and Ambition, *that we shall also reign with him.* Which surely does not imply his Government shall be abolished, but rather that it shall display itself to greater Advantage.

There is indeed mention made in Scripture of a temporary Reign of Christ for a *thousand Years*, in which his *faithful* Servants shall *reign* with him. *See Rev.* xx. 6. Which Passage, whatever it intends, cannot be inconsistent with the eternal Duration of Christ's Kingdom, but does really confirm it. Because those *thousand Years* are represented to expire before the last Troubles of the Church, and the final Condemnation of the Devil and his Adherents. (*Verse* 7, *&c.*) After which *the Throne of God and of the Lamb*, *Rev.* xxii. 1, 3. is said to be made conspicuous in the *heavenly Jerusalem*, where there shall

shall *no more be Night*, but his Saints and his Servants *shall reign* with him *for ever and ever*. *Rev.* xxi. 25. xxii. 5.

Besides this regal Character of *Christ*, which has been explained from the *Psalms* and the following Prophets, it might be observed that many other Characters are intermixed, relating to his Life and Actions; but as it was not my Intention, nor necessary to our Purpose to discourse of every particular Prophecy, I shall only observe one Circumstance, which is so singular, that it deserves our Attention. It was declared to our first Parents, that the *Seed of the Woman* should have his *Heel bruised* by the *Serpent*. This has been explained to mean the Suffering of Death; and that Exposition was probably confirmed to them by the Appointment of those bloody Sacrifices, which we find to have obtained in the earliest Antiquity. The same was afterwards typically represented in *Abraham*'s intentional offering his Son; in the Erection of the *Brazen Serpent*; in the Institution of the *Paschal Lamb*, and other Sacrifices of the Law. All which might reasonably be understood to refer to that Annoyance, which this promised Redeemer should sustain from our grand Enemy, when he undertook the Work of our Redemption. But when *David* and the following Prophets had drawn out the regal Character of this great Deliverer, it was proper, lest the Notions of his *Sufferings* should seem to be excluded by the Pomp of their Descriptions, that some more express Declarations should be added of the *Sufferings* to which he should be exposed, and the great Atonement to be made by him.

Accordingly we read both in the *Psalms*, and in the following Prophets, particularly *Isaiah*, several Predictions full to this Purpose.

The

The *Jews* however were generally better pleased with attending to the brighter side of the *Messiah*'s Character, and as their Commonwealth declined eagerly expected the Advent of this promised Deliverer, and in the warmth of such Expectation, seem to have forgot the Description of those Hardships and Sufferings he was to undergo. Even the Disciples of Jesus were not clear from this national Prejudice. They looked upon Christ's dying at all inconsistent with their Notions of the *Messiah*. Though Christ was pleased to assure them of his approaching Death and Resurrection, yet even those divine Discourses did not remove their Prejudice, but they were so confounded at his Death, that they would not believe the first Reports of his Resurrection. Such was the Discourse of the two Disciples going to *Emmaus*, when Jesus unknown joined himself to their Company, and took Occasion to upbraid them; *O Fools and slow of Heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these Things and to enter into his Glory?* This gave him a handle more fully to explain the Passages which they had overlooked, or misunderstood, so that *beginning at* Moses *and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the Things concerning himself.*

Without explaining at large every Thing of this Kind in the Old Testament, the most remarkable Prophecy is that of the 52d and 53d of *Isaiah*, in which some eminent Person is described under the Title of *the Servant of the Lord*, who should with great Meekness and Patience suffer many Miseries, and Death itself for the Sake of the People, and of his own accord: And at last should be highly honoured for his Obedience, and see the Success of all his Sufferings in the *Justification* of those, whose *Iniquities* he had *borne*, and in their Admission to *divide the Spoil* of his Enemies, and enjoy a State of Glory and Happiness with him. The

The principal Thing to be observed for the Explication of this Passage, is the Unity of Character, which runs throughout the whole. It is the same Person, the same *Servant of the Lord*, that without any Demerit of his own, met with such Treatment, and submitted to it with such Willingness, that procured by it such Pardon to other People, that was recompensed at last with such Glory.

The *Jews* would persuade us, that their Nation in its present Captivity, is here designed under the Figure of a single Person. But there is no Colour to be alledged for their enduring such Hardships in any Country, as may answer the Description of Prophet. Besides the suffering Person is expressly distinguished from the People of God. Besides after all, will any one pretend that the *Jews* are free from Blame or Wickedness and suffer without any Fault? Can it be said they submit without Murmuring? Or can any one think that their Sufferings should expiate the Sins of other People? That they should *see the Success* in the *Justification of many*, that they should be *satisfied* with this *Fruit* of their Sufferings, and observe this *Pleasure of the Lord* to *prosper in* their *Hands?*

The like Exceptions may be made against their Application of this Prophecy to King *Josiah*. He was indeed a pious Prince; but the Expedition, in which he fell at *Megiddo*, was undertaken against the Command of God; his Death therefore was the Punishment of his own Sin and Temerity. And he did not submit to it voluntarily, for he was slain by the Enemy. Much less had it the Virtue of an Atonement: For divine Vengeance pursued the *Jews*, who were led Captive to *Babylon* a few Years after.

There is no better Pretence for applying it to the Prophet *Jeremy*. (*See* Grotius *in loc.*) He in-

deed underwent great Afflictions but not voluntarily. Nor does it appear that he died a violent Death, and much less, that his Death was a Means of appeasing the Wrath of God, and averted his Vengeance from Transgressors.

But the Targum of *Jonathan* and the more ancient Rabbins have applied some Passages of this Section, and particularly the first Words of it, to the *Messiah*; and their Successors have no way to elude the Force of the Exposition, but by two Pretences, which they have devised, which are neither consistent with the Text, nor countenanced by what remains of that ancient Exposition.

Sometimes it is suggested, that they meant only to apply the first Verse of this Section to the *Messiah*, where he is introduced under a pompous Character, as one that should *be exalted and extolled, and be very high*, which three Words the same Ancients have explained to intimate his being *exalted above Abraham*, and *extolled beyond* Moses, and higher than the Angels of God. (*See* Abarbanel *in loc.*) And then 'tis thought the humbler Characters may be reasonably applied to some other Person: But 'tis more reasonable to believe that they who applied the beginning of this Prophecy to *Christ*, would understand the Continuation of it in the same Sense. Besides some Parts of the suffering Character have been actually expounded by the ancient *Jews* to belong to the *Messiah*, (*See* Chandler's *Defence of Christianity.*) who have likewise spoke in plain Terms of the Afflictions, which he was to endure, as *a third Part of the Afflictions* which were to happen in the World.

At other Times, when the Ancients appear too express for the afflicted State of the *Messiah*, they have then recourse to another Fiction of two *Messiahs*, one of them should be the *Son of David*, a potent Prince; the other of the Tribe of *Joseph*, who should be miserable and oppressed.

But

But neither Scripture nor any Tradition more ancient than the *Gemara* and the later *Targums* give them any Reason to expect two *Messiahs*. And the Mention which these Writings have made of the *Messiah* is so little consistent with the other *Jewish* Notions, that *Maimonides* left it out, when he collected the Traditions which relate to the *Messiah*.

Again, what is the Use of this other *Messiah* of the Tribe of *Joseph?* All the Benefits which the Prophets have foretold, they look for only from the *Son of David*. So that this *Son of Joseph* is only a Fiction invented to account for that Mention, which is made of the Afflictions of the *Messiah*, which they would have the *Son of David* stand exempt from.

But if we admit their Fiction of two *Messiahs*, it could neither help them in their Explication of this Text, nor in accounting for the traditionary Exposition of their ancient Doctors. The same Person is understood throughout the whole Prophecy. If then it was the King *Messiah*, the *Son of David* who was to *be exalted*; it must be the same *Son of David*, that was to be *despised and rejected of Men*, &c. accordingly some of these Characters are referred by the Exposition of the ancient *Jews*, to the same *Messiah*. So that the modern Fiction of two different *Messiahs* is absurd, and unapplicable to that Purpose, for which it was invented. But in the Christian Scheme the whole Matter is plain; the same Person, who suffered Affliction, and offered himself an expiatory Sacrifice, was afterwards raised to a State of Glory. These then are the Parts ~~of~~ to be ~~that~~ distinctly considered; as being predicted in the Old Testament and accomplished in the New.

I. That he should *voluntarily* expose himself to Sufferings.

II. That these Sufferings should make an Atonement for Sin.

III. That

III. That they should be *previous* to his State of Exaltation.

I. That he should voluntarily expose himself to Sufferings.

This is taught in such Variety of Expressions that there can be no Dispute about it. *Isaiah* says, *he was brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb, so he opened not his Mouth.* Which Character agrees neither to *Josiah*, nor *Jeremy*, nor to the People of the *Jews*, nor to any other, to whom their Expositors might be glad to apply so important a Prediction; but to the blessed Jesus, whom we receive under the Character of the *Messiah*, it agrees perfectly well. He bore all his Afflictions with the greatest Patience, and far from reviling his Persecutors, he prayed for them; and tho' he could have summoned *more than twelve Legions of Angels*, yet he chose to wave his Power, and *to give himself a Ransom for all.* And that was the,

II. Second Thing considerable in *Isaiah*'s Prophecy, that these Sufferings should make Atonement for Sin.

There are many Expressions to this Purpose, *Isaiah* liii. 10, 4, 5, 6, 7. And tho' modern *Jews* have absurdly endeavoured to apply this to some or other of the Worthies of the Old Testament, yet they are forced to admit a kind of *Expiation* to be designed in some of the Clauses of this Prophecy; and after this we may leave their Application of them to sink under the Weight of its own Absurdity. Could it be said of *Josiah* or *Jeremy*, that their Sufferings made Atonement for the Sins of the People, when they not only left them still exposed to greater Miseries in their outward State, but marked out as Objects of divine Vengeance from the Guilt of their complicated Wickedness?

But

But upon the Chriſtian Scheme, the whole Paſſage is plainly applicable to the Sufferings of *Jeſus*, who gave himſelf for the Sins of Mankind, that all thoſe, who ſubmit to him by Faith, may be reſcued from the Dominion of them at preſent, and hereafter from their Puniſhment.

But there is one conſiderable Objection lies againſt the *Chriſtian* Scheme in this Particular; and that is, that St. *Matthew* himſelf ſeems to have interpreted this Text of *Iſaiah* after another Manner. For tho' he applies it to the Perſon of *Chriſt*, yet it is upon Occaſion of his miraculous Cures performed upon Demoniacks, and ſuch as were troubled with other Illneſſes, *that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by* Eſaias *the Prophet, ſaying, himſelf took our Infirmities, and bare our Sickneſſes*, *Matt.* viii. 17. From whence it may be argued, that the Prophet meant nothing elſe, but his taking away Diſeaſes by healing them; and not his taking Puniſhment upon himſelf, or enduring it inſtead of others. But if we recollect in what Variety of Phraſes this Matter is ſet forth by *Iſaiah*, it will be impoſſible to explain them of his healing Diſeaſes, or other miraculous Effects of his Power upon other Men; and therefore as St. *Matt.* has quoted only a Part of this Prophecy, ſo it is moſt reaſonable to think he has expreſſed only a Part of its Meaning. All the Miſeries of Life being the Conſequence of Sin, there is no doubt but *Chriſt*, who made a perfect Satisfaction for Sin, had in that Regard a Power to remove them. His miraculous Cures therefore, conſider'd as the Reſult of his Atonement, might be fairly deemed a fulfilling this Prediction of *Iſaiah*, and more particularly of that Clauſe which in the Form of the Expreſſion ſeems to be accommodated to that Purpoſe. Accordingly they are pertinently joined with the Remiſſion of Sins, and performed as

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the Reward of Faith, either in the Patient itself, or in those Friends that offered him for Cure. And though this was previous to his suffering upon the Cross, yet it may be considered as posterior in the View of the divine Counsels, in Respect of which the Mercies of God were exhibited through *Christ* to former Ages, and he is said to be the *Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World.* There is one Thing more to be observed in this Prediction, and that is,

III. *Thirdly*, That these Sufferings of Christ were previous to his State of Exaltation. (See *Isa.* lii. 14, 15. liii. 10, 12, 11, 12.)

From all this Jesus argued that *Christ* ought in the first Place *to have suffered these Things, and* after that *to enter into his* Glory.

I have now gone thro' those Prophecies, which I thought most material to be considered, which were delivered from the Time of the Erection of the *Jewish* Monarchy, in the House of *David*, to its Downfal in the *Babylonish* Captivity. And in treating of them I have anticipated a great Part of what might have been said, concerning the succeeding Period, which reaches from the Downfal of the *Jewish* Monarchy in the *Babylonish* Captivity, to the Birth of the promised *Messiah:* there being many Predictions within that Period, which relate to the same Events, namely, to the Glories of Christ's regal Character, and also to his suffering Estate. But then as there was more than ordinary Need, under that Diminution of the House of *David*, to raise the dejected Spirits of the *Jews* with Hopes of the Restauration; so there are some Circumstances added by these latter Prophets, which do more punctually fix the Time for the Coming of the *Messiah*; namely that it should be before the second Destruction of the Temple; that it

ſhould be within ſuch a preciſe Number of Years, and after the Preaching of a certain Meſſenger, to make all fit Preparations for the Introduction of ſo great a Saviour.

The two firſt of theſe Characters are pointed out in that Prophecy of *Daniel. Ch.* ix. 24—27. both which it will be proper to ſtate, in Order to perceive how the Knowledge of this great Doctrine was gradually increaſed.

In ſtating the firſt of theſe Characters, I would take this Prophecy of *Daniel* in Conjunction with that of *Haggai.* Chap. ii. 6, 7, &c. who foretels that *ſhaking of all Nations*, in Order to introduce a glorious Alteration, when the *Deſire of all Nations* ſhould come into the ſecond Temple, and fill it with ſuch Glory, as ſhould exceed the boaſted *Glory* of the former, which was raiſed by *Solomon.* The Prophecy of *Daniel* is in this Point leſs particular, for tho' it foretels an utter Overthrow to ſucceed the Exciſion of the *Meſſiah*, yet it is not ſo expreſs, that there ſhould be none before it, but this promiſed Deliverer ſhould certainly appear whilſt their ſecond Temple was ſtanding, and before it ſhould be demoliſhed by their Enemies.

Daniel's Prediction was delivered juſt at the Expiration of the 70 Years of Captivity, before their Temple was built, he promiſes a Reſtoration of their State and Polity, but leſt they ſhould reſt in it, as their greateſt Happineſs, he warns them that its Duration ſhould be temporary, that when the End of their Diſpenſation was accompliſhed, their *City* and *the Sanctuary* ſhould be then ſubject to an utter *Deſolation.* The latter Part of this Prediction, ſome have thought, foretels the Ravages and Profanation of *Antiochus*; yet there can be little Doubt but, if other Characters agree, this Part will alſo be moſt ſtrictly applicable to the Deſtruction

of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*: as I will show by and by.

But the Prophet *Haggai* is more express in fixing the present Character, that there should be no more Destruction of the Sanctuary, before the Coming of this promised Deliverer. This Prediction was occasioned by the Slackness of the People, to improve the Licence which had been given by the Emperors of *Persia* for rebuilding the Temple, or rather by their Despair of finishing it in any Manner answerable to its former Glory. The Prophet bids them go on with Courage, in full Assurance that God would take Care for the Glory of his House, Ch. ii. 4, 5. And abundantly supply all that Defect of Glory, which they so much apprehended, v. 6, 7, 8, 9.

This Prophecy some *Jews* pretend to understand of that third Temple they expect to be built in the Days of the *Messiah*. Which Notion is not only inconsistent with the plain Design of the Prophecy, but likewise with the express Authority of their own ancient Doctors, as well as the Suffrage of many of the modern *Rabbins*.

Nor are those Christians right, who excluding the literal Interpretation of this Prophecy, would explain the Temple therein mentioned in a figurative Sense, to denote the Christian Dispensation, which is far superior to the *Jewish*. For whatever typical Reference of this Kind might be allowed, yet that is secondary, and that the material Fabric, which was then erecting, must be literally understood, appears from the manifest Occasion of the Prediction itself. Against this,

1. It is objected both by *Jews* and *Christians*, Patrons of the Opinions abovementioned, that the Temple meant by the Prophet, is called the *later House*, by a Word in the Original, which they say, is never used to denote the last of two, but always of three Things or more. To

To which I answer, that were there any more than one, there may be certainly Priority of Order, and the Names of *former* and *latter* may as justly be applied where there are but two Temples, as they may be, where there are two Hundred. Again,

2. It is objected, that that which we suppose to be the *Glory* here foretold, did not fall out whilst that Temple stood, which *Zerubbabel* was now building, but after that rebuilding of it by *Herod the Great*; and consequently we are bound to own, some future Temple was intended by the Prophet.

To which I answer, that the *Jewish* Sanctuary was reckon'd to continue, so long as it was not destroyed by their Enemies. To repair, or even to rebuild was not considered as any Discontinuance of it, and therefore the Temple thus rebuilt, was esteem'd the same. The Continuation of Worship, in the daily Sacrifice, prevented any Need of a new Dedication of the Temple, which had been judged necessary in a former Instance, to the same numerical Building, after the Impieties of *Antiochus*. To this Purpose 'tis observed, (*Vide Selden. de Synedr. lib. 3. cap.* 13. §. 8.) that the *Jews* called *Herod*'s Building the *Second House*, or Temple; and whenever they make Mention of the *Third House*, they mean by it that future Temple, they still expect in the Days of the *Messiah*.

Nay *Josephus* himself, upon whose Authority this Account of *Herod*'s Temple depends, had the same Notion of the Matter, and as he call'd that which was raised by *Solomon* the *first Temple*; so he calls that the *last*, which *Haggai* began to build in the second Year of *Cyrus*. From hence 'tis manifest that he did not look upon *Herod*'s, tho' a new Building, as a *third Temple*. And what should hinder us to understand the Prophet *Haggai* foretelling to his

Countrymen, that their *Messiah* should appear in Person, to make them ample Amends for the Absence of the *Shechinah*, and *fill* their Temple with *Glory greater* than ever *Solomon*'s could boast of, before it should be demolished by their Enemies.

Nay, it may be added, that the Temple from its first Erection by *Solomon*, to its final Destruction by the *Roman* Army, as it stood in the same Place, and was directed to the same Ends, so it seems, in the Account of the Prophet, to be *one* and the same *House*. And accordingly the Opposition of *former* and *latter* should not be applied to the *House*, but rather to the *Glory* of the House. It should not be said the *Glory of this later House shall be greater than of the former ---- but --- the later Glory of this House shall be much greater than the former* (Glory). Thus much seems to be collected from the Stile of the Prophet at the 3d Verse; *who is left among you that saw this House in her first Glory, and how do ye see it now?* This House therefore is the *Jewish* Temple, whether built by *Solomon* or by *Zerubbabel*; and if *Solomon*'s Structure were included in that Character, what should hinder but that *Herod*'s might be included in it too? So that the Prophet considers the Temple as one, but in different Estates, and Promises that the latter Estate shall be most glorious. Let us see how this is found in Fact.

It is certain that the Temple rebuilt by *Herod* was by nothing so magnificent as *Solomon*'s.

Neither again is the *Glory of this later House, or the later Glory of this House* to be sought in its Duration. For altho' we should allow, that there was a greater Difference between them in this Respect, than that trifling space of ten Years, as the *Jews* compute it, yet how mean a Notion must they have of Prophecy, who can imagine this to be the boasted *Glory* here foretold in such lofty Expressions?

For was this an Event worthy *the shaking of all Nations*, only that this Building might stand a few Years longer than the former? Was this that *Desire of all Nations* that was *to come?* Much less then could this make it preferable to the admirable Structure of King *Solomon*, and compensate for the meanness of its Utensils, and the Absence of some of its most distinguishing Privileges of the former Temple, as having now no more the sacred Fire to consume their burnt Offerings, no more the Oracle of *Urim* and *Thummim*, no more the divine *Shechinah* between the *Cherubim*, nor the Ark of the Covenant in the most holy Place.

The Phrase of *filling this House with Glory* has an especial Reference to those ancient Phrases whereby the *Glory of the Lord* is said to have filled the Tabernacle or the Temple, *Exod.* xl. 34, 35. 2 *Kings* viii. 11. and now that ancient Glory was withdrawn, the greater Glory with which *this House* was to be filled, must be proportionably understood to consist in some other more sensible Appearance of the divine Majesty, and how should that be, but in the Advent of the promised *Messiah?* He therefore must be the Person here design'd under the Character of the *Desire of all Nations*, which suits well with those other Descriptions, that were given of him from the beginning. (See *Gen.* iii. 15. xxii. 18. *Psal.* lxxii. 8. *Dan.* vii. 14. *Isai.* xlix. 6. xi. 10.)

The *Jews* indeed, who understand this Prediction of the outward Ornaments of Use in Building, and its Utensils, would confine this Phrase to denote the *precious* or *desirable Things of every Country*, to beautify *this Place of the Sanctuary of God, and to make the Place of his Feet glorious.* And it cannot be denied, but by help of other Words put in Construction with it, it may sometimes signify *precious* Things of any Kind.

But as there is nothing in the Event to answer the Prediction so interpreted, so there is plainly no other Word put in Construction with it, to lead us to such Interpretation. But the *Desire of all Nations* is simply mention'd, and remains to be explained from the Analogy of other Descriptions in the Old Testament.

We have the Word expresly used of that Affection with which the People are acted towards an intended King. *On whom is all the Desire of* Israel? *Is it not on thee, and on all thy Father's House?* and when *Jehoram* had lost this Affection of his People, it is said *that he departed without Desire*, without any such loyal Dispositions to his Memory. (2 *Chron.* xxi. 20.) And how natural is it then to suppose, that the *Messiah*, who was to have an universal and prosperous Empire over the whole World, should be described under the Character of the *Desire of all Nations*; since all must needs wish for such Improvement as he only could give?

And Words of the like import are applied to the Messiah by *Malachi* iii. 1. *The Lord whom ye* seek *shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant whom ye* delight in, *saith the Lord of Hosts.* Which many of the *Jews* understand of the Messiah in Person. *See Kimchi. Comment ad Loc.*

The Privilege which is here promised at his coming, is the same which the other Prophets insist on, as the main Characteristic of the Days of the *Messiah*, *viz.* that *Peace* which is foretold as the great Advantage of his Government: And in this *Place will I give Peace, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

So great a Change was not to be effected without much Agitation and Commotion; but the State then introduced, being to be stable and perpetual, it is added, that this Commotion shall *yet* be but *once.* See *Haggai* ii. 6, 7. All

All this the Prophet fortels should be accomplished within the Time of the Continuance of the second Temple, as it was in those general Commotions of the World, which preceded the Empire of the *Romans*, and in the ensuing Publication of the Gospel-Scheme. And after such Accomplishment the Prophet *Daniel* has foretold, that the *Jewish* State should be overturn'd and *Jerusalem* destroyed. The *Roman* Army laying all desolate about them, and demolishing the Temple, was emphatically that *Abomination of Desolation spoken of* by *Daniel*, *standing in the holy Place*; which since it could not come, before the *Desire of all Nations* had appear'd, does bear a signal Testimony to the Truth of the Christian Religion, giving Proof that the *Messiah* is come, and that the Time of his coming is the same in which *Jesus* did appear.

Having shewed that the *Messiah* should appear before the Destruction of the second Temple; I come now,

2. To consider the precise Time; the Prophet *Daniel* says, that 70 Weeks were *determined* for that Purpose, 69 of which were to pass before the Messiah enter'd upon his Office, and in the last, he should *confirm* his *Covenant*, and be *cut off in the midst of it* himself.

There are two Methods made use of by this Prophet, for setling the Time of the *Messiah*, the one more general, the other more precise. By the first I mean that Description which is given in *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Dream. *Dan.* ii. 31, *&c.* and in the Prophet's Vision of the *Beasts*. *Ch.* vii. 3, *&c.* of four successive *Kingdoms*, with which the Church of God should be concern'd; under the last of which another *Kingdom* should be erected by the *God of Heaven*, which though it might be suppress'd for a While, yet in the End should subdue all Power to itself, and endure all Ages.

Some of these Particulars are farther explained. *Ch.* viii. 3, *&c.* xi. 2, *&c.* and whoever compares these Passages with the Histories of the following Times will find such evident Characters of the *Chaldean*, *Persian*, *Grecian* and *Roman* Kingdoms, and of the Christian Dispensation commencing under the last, and putting a Period to all, that he must conclude a Prediction so punctual in its Circumstances, and so exactly fulfilled in the Event of Things, is a most weighty Argument for the Truth of our Religion, a Demonstration from Experience of what is past, for the Truth of what is still expected.

But though this Prediction will fix the coming of *Christ* to the Days of the *Roman* Empire, there is another in the same Prophet, which does more directly point out the Period of Time, in which he should appear, and after which the holy City should undergo its final Desolation, to endure till that *Consummation* of Ages, to which the glorious Restoration of *Israel* is refer'd, and their Incorporation into one Body with the Faithful gather'd out of all Nations. See *Dan.* ix. 24. 27.

The Person who is in this Passage described under the joint Titles of *Messiah the Prince* at the 25th Verse, and under each of those Titles separately in the Verse following, I take to be no other than that great Deliverer, whose Office, and Character had been gradually unfolded by the former Prophets, the *Nagid*, *the Prince* is a Title by which *Isaiah* described him. See *Isai.* lv. 4. 1 *Chron.* v. 2. And then for the other Title of *Messiah*, or *Anointed*, though it be elsewhere applied to other eminent Persons, upon Acount of the *Unction* to some high Office, or as Types of that more eminent one to come, yet being used there by way of Distinction

stinction it can be refer'd to none but him, whom the *Jews* from that Time expected under no Character so much as that of *Messiah* or the *Christ*.

Besides the Things which are here foretold of this *Messiah Nagid* that he should *be cut off*, and that the *Jews* should be no more his People, but another People be surrogated in their Room, called here the *Nagid's People that shall come*, or his future People, are no other than what we find mention'd by other Prophets, with Respect to the Son of *David*.

Nor are they who contend for any other Interpretation either agreed with one another, or consistent with themselves in the fixing of this Character. Sometimes the *Messiah the Prince*, (*See* Sir *John Marsham*) in the 25th Verse is some extraordinary Person; and yet it is insisted that the *Messiah* to be *cut off*, in the next Verse, is not the Character of any singular Person, but attributed to the Temple, and Priesthood which was *cut off*, or interrupted by the Profanation of *Antiochus*. At other Times, *Messiah the Prince* shall be *Cyrus*, or *Zerubbabel*, or *Joshua* the High-Priest. *Messiah* to be cut off *Agrippa Minor*, the last of the *Jewish* Kings. And the *Nagid* or *Prince* mention'd afterwards, shall be *Titus* at the Head of the *Roman* Army marching to destroy *Jerusalem*. But 'tis impossible by any Computation of these Weeks to point out *Cyrus* or *Zerubbabel*; and *Agrippa* could not possibly be the *Messiah cut off*, because he survived the sacking of *Jerusalem*, and enjoyed the Favour of the *Romans*.

Mean while I accept of this Concession made by *Jews*, that the Desolation here foretold was effected by the *Roman* Army, and not the Profanation of *Antiochus*. For however the *Abomination of Desolation*, or the *Wing of Abominations making desolate*, may

may be reasonably understood of an Army of Idolaters, with the Images of their Idols painted on their Colours, and is applied by *Daniel* xi. 31. and in 1 *Macc.* i. 54. to the Army of *Antiochus*; yet here it must be understood of a greater and more lasting Desolation, such as should endure *until the Consummation, and that determined, shall be poured upon the desolate, or Desolators.* And what other should this be but the Desolation of the *Roman* Army, which has lasted nigh 1700 Years; and therefore we may suppose will last till the *Consummation*, when the calling of the *Gentiles* shall be compleat, the Enemies of the Church destroyed, and the *Jews* received into Favour.

Our Saviour speaks of it, *Matt.* xxiv. 15. as future, and the Event falling out so exactly agreeable to his Prediction, affords a strong Argument for the Truth of his Interpretation. And St. *Luke*, in representing this Discourse of our Lord, has more clearly expressed the Matter to our purpose, paraphrasing as it were the Words of *Daniel.* (See *Luke* xxi. 20.

All these are such Characters as strongly argue for the *Christian* Exposition, and yet to these it may be added, that the Benefits here promised point out the Offices of the *Messiah*, and cannot be ascribed to any one else. Whom else may we expect but the *Lord our Righteousness*, who is at the same Time that *righteous Servant*, *Isa.* liii. 11. that is to *justify many*, and to *bear* their *Iniquities*?

Whom else may we expect to *finish the Transgression and to make an End of Sins, by making Reconciliation for Iniquity, and bringing in everlasting Righteousness?* Who else should cause the *Sacrifice to cease*, but he who *made* himself an *Offering for Sin?* Who else can be supposed to *seal up Vision and Prophecy*, but he who was the Subject of the Prophecies, and in whose coming they are accomplished? *Lastly*, Who

is that *Most Holy* here said to be *anointed*, but the same, who in the Verses following is emphatically stiled the *Messiah* or *anointed*. And whom the Prophets have described as being *anointed of the Lord to preach the Gospel or good Tydings to the Meek*.

This last Clause indeed the *Jews* contend should be understood of a material *Unction* and that not of a Person, but of the inmost Sanctuary, called the *Holy of Holies*. But because the want of the holy anointing Oyl is reckoned by the *Jews* among the Defects of the second Temple, to avoid this Diffity, they understand the Sanctuary here to be *anointed* to belong to the third Temple, which they expect in the Days of the *Messiah*. To which I reply, that as it is impossible for them to fix on any Computation of Time, which will suit with that Hypothesis, so it would draw with it this most terrible Consequence, that there is another Desolation and Captivity to be expected, subsequent to the building of that other Temple, and which must endure *till the Consummation*.

Nor can the *Holy of Holies* be here taken typically, either for Heaven itself, which our Priest has enter'd into, and has prepared for us, and which answers to *Moses*'s consecrating the typical Sanctuary with Oil; nor else, for the *Christian* Church, which Christ has anointed, that is, consecrated in the room of the *Jewish*, by his Blood has purchased, and by his Grace directs: For as that illustrious Person, who is the general Subject of all the Prophets, has in the following Verses the Title of Messiah, I would explain this Phrase by an Allusion to the same Character, as speaking of the *Unction* of that *most holy* One.

Being convinced then by all these Considerations, that this most signal Prophecy of *Daniel*, refers to the Time of Christ's coming in the Flesh,

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it remains that we examine into the Period of Time prefixed for this great Occurrence. *Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and upon thy holy City.* By *Weeks* is here underſtood *Weeks of Years*, which is both agreeable to the Prophetic Style, in which it is uſual to count a Day for a Year, and ſeems to be intimated by the Prophet himſelf, when ſpeaking of the Vulgar Weeks, he terms it *a Week of Days*, as it were on Purpoſe to diſtnguiſh it from the Week of Years in the foregoing Chapter. Now ſeventy Weeks, or ſeventy times ſeven Years amount to 490, or if you reduce them to *Jubilees*, there may be one Year added for every Jubilee, that is ten, which will bring the Computation to 500 Years.

Theſe Weeks now were to be computed from the *going forth of the Commandment to reſtore and to build Jeruſalem*, that is, from the Promulgation of ſome royal Edict to grant leave for the *Jews* to return and build their City. But as there were four different Edicts of the Kings of *Perſia*, which concerned this Reſtauration of the *Jews*, the firſt by *Cyrus*, the ſecond by *Darius*, and two more by *Artaxerxes*, it has been diſputed which of theſe ſhould be the *Epocha* of *Daniel*'s Weeks; from whence we are to reckon to the Time of the *Meſſiah*. And it has been a Matter of Doubt, what *Darius* might be meant in the ſacred Hiſtory, whether *Hyſtaſpis* or *Nothus*; and what *Artaxerxes*, whether *Longimanus* or *Mnemon*. Moreover as this Computation is made by Weeks or Sabbaths of Years, it may be queſtioned whether they ſhould take riſe immediately from the Promulgation of ſuch Edict, or rather be poſtponed till the Obſervation of *Sabbatic* Years was reſtored, and from thence computed to the Term of their Completion. Farther as the Angel in *Daniel* has divided his Period into the diſtinct Intervals of

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seven Weeks, sixty two, and one, it has been questioned, whether he means they should all be numbered in one continued Succession, or whether it might not be equitable to suppose an Omission, for some Years between those several Intervals.

It may also be disputed, whether they should terminate in the Birth, or Ministry, or Excision of the *Messiah*, or be so extended, as to take into the last Week, the Overthrow of *Jerusalem*.

These are such Difficulties, as may reasonably create some Variety of Opinions. But as it would be Matter of too great Length to enquire into the Merit of these Controversies, so the Main of the Argument would not be affected by the Issue of such Enquiry, so long as we are allowed, that the coming of the Messiah was meant to be pointed out by this Period. For whatever be determined about those other Questions, thus much is certain, that the Date of this Prophecy must long since have expired, that more than two thousand Years have passed since the Commencement of it, and that the Term of its Completion would fall much about that Age of the World when Jesus lived: That the Excision of *Messiah* should be followed by the final Desolation of *Jerusalem*, and if both did not fall within the 70 Weeks, yet neither could be long after them.

It appears evidently from the new Testament, from *Josephus* and the *Pagan* Historians that the *Jews* about the Time of Christ's Birth and from thence to the Sacking of the City, expected his coming with the greatest Impatience. And when they saw the Destruction of their City, without finding their Expectations answer'd, they were in the darkest Doubt and Hesitation, they became an easy Prey to Impostors. (*Vid.* Othonis *Hist. Doctor. Misnicor. p.* 109.)

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With what an Air of Desperation was that Complaint anciently made, that all the Characters of Time were compleated, and yet the *Son of David* was not come? And if of late the *Jews* abide not by the old Interpretation of the Prophets, they yet in effect give up the Cause, and confess the Time to be expired for his Advent, when they pronounce a Curse on those, who shall presume a Calculation, destroying hereby the End of such Predictions, and giving Reason to suspect, that their present Belief is not consistent with those ancient Promises, upon which it should be founded. For to what End should God acquaint his People with this Time of their Salvation, but to teach them to rejoice in the Continuance of their outward Privileges, and to aspire after those spiritual ones to be enjoyed under him, to expose the Folly of all vain Impostors, and point out the real Object of their Hopes? And should they then neglect to improve his Mercy to this gracious End? Should they not advance their Hopes, as that Time drew nearer on, and believe in him as their promised *Messiah*, in whose Advent it was finally completed?

If then upon the best Calculation we find the Time to be expired, from hence we are to collect, that the Promise is fulfilled, that the *Messiah* is come, and answer'd what was written of him by the ancient Prophets.

'Tis but a weak Evasion of the *Jews*, to say that their Sins are the Occasion of this Delay. The Promises of his Coming have no such Limitation to confine them. The Time was *precisely determin'd*; and the Wickedness of the People was so far from hindering his appearing, that the Prophets have most clearly foretold the Vices of the Age he should appear in, and the Indignities they would offer him. And *Abarbanel* says, that tho' this Condition of Repentance

Repentance be not fulfilled, he must come at the appointed Time.

This shews another weak Pretence which the *Jews* have recourse to, *viz.* That the *Messiah* did really come within the Time appointed, but he hid himself from an unworthy People. For he was not only to come in the Flesh, but to execute his Office; and tho' he might not be own'd by a sinful Nation, yet he was so far to appear among them, as might expose him to that Contempt which the Prophets had foretold. He was to *come*, and to be *cut off*; he was to *make Reconciliation* for Iniquity, and to *bring in everlasting Righteousness*. He was to suffer from his Enemies for a little Time, and come off at last with Glory. Which shews again the Weakness of another *Jewish* Pretence, that their State at present is neither good enough nor bad enough for his appearing, which must be in a Generation either altogether sinful or righteous. 'Tis certain that *when the Fulness of Time was come*, he shewed himself faithful who had promised, by sending his Son to take human Flesh upon him, to submit to the Discipline, and fulfil the End of the *Mosaic* Law, for the Salvation of such as expected him.

Having shewed that the Coming of the *Messiah* was to be in a precise Number of Years; I proceed

3. To shew, that it should be after the Preaching of a certain Messenger, and here I shall consider,

I. What Grounds there were for this Expectation.

II. What was the Business of this Messenger; and,

III. How this was accordingly fulfilled in *John the Baptist*.

I. As to the Grounds of such Expectation, there are three Passages in the Old Testament, which intimate some Harbinger of the *Messiah*. The first is that

that of *Isaiah*, which the Baptist has applied to himself. The Voice of him *that crieth in the Wilderness, &c. Isaiah* xl. 3, 4, 5. This Passage very clearly alludes to the Preparation that is usual to be made by mending of the Ways for the Entry of Princes. And that the Prince, here intended, is the *Messiah*, appears from these Words, *the Glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all Flesh shall see it together*. The *Glory of the Lord* signifies the bright Appearance of the divine Presence in the ancient Sanctuary. And when in reference to that, there is a *greater Glory* foretold to be manifested to the *Gentiles*, it means the glorious Days of the *Messiah*, which are elsewhere drawn out under the like stupendous Characters. The Messiah therefore is that *Jehovah*, that *Lord*, whose Way is here to be *prepared*, and before whom a *Voice* or Preacher was to be sent out.

That this is the natural Account of that Prediction of *Isaiah* may be cleared from another of *Malachi*, which St. *Mark*, *Ch.* i. 2, 3. has joined with it; in which the *Messenger* to be sent must be the same with the *Voice* in the forgoing Prophecy, because the Office of both was, *to prepare the way of the Lord*. And that the *Lord*, whose way should be prepared, was the *Messiah*, may be gathered from those Characters of their *seeking* and *delighting in him*, and his *coming suddenly to his Temple*.

Accordingly *Jewish* Expositors do admit this to be a Prediction of the *Messiah*. Whom then do they suppose to be this *Messenger* sent before his Face? Some will have it to be *Malachi* himself, whose Name signifies *Messenger*, and who being last of the *Jewish* Prophets and nearest to him, is therefore said to go before *his Face*. Others understand it of *Messiah the Son of Joseph*, whom they expect to come before the *Son of David*, and be slain. But as the Notion of a double Messiah has been confuted; they are most

right,

right, who understand this *Messenger* to be the same Person who is called *Elijah* in the Chapter following, where we have the last Description of this Harbinger. *Behold, I will send you* Elijah *the Prophet before the coming of the great and terrible Day of the Lord; and he shall turn the Heart of the Fathers to the Children, and the Heart of the Children to their Fathers, lest I come and smite the Earth with a Curse.*

That the coming of *Messiah* which brings Joy and Gladness to such as *look* for his Salvation, will nevertheless be *dreadful* to Opposers, especially as it is opened by the Prophet *Daniel*, and more fully in the Gospel itself, to include his second coming to *judge* the World. Now as these two Advents are for the most Part not distinguished in the Old Testament, but the whole Oeconomy of the *Messiah* is spoken of as one entire State of Things, it is no Wonder if that same Harbinger, who is elsewhere promised to *go before the Lord*, whom they *sought* and *delighted* in, should here be reckoned to precede *the great and dreadful Day of the Lord.*

He is called *Elijah the Prophet*, and it appears from the New Testament as well as other Evidences to have been a common Opinion of the ancient *Jews* that that very Prophet should return in Person to anoint *Messiah* to his Office, and manifest him to his People. But as the Allusion of a Name may be easily supposed without Identity of Person; and as *Christ* has been promised under the Name of *David*, without designing to intimate that *David* should return; so some of the *Jews* have had the same Candour to allow the same with Respect to this Promise of *Elijah* for his Harbinger: that it should not be *Elijah* himself, but some great Prophet like him, and called by that Name, for his declaring the Knowledge and Name of God. And

Menassah Ben-Israel insists upon this only as certain, that there must come a Forerunner, to incline and create better Dispositions in Men. So that the Allusion to the Name of *Elijah* may import no more than his Resemblance of that Prophet in the Manner of his Life, and in the Tendency of his Doctrine, that he should *come in the Power and Spirit of Elias*. And this leads me,

II. To consider what was his Office. Which is twofold. 1. To point out the *Messiah*. 2. To instruct the People, or incline them with Dispositions to receive him.

I. To point out the *Messiah*.

This is implied under the Phrases of *preparing his Way*, and being *sent before him*. After a long Interruption of the Order of Prophets, it was suitable to the Dignity of the *Messiah*'s Character, that one *more than a Prophet* should be sent to signify the Approach of so great a Deliverer. When he designed to visit and adorn his Temple with his glorious Presence, it was fit that some one should give Notice of his coming to accomplish the ritual Worship, and declare him to be the Person that had been figured out by the legal Expiations. Lastly since the End of his coming was to take Vengeance on his Enemies, and to effect the Salvation of his chosen People, it was proper that this *great and dreadful Day of the Lord* should be notified, that he was *coming with a Fan in his Hand*, and would *throughly purge his Floor*, *gathering the Wheat into his Garner*, but *burning up the Chaff with Fire unquenchable*. By such Notices, he would not only point out the Person and Offices of the *Messiah*, but at the same Time instruct his People with what Dispositions to receive him. Which is expressed by the Prophet Malachi; *He shall turn the Heart of the Fathers to the Children and the Hearts of the*

Children to their Fathers. See Luke i. 16, 17. Such then is the Character and Office of the *Messiah*'s Harbinger. It remains to be enquired in the

III. *Third* Place, how this was fulfilled in *John Baptist.*

Tho' *Elijah* the *Tishbite* did not come in Person, yet there are such Lines of Resemblance between him and the *Baptist*, as may justify such Application of his Name.

The Austerity and Reservedness of his Life was one considerable Argument of such Resemblance. But the Tendency and Purport of his Doctrine, the Opposition which he made to prevailing Prejudices and Corruptions of the *Jews*, did at once answer the Character of *Elijah*, who so zealously endeavoured the Reformation of the People from *Baalitical* Idolatry, and likewise to those Predictions which have been produced of the *Messiah*'s Harbinger, and the Nature of his Office to regulate such Things, as were irregular, and correct the perverse Wills and Dispositions of Men. *See Mat.* iii. where after he had obviated the reigning Prejudices of the Times, and had prepared an easy Way to encourage their Belief in the *Messiah*, as a Person quickly coming after him; he let them know that his coming which gave such Satisfaction to them who did rejoice in his Salvation, would yet be *great* and *terrible* to them who improved not by his Influence, when he should come, not only in Mercy to save his faithful Servants, but in Vengeance to consume his Enemies.

It is true indeed, that former Prophets too, as well as *John Baptist* did in some Sort *prepare the Way* of *Christ*, both by directing the People to believe in him, and teaching the Necessity of Repentance and inward Piety. But they did not so boldly warn the People how vain those Confidences

were, by which they flattered themſelves in being the holy Seed of *Abraham*. They did not ſo clearly diſcover to them the Inefficacy of a bare, tho' nice Obſervance, of the *Moſaic* Ordinances. They did not ſet before their Eyes that *unquenchable Fire*, prepared for ungodly Men and Hypocrites. Nor did they preſs the Neceſſity of Repentance, by this ſtrongeſt Motive, the *Kingdom of Heaven* being then *at Hand*. Conſequently they could not be ſaid like him to *go before the Face of the Lord*.

So far we have ſeen how the *Baptiſt* did fulfill the Character, and anſwer the ancient Predictions of the *Meſſiah*'s Harbinger; but there are two Objections to be made againſt it, which I will remove. 1. It is objected that the *Baptiſt* himſelf did expreſly diſclaim this Character. John i. 21. When the *Jews ſent Prieſts and Levites to ask him*, whether he were *Elias*, *and he ſaid I am not*. But to this I anſwer, that though the *Baptiſt* ſaid he was not that real *Elias* whom they expected; yet nevertheleſs he was that Prophet *Elijah* deſigned by *Malachi*, i. e. one fitly reſembling that ancient Prophet, by coming *in the Spirit and Power of* Elias. And that he was ſo in Reality he declared, when at the ſame Time he applied to himſelf this Prophecy of the illuſtrious Forerunner. *I am the Voice of one crying in the Wilderneſs, &c. John* i. 23.

2. It is objected that *St. John* did not fulfill thoſe Predictions of *Elias*, which have been recited; that his Preaching had no ſuch Efficacy as thoſe Paſſages had promiſed; that he did not *reſtore all Things*; that he did not *turn the Hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the diſobedient to the Wiſdom of the Juſt*. For the *Jews* were hardened againſt his Doctrine, attached to all their old Prejudices, and rejected that Perſon, whom he is ſaid to introduce. To this I anſwer, that the

Baptiſt's

Baptist's Doctrine was agreeable to that which the Scriptures had foretold of the *Messiah's Harbinger*, that he converted great Multitudes of common People and some of the *Pharisees* and *Scribes*, who submitted to his Baptism, and learnt of him to *believe in him, that should come after him.* That finally there were no Grounds to expect that the Success of his Ministry should be universal, since in this Case there had been no Room for that severe Denunciation of the Prophet, that *this Day of the Lord shall be great, and terrible to burn up as an Oven all that do wickedly:* So that it will be reasonable here to take the Angel's Exposition: *Many of the Children of* Israel *shall he turn to the Lord, their God.*

But as we are taught to expect a second Coming of *Christ*, which is more emphatically stiled the *Times of Restitution of all Things*; what if we should suppose, that there should be also a second Coming of his Harbinger, when this Part of his Office, shall more eminently be fulfilled in the *restoring of all Things* and making *ready a People prepared for the Lord?* But I will not insist upon a disputable Point, when I think there is enough to be alledged of what is clear to give us Satisfaction.

In stating the Evidences of the Gospel Scheme, as they were gradually opened to those Ages before Christ, I had Occasion to make mention of the Law of *Moses*, as a standing Prophecy of his Office and Character. And if it be admitted, which I have shewn, that the Nation of the *Jews* was figurative of the *Christian* Church; and consequently that the more remarkable of God's Dealings towards them were Types of his future Acting through *Christ*; there is no Doubt but the Dispensation of the *Law*, among the Rest, should be referred to the same

stupendous Oeconomy, and designed as well to point out, as to make some present Application to faithful Men, of the Discipline and Benefits of the *Messiah*. But as this is a Matter of great Concern, and which adds the greatest Beauty to the Writings of the Old Testament, at the same Time that it confirms the New; I will state it at large, and in Order to treat it with the greatest Ease, I shall digest what I have to say under the three following Heads.

I. I shall explain the *Antithesis* between the *Law* and the *Gospel*.

II. I shall shew that the *Mosaic Law* was not to be of perpetual Obligation, but served as a preparatory Discipline to lead Men to the Gospel, and was to terminate in the Days of the *Messiah*.

III. I shall explain how it served this Purpose by its Types, which foreshewed the Office and Character of the *Messiah*, and made such Application of his Benefits as was suited to that Age of the World, and proportioned to the Faith and Sincerity of its Observers.

I. I will explain the *Antithesis* between the *Law* and the *Gospel*. Which lies in three Particulars.

1. In the Titles and Characters of both; the one is termed the *Law*, the other is described to be *Grace and Truth*.

2. In the Method of their Dispensation; the one is said to be *given*, the other to come or to be effected. And

3. In the different Authors of them: the one was *given* by *Moses*; the other *came* by *Jesus Christ*.

1. Let us attend to the Characters of both: the one is termed the *Law*, the other is described to be *Grace and Truth*. John i. 17.

By the *Law* we understand that System of Precepts which was given to the People of *Israel*. Now as the Precepts contained in this Law are of different Kinds, so they are called by different Names, the *Commandments* or *Testimonies*, the *Statutes* and *Judgments*. And considering Men have treated, agreeable to this, the *Law* of *Moses* under three Heads, the *Moral*, the *Ceremonial*, and the *Judicial*, or *Forensic*.

By the *moral Law* we are used to understand those Precepts which are founded in known Principles of Nature; and tho' this Law differs only in the Method of Promulgation from the Dictates of right Reason, yet considering the Corruption of Mankind, by which the Reasonings of Men were perplexed, and the Light of Nature extinguished, it was no small Advantage to the *Jews*, that their Duty in these Matters were set right by a new Revelation, in clearer Characters than their own Reason could suggest.

The *ceremonial Law* is that which prescribes the Rites and Ceremonies of religious Worship, and some of a more private Nature correspondent to it. Which Rites were typical of future Benefits, and pointed out the same Truths which should be afterwards unfolded by *Messiah* himself.

The *judicial Law* concerned the Constitution of Government, the settling of Property and the Administration of Justice.

But *Moses* has not particularly digested them under these Heads, but has so intermixed them together, that we may observe the same Law to partake of the *Moral*, *Ceremonial* and *Political*.

However the *Jews* may from hence be led to look upon them as of one Purport and Obligation; yet upon a careful Examination we may observe a manifest Difference between them, and

where the same Law is compounded of different Parts, to separate what is *moral* from the *ceremonial*, and those *political* Rules which are founded in Nature, from those which respect the *Jewish* Oeconomy. Even the Decalogue itself, however justly computed a Compendium of the *moral Law*, is not without some Mixture both of the *political* and *ceremonial* Kind.

The fourth Command, for Instance, besides that Vacancy from Business which natural Light would prescribe for the Celebration of divine Worship, has something typical and *ceremonial* in it, viz. the special Observation of the seventh Day, signifying God's resting from the Work of Creation, his delivering the *Israelites* from their Bondage, that Delight he takes in his Elect, which is proposed as an *eternal Sabbath* to his chosen People. Withal it has something *political* or *judicial*, both as it prescribes a Vacancy from worldly Cares, and also as its Observation is enforced with Death. *Numb.* xv. 32. 36.

So again the fifth Commandment is *moral* as it requires Children to *give Honour* to their Parents; it is *political* as it contains a Promise of the Land of *Canaan*. And it has something *ceremonial*, inasmuch as *Canaan* figured out a *better Country*. i. e. an *heavenly*: And was annexed both as a Memorial of those Promises, and that salutary Doctrine which was given to the Church.

Once more the Law against *Murder* is plainly *moral*: but the Penalty was of a *judicial* Nature, as the Cities of Refuge protecting the involuntary Manslayer till the Death of the high Priest, which set him free, were *typical* or *ceremonial* respecting *Christ* our great high Priest, by whose Death we are delivered from the Guilt of Sin, and protected from the Malice of the Devil.

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From all this it will be easily understood, that tho' the whole *Law* of *Moses* may in some Sense be reckoned to refer to Christ, as it served to keep up a select Body of Men, who were trained up in Expectation of him, and likewise as it shewed the Curse, from which we wanted something to deliver us, yet it was the *ceremonial Law* which did especially point out the Benefits of his Redemption, and is therefore meant as the *Law given by* Moses, in Contradistinction to that *Grace and Truth* which *came by Jesus Christ*. We will distinctly state this Opposition under both Particulars.

The *Grace* of the Gospel either implies our Justification and Forgiveness of Sins; or else the supernatural Gifts and Graces of the Holy Ghost. In the former Acceptation we are said to be *justified freely by his* Grace, *Rom.* iii. 24. *Eph.* i. 6, 7. ii. 4, 7.

In this View the *Grace* or Mercy of God is opposed as well to any Merit in Works, as to any real Efficacy of the legal Expiations, to import that our Salvation could not be effected by our Care, but solely by the Favour of God manifested to us through *Jesus Christ*. Eph. ii. 8, 9.

And hence it is easy to discern how the *Grace* which *came by Jesus Christ* could never be attained by the *Law of Moses*. The Imperfection of human Nature must needs disqualify us for discharging any perfect Obedience to the *moral Law*; here therefore was Need of Pardon to them who owed an Obedience which they could not discharge. To this the *ceremonial Law* pointed out the Way by Types, and by symbolical Atonements prepared the Way for that real Atonement, which alone can *take away Sin*. But the Victims of the *Law could not make him that did the Service perfect as pertaining to the Conscience*. Heb. ix. 9. x. 4.

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Herein therefore the *Mosaic Law* gives place to the *Grace* and Mercy of the Gospel, *by which all who believe are justified from all Things.* Acts xiii. 39. Heb. ix. 14. A Privilege which the first Christians were forbidden to expect from the legal Institutions; and to as many as pretended to look after Forgiveness from a Law which could not justify. *Christ is declared to be of none Effect to them.* Rom. iii. 20. 1 Pet. i. 10. 2 Tim. i. 9.

But besides this Sense of *Justification*, and Forgiveness, the Grace of the Gospel is otherwise understood to denote the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, whether inwardly sanctifying the Affections of Men, or endowing them with extraordinary Abilities. *Rom.* xii. 6. 1 *Pet.* iv. 10. 2 *Pet.* iii. 18. Now this Gift of the Spirit is promised as the Consequence of Faith in Christ. *John* vii. 38. Now the Law of *Moses* in its literal View undertook for no such Benefit, but strictly prescribed the Duties to the Transgressors; whereas the Gospel not only promises Pardon for past Offences, but offers Aid for future Obedience.

Indeed the old Church was not entirely destitute of the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, but as the one were less frequent, and the other less clear, so they were neither of them properly contained in the Law as *given by* Moses, but distinct from it, and as it were the Dawnings of the Gospel. The Letter of the Law (which is what was properly *given by* Moses) prescribed the Use of outward Ordinances, which were attended with an outward Efficacy.

But if we look to the inward or spiritual Blessings designed by them, in that View it differed nothing from the Gospel itself, which gives as it were Life and Spirit to the Law, and has been all along the same, tho' not delivered in every Age with the same

Clearness.

Clearness. The Gospel we have seen was preached to our first Parents, and after that to *Abraham*; and as the Prescription of Sacrifice and Circumcision in their Days did not, so neither could the *Mosaic* Institutions be afterwards meant to disannul such gracious Promises. Nay it will appear that those ritual Institutions were designed to figure out the *Grace* and Mercy of the Gospel: which while it argues the Weakness of the Law by itself, implies the abundant Efficacy of the *Grace* of *Christ*, and teaches us that what that did in Types, he has done in *Truth*. *St. Paul* says, that *the Law had only a Shadow of good Things to come, but not the* very *Image of the Things*. The good Things *to come* seem here to intend that future Inheritance of everlasting Glory, in Respect of which *Christ is termed an High Priest of good Things to come*. Of these now we under the Gospel enjoy that very or *true Image*; whereas the *Law* had only *the Shadow* and gave but an imperfect Prospect of the future Happiness by figurative and dark Representations.

Or if the *good Things to come* be taken for the whole *Christian* Priesthood and Sacrifice, and all that Christ suffered in Order to perfect our Redemption, then we have the very *Substance* of those good Things of which the *Law* was but a faint *Shadow*. The *Jewish* Tabernacle and Temple (as will appear hereafter) were only figurative of the heavenly Sanctuary, into which Christ as our Forerunner hath already entered: so again the *legal Purifications* which only *purified the Flesh*, foreshewed the Blood of *Christ* which should *purge our Consciences from dead Works*. So the annual *Atonement* figured out that eternal *Atonement* made by *Christ*. And the Admission of the People in the Service of the Tabernacle, when cleansed by legal Sacrifices, denotes our Right to enter into Heaven, when cleansed

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by the Blood of *Jesus*. So that the Truth in this Case is to be looked for in the Gospel, but the Shadow of it was the Subject of the *Law*. And as the Thing prefigured was often something done by Christ in Person, the *Truth* is in this Respect very emphatically said to *be effected* by him. *Take* and sacrifice a *Lamb for your Houses*, says the *Law*. But *Christ* became himself the very *Paschal Lamb*, the *Truth* intended by that Figure, and offer'd up himself. Again it is written in the Law, *Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the Words of this Law*, Deut. xxvii. 26. *But Christ has redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being* made *a Curse for us*, Gal. iii. 13.

After all this Enlargement upon the Titles or Characters of the two Oeconomies, in that one is termed the *Law*, and the other described to be *Grace and Truth*, I proceed,

2. To say something concerning the Method of their Dispensation, in that one is said to *be given*, the other *to be effected*. The Law was only *given*, *i. e.* issued out or delivered by *Moses*, but the very Thing intended by it, that Pardon and Salvation, which it could only notify by Types and Figures, was the *Grace and Truth* which was *effected* by *Jesus Christ*. *In him all the Promises of God are yea, and Amen. The Law made nothing perfect*; but the Gospel shadow'd by it did, by giving Foundation for a *better Hope* than the Letter of the Law contain'd, and really *effecting* that Salvation which the Law typified. It then remains now,

3. To say something in few Words of the different Authors or Promulgers of these two Oeconomies, *Moses* and *Christ*.

Moses *verily was faithful in all his House*; but *as a Servant*. He did not give Laws in his own Name; but as he continued some Ceremonies which had been anciently used, as Circumcision and Sacrifice,

and established others which were new; so he delivered them as the Result of divine Appointment, and generally referr'd to the same End of Religion, which had been always in view, to keep up the Hope of a promised Redeemer. From hence we may collect, that the outward Observances of these Ceremonies could not be necessary in themselves, inasmuch as it had not been requir'd in all Ages, and was then only subservient to a future Good, and when that should be attained, be of no farther Use. But *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, and for ever*; the Benefits of his Redemption is the Foundation of revealed Religion, and runs thro' every Oeconomy of Worship, which God has been pleased to prescribe from the beginning, *Rev.* xiii. 8. So that the *Christian* Religion was taught from the Time of Man's Apostacy, and tho' the outward Shell might be Matter of temporary Institution, yet the inward Design of it was that same *Grace and Truth*, which has *Jesus* for its Author, and is of unalterable Benefit. I come now to the

2. *Second Head*, Which was to shew that the *Mosaic Law* was not designed to have a perpetual Obligation, but served as a preparatoy Discipline to lead Men to the Gospel. And to do this with the better Dispatch, I shall,

1. Overthrow the *Jewish* Arguments for the opposite Opinion; then,

2. Propose those by which our own is supported.

1. *First* therefore, I begin with examining those Arguments which are alledged by the modern *Jews* both from Reason and Scripture, to assert the perpetual Obligation of the *Law* of *Moses*.

1. As to those Arguments which are drawn from Reason, the Sum of them amounts to this, that the *Law of the Lord is perfect*, the Result of that divine Wisdom, which is unchangeable, and directed to

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an End which is always necessary, *viz.* to promote the Happiness and Good of Men.

To which I answer, that tho' God's Wisdom is unchangeable, and his Laws the Result of such consummate Wisdom, yet they have not the same absolute Perfection; because they relate to Men, who are mutable and finite Beings. From whence many Grounds of Variation may arise with respect to Time and Place, and other Circumstances; and for that Reason, because the Author is invariable, he may chuse to make some Alteration in his Laws, that they may better suit the alterable State of Mankind. This can be no Argument of Mutability in God, but of the most constant and tendereſt Regard to the Weakness and Necessity of Men.

Accordingly we find in Fact, that some of his Laws have been differently suited to the Circumstance of Time and Opportunity.

Thus different Precepts were prescribed to *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, and the *Israelites*; and if then it be no Impeachment of the Divine Wisdom that those Rites were not prescribed to the first Ages of the World, there can be no arguing from Reason, that future Ages may not be released from them again.

Nay *Maimonides* himself has ascribed such Causes or Reasons for divers Institutions, as are plainly of an alterable Kind, and may serve to intimate, that when those Reasons ceased, it could be no way unworthy of God to set aside the Institution. The first Intention of the Law, he says, was to root out all Remains of Idolatry, Divination, and Enchantment: And though the true Worship of God consists in the inward Love and Fear of him, yet, he says, many external Rites were added in Opposition to the Rites of the *Zabians*. Since then the Rites, against which they were levelled, are now forgotten, why should it be urged as any Proof of

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Inconstancy, if God sees fit to abrogate the Precepts, as of no longer Use.

But upon the Christian Scheme this Argument may be farther push'd. The Law was intended for a *School-master* to lead to *Christ*, but when he was come in Person, there was no more Occasion for a *School-master*. It was not then for the Dishonour of the Law, that its ritual Injunctions were no longer necessary; their End was served, and they expired of Course. It can be no Argument of change in God, that those ritual Precepts are rather obsolete, than abrogated; that those Institutions, which were not good in themselves, but only expedient for a time, are no longer exacted since that Time expired, and their Expediency has ceased. For this Reason the *Gospel* is so far from pretending to be a new or different Law, as to any essential Parts of Duty, that it even ventures to establish itself upon the old Foundation, and appeals to *Moses* for the Proof and Confirmation of it. *Heb.* iii. 5. And for that Reason taxes the *Jews* for not believing *Moses*, because they believed not *Jesus* of whom he wrote. *John* v. 46. vii. 17. v. 39. I come now,

II. To consider what the *Jews* have to offer for the Perpetuity of the Law, from the Scriptures.

The first Text alledged to this Purpose, is that of *Deut.* xii. 32. *What Thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.* From whence *Maimonides* concludes that the *Mosaick* Law is neither capable of Increase nor Diminution. But no more can be understood from this Text, than that Men shall not add nor diminish for their own Pleasure, but by no means to exclude God from making such Alterations.

The next Text urged by him, is *Deut.* xxx. 12. *It is not in Heaven, that thou shouldst say who shall go up for us to Heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may*

may hear it and do it? Which he would have meant that there was no new Law to be expected from Heaven. Whereas this Place neither respects the Change nor the Duration of the Law. But as *Moses* was exhorting them to Obedience, so he enforces his Advice from the Easiness of complying with it, in that this Word was neither *hidden*, nor *far off*, neither *in Heaven*, nor *beyond the Sea*, *but very nigh unto them*, *in* their *Mouth* and *in* their *Heart*, that they might *do it*.

Malachi iv. 4. *Remember ye the Law of* Moses, *my Servant*, *which I commanded to him in* Horeb, *for all* Israel, *with the Statutes and Judgments*, is sometimes mentioned to the same Purpose; but as there is plain Reason to be given from the Degeneracy of the People, at that Time, from their being newly returned from Captivity, to the Opportunities of publick Worship, and from the near Expiration of Prophecy, why they should then more particularly be required to look to the *Mosaic* Institutions, as the Rule then in force, without implying them to be absolutely immutable; so indeed the following Words do rather intimate there was a Day a coming, when a new Direction might be reasonably expected, which should be preceded by the Coming of *Elias*.

The Argument from these Passages is inconsiderable; but there is more Appearance of Solidity, in what is argued from *Deut.* xxix. 29. *Those Things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our Children* for ever, *that we may do all the Words of the Law.* And this seems to be greatly confirmed by such other Passages, where any of the ritual Institutions are prescribed to be a *Covenant for ever.* (*See* Gen. xvii. 13. Exod. xxxi. 16, 17. —xii. 14. 17. 24. Levit. iii. 17. —vi. 18. 22. —vii. 34. 36. —x. 9. 15. —xvi. 29. 31. 34. —xvii. 14. 21. 31. 41. —xxiv.

3,

3. 8, 9. —xxv. 34. Exod. xxvii. 21. —xxviii. 41. —xxix. 2. 28. —xxx. 21. —xl. 15. Numb. x. 8. —xv. 15. —xviii. 8. 11. 19. 23. —xxv. 13. —xix. 10. 21.) From all which Places, the Zealots of the old *Law* argued, that the *Law* was to be perpetual.

But in answer to all this, it has been justly observed by *Jewish* as well as *Christian* Writers, that the Words *olam* and *l'olam*, or *ad olam*, which we render *for ever*, do properly signify *for the Age*; which will admit of very different Interpretations according to the Nature of the Things, to which it is applied. Thus when *Jehovah* is stiled the *everlasting God*, or *the God of the Age*, we understand that *Age*, to be as unlimited as his Existence; which is eternal. But when *Hannah* devoted *Samuel* to *appear before the Lord, for the Age*, (which we translate *for ever*) she could not possibly mean it beyond the Term of Life.

So likewise when the Servant refused to accept of his Liberty, the Law prescribed that he should be to his Master *Ebed Olam* a *Servant of the Age* or *for ever*: But this could not extend beyond the Life of the Servant. Nay the *Jews* generally agree it could not extend beyond the Year of *Jubilee*.

I would mention but two Places more, and they respect a limited Duration for time past. The first is, that of *Proverbs* xxii. 28. *Remove not the* ancient *Land-mark, which thy Fathers have set.* The *Hebrew* is the *Bound of the Age*, which (if we render it conformably to other Places) will be the *everlasting Bound*, and yet it means only *for a long time*. The other is that of the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Chap.* ii. 20. *For* of Old (in *Hebrew from the Age*) *I have broken thy Yoke and burst thy Bands, and thou saidst I will not transgress*, which cannot possibly be carried beyond the Time when *Israel* became a Nation, and suffered Punishment for their Iniquities.

The *Jews* have a Tradition which they refer to the House of *Eleasar*, that *Netsahh*, *Selah* and *Ad* are Words of a stricter Import; and in all Places where they occur, there is intended a continual Duration without end; since therefore, no one of these Words is ever used in all that Variety of Places, which prescribe the Ceremonies of the *Law*, but only the Word *Olam*, which appears in many Places to have a limited Signification, 'tis not improbable, that it is here also used in a restrained Acceptation, and means a Continuance of long standing, but short of everlasting.

Now though it is not demonstratively certain from all this, that where the Phrase is applied to the *Mosaick* Institutions, it must needs be understood of a limited Duration; yet it is evident however, that we are not obliged to understand it of such as is to continue throughout all Ages. And if the Phrase does admit of Limitations, what should hinder us from applying them in this Case?

But then especially, if it should appear, there is any allowed Acceptation of the Word *Olam*, which is applicable to such limited Duration of the *Mosaick* Institutions; in such Case it will be highly probable, that this is the Acceptation intended in such Passages; and so what the *Jews* are used to glory in as an invincible Proof of the Perpetuity of the *Law*, will become almost an Argument against it.

There is a celebrated Distinction among the *Jewish* Writers between *this Age* or *World*, and *the Age* or *World to come*; by this latter meaning the *Age of the Messiah*, and by the other meaning that State of Things previous to it. Sometimes indeed that Distinction may mean the present mortal Life, in Opposition to the State of the Soul after Death: And at other Times it may mean the present State of the World in Opposition to a future State.

But

But at other Times it is certainly used among the *Jews* as well ancient as modern, in the Sense abovementioned: Which is countenanced by *Isaiah* and *Haggai*, who describe the Days of the *Messiah* under the Character *of new Heavens and a new Earth*, (Isai. lxv. 17.) introduced by the *shaking of the Heavens and the Earth* and of *all Nations*, Hag. ii. 6, 7. From whence with reference to this Distinction, some Expositors have explained that Declaration of *Jesus* concerning the *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, that it shall not be forgiven, neither in this World, nor in the World to come.* And that of St. *Paul*, when stating the Excellency of the Christian Dispensation above the *legal*, he has this Expression, *Unto the Angels he hath not put in Subjection the Worle* to come, *whereof* we speak. *Heb.* ii. 5.

Now this being the allowed Use of the Word *Olam*, it seems natural to suppose that when any of the *Mosaick* Precepts are mentioned to endure *for the Age*, this should not be taken in the most absolute Sense, but respectively to the *Mosaick* Oeconomy, as being to endure throughout that Age, in which they were instituted, or till the other should commence. And this might be the Meaning of those Phrases, that their Rites should be observed *in their Dwellings throughout their Generations*, that is, as long as they had Possession of the Land of Promise. Thus it seems to be explained by *Moses*. *Deut.* xii. 1.

Accordingly in the Captivity of *Babylon*, the *Jews* did not think themselves obliged to observe the legal Festivals. (*See* Jenkins's *Reas. of Christ. Rel. Vol.* 2. *Chap.* 15.)

Daniel fasted three Weeks in the first Month, and consequently did not keep the *Passover*. *Dan.* x. 2, 3, 4. And from hence St. *Chrysostom* blames the *Jews* of his Time for observing their Festivals

in other Countries, againſt the Example of their Anceſtors. (*D.* Chryſoſt. *adv.* Judæos, *Orat.* 1. *Tom.* 6. *Edit.* Savil. *p.* 315, 316.) The believing *Jews* were indulged in adhering to the legal Precepts while the Temple ſtood, but the compleat Deſtruction of their City and Temple has now put a final Period to the Law and its Preſcriptions.

We may alſo obſerve, that as the legal Precepts are capable of being diſtinguiſhed into ſuch ſtated Rules as came on courſe, and ſuch as may be called occaſional; ſo the Character of a *Statute* or *Ordinance of the* Age, or *for ever* is moſt properly applied to ſuch Rites as were ordinarily required in the Courſe of their Religion.

This was plainly the Caſe of the Feaſts of *Paſſover*, *Pentecoſt*, and *Tabernacles*, the Day of *Atonement*, the *Veſtments* of *the Prieſts*, and Poſſeſſions of the *Levites*, and thoſe Sacrifices which were made by a fixed Obligation: And if the ſame Phraſe is alſo uſed in the Preſcription of thoſe Sacrifices, which were occaſional only, yet it is not applied to the whole of the Inſtitution, but only to ſome general Rule, that is laid down concerning it, as a Matter that was deſigned to be conſtant, whenever ſuch ſacrifices were performed; or perhaps a Rule, that ſhould obtain, not in that inſtance alone, but throughout all their Sacrifices, and in other Caſes alſo. Thus in the *Laws* of *free-will Offerings*, (Levit. i, ii, iii.) there is no Expreſſion to enjoin them by an Ordinance for ever, but after its being mentioned that the *Fat* upon the Inwards ſhould be burnt *for a ſweet Savour* to God. It is added, (Chap. iii. 17.) *It ſhall be a perpetual Statute, that ye eat neither Fat nor Blood.* From which we may collect, that the true import of the Phraſe is calculated to point out a ſtanding Rule, in oppoſition, to ſuch as are occaſional.

Having

Having refuted the Arguments the *Jews* bring either from Reason or Scripture to establish the Perpetuity of the *Law*; and having shewn that that Perpetuity, which seems to be ascribed to them, is not absolute, but relative; and therefore may, without any Inconsistency, admit a Change or Variation. It remains,

II. That we prove they are changed accordingly; which I will do,

(1.) *First*, From the Nature of the *legal* Precepts, as not being founded in the Reason, and Natures of Things. I mean here the ceremonial Precepts of the Law, whose Obligation we may consistently dispute, as not appearing to rest upon the same Foundation with the *moral Precepts*.

It must also be owned, that the Will of God revealed, is a sufficient Ground for our Obedience, though there were no apparent Ground to be collected from the Reasons and Relations of Things. But then since he who placed Things in such Relation, and made that the most general Method of notifying his *Will* to Mankind, there is Reason to believe that the Duties herein founded, are fixed and unalterable, as being conformable to the Nature and Attributes of God himself: Whereas the same is not to be said of those Duties, which are founded upon Precepts, since they may be variously accommodated to Persons, Places, and Seasons, and for the same Reason may be convenient at one Time and not at another.

It must nevertheless be granted that even these Duties have an inward Meaning which is moral and unalterable; and tho' the outward Matter be liable to change, yet the Faith and Obedience expressed by it, is always necessary; and will have the same Acceptance with our Judge, when it exerts itself, in *positive*, as when in *moral* Duties. But the real Dif-

ference lies here, that though the outward Act is in neither Case acceptable by itself, yet in one Case it ought to flow from the inward Disposition, supposing a Concurrence of proper Circumstances, tho' there were no *outward Law* to require and exact it; whereas in the other Case, it depends on the Subsistence of some *positive* Law to exact and make it necessary. The inward Part of both is always necessary, and gives Value to the Action; but the outward Part of one is founded on some mutable Respects, and therefore subject to change. The wiser *Jews* were sensible of this Distinction; and *Maimonides* himself with all his Zeal for the Perpetuity of the *legal* Precepts confessed a Difference; those he calls *intellectual*, which would deserve to be written if they were not so already; and those, which if not prescribed by an express Law, might have been left unobserved without Sin.

I know it is alledged by the *Jews*, (*Limborch*, *Amica Collat.*) that there may possibly be some secret *Relations* of Things undiscovered by us, from whence the *legal* Precepts may be reasonable in themselves, and founded in a Necessity of Nature, and ought so to be accounted, because they are ordained by the Wisdom of God, though that Reason be not apparent to the Wisdom or Philosophy of Men. But to this I answer, that our Obedience can be no further rational, than whilst we see sufficient Grounds for it.

The Command of a supreme Lawgiver is no doubt a rational Ground of our Obedience, and we may from thence collect, that there is a Fitness in the Thing commanded, though we see no Reason but the Command itself. But if we would say, whether this Fitness is necessary and immutable, or occasional, there must be other Considerations taken in for the Decision of this Question; and except the Matter

Matter be supported by other Arguments we are not certain, but the Command may some time or other be revoked.

Of the ritual Precepts in general it may be said, that they cannot be necessary, because they were not always required. And many of them, the *Jews* own, have had such Respect to such Customs of other Nations, as are now forgotten; And if the Ground of their Prescription ceases, can it be any Reflection on the divine Wisdom, or any Argument of Mutability in God, that the Prescription itself should cease with it? Lastly, it will appear that they were meant to introduce the Gospel Dispensation, and did figure out the Blessings and Benefits of it. But when the Substance came in View, it was but fit the Figures should be drawn off. They were confessed to be good in their Time, and tho' they had not the same intrinsic Goodness with the moral Precepts yet they are joined together. *Neh.* ix. 13. But,

(2). I observe that some of the *Mosaic* Rites are explained in the Old Testament to have an inward and spiritual Meaning; from whence I judge, that the Matter which was chiefly intended, was not the outward Observation of the Rite prescribed, but that principal Regard was had to something which was denoted by it; something which was not less necessary before the Prescription of that Rite; and as it then subsisted, so it may continue, though the external Rite should be abolished.

Thus in the Case of *Circumcision*, there was an outward Rite prescribed, which was not necessary till commanded; but it betokened an inward Disposition which has been always necessary, *viz.* the mortifying and casting off of vicious Appetites. See *Deut.* x. 16. xxx. 6. *Jer.* iv. 4. And those whose Affections are not in this manner mortified,

are described as *uncircumcised in Heart*. *Lev.* xxvi. 41. *Jer.* vi. 10. ix. 26. *Ezek.* xliv. 7, 9. *Col.* ii. 11. *Phil.* iii. 3. *Acts* vii. 5. *Rom.* ii. 28, 29.

So likewise in the Case of *Sacrifices*, it was the inward Principle of humble Obedience, which made them acceptable, 1 *Sam.* xv. 22. *Psal.* l. 14. lxix. 31. li. 17. *Isai.* i. 11. 17.

The Prophet *Jeremy* has spoken of this Matter in such Terms, as if the Use of Sacrifices had not been at all prescribed. See *Jer.* vii. 22, 23. Upon which Passage *Maimonides* moves a Difficulty, how this Declaration can be reconciled in Fact: which he solves thus, that the first Design of the Law was to secure the Belief and Worship of one God, and that what relates to these ritual Observances being only of a secondary Nature, and instituted only for the better securing of the first End, is spoken of as if it had not been prescribed at all, in Comparison of the other, which was the Thing principally designed.

It may be added that these Sacrifices are not expresly mentioned in the original Covenant between God and the People at Mount *Sinai*, (Exod. xix. 3, &c.) but only a general Stipulation for Obedience. After which these are not mentioned, but after the moral Precepts of the *Decalogue*. Sacrifice then was prescribed in Consequence of this Covenant; but the Thing directly engaged for was Obedience. The Covenant was indeed ratified by *Sacrifice*, but that was no proper Part of the Covenant, but only the Method of ratifying it.

Now tho' it cannot be argued from this, that the Institutions of this Kind may be neglected at Men's own Choice, so long as the Precepts requiring them are of Force; yet they may certainly be changed or abolished at the Will of the Lawgiver, when the

the great End which was served by them at first, may be secured afterwards, in another manner, more effectually; here is then the same Reason and Wisdom in abrogating them, as there was in appointing them before. But

(3). Our next Argument will shew that this was not a likely Case, but that in Fact the *Mosaic* Institutions were so peculiarly adapted to the People and Land of *Canaan*, that many of them must be impracticable under the Reign of the Messiah, whose Kingdom was to extend over the World.

They were meant to distinguish the *Israelites* from other Nations; but this Distinction must cease of Course, when all should become *one Nation*, and have *one King* over them, when *Jehovah* should *be one*, and *his Name one*. Which was to be the State of Things in the Days of the *Messiah*.

The *new Moon*, or first Day of every Month, was required to be observed with the Blowing of *Trumpets*, and the Offering of solemn Sacrifice. *Num.* x. 10. And this was yet more strictly enjoined on the first Day of *Tisri*, which being the Beginning of the Year for some Uses with the *Jews*, tho' the seventh Month in other Respects was more eminently distinguished as the *Feast of Trumpets*. Now the Knowledge of this Beginning of the Month depended on the Observation of the *Phasis* of the Moon at *Jerusalem*; and as their other Festivals were fixed to certain Days of their Months respectively, it follows that the Observation of the *Kalends*, or the Term from which their Month began, could be had only in *Judea*, or the neighbouring Places. And how then can this consist with the universal Extent of the *Messiah*'s Kingdom?

And as this creates a Difficulty in their monthly and annual Festivals, such as obliges them to ob-

ſerve two Days together for their *new Moons*; which was never the Intention of the Law; ſo there is another to be obſerved in their weekly Feſtival of the *Sabbath*. The *ſeventh Day* to be *kept holy* was computed from the ſetting of the Sun on the ſixth Day, to its ſetting again on the Day following. But ſurely this Law was never deſigned to reach to every Country, ſince the Meaſure of Time can never be the ſame in all. At the ſame Time that it is Noon in *Judea* it is but Morning in *Britain*, it is Evening in *China*, and Midnight in *America*; and different in Places ſtill more different. Now under this Variety, how ſhould the *Sabbaths* or other Feſtivals be reduced to any certain Computation? The Law has made plainly no Proviſion for this Exigence, from whence it is at leaſt a reaſonable Preſumption, that the Law was only calculated for the Inhabitants of one Part of the World; and therefore could not be deſigned for the Subjects of the *Meſſiah*, who ſhould be ſpread over the whole Earth.

Let us look again to their ſabbatical Years returning in a Courſe of ſeven Years, when their Land was to reſt; and by a Rotation of ſeven of which *Sabbatic* Years the grand *Sabbath* of *Jubilee* or general Releaſe was regulated. Now theſe Years were to commence (*Levit.* xxv. 9.) from the tenth Day of *Tiſri*, which anſwers to our *September*, after the Fruits both of the Field and the Vineyard were got in, and about five Days before the Feaſt of *Tabernacles*, (*Levit.* xxiii. 34, 39.) which was preſcribed to be obſerved when they had gathered in the Fruit of the Land. By this Means the Fruits of the ſixth Year were clearly got in, before that reſt of the ſeventh. But that could be the Caſe only in thoſe Places where the Seaſons kept the ſame Courſe as in *Judea*; ſo that neither was this

Law

Law calculated for the whole World, since Summer and Winter cannot be the same in all Places. And it is remarkable that this Law tho' given to the *Israelites* forty Years before they entered *Canaan*, yet was not to take Place, till they had Possession of the Land: *Lev.* xxv. 2.

Some Laws were given to them as Inhabitants of *Canaan* only. Thus it was in the Case of the *Leprosy* of Houses. See *Lev.* xiv. 34. And it is observable that in many of those Places where their Rites are prescribed by an *Ordinance for ever*, there is this Limitation expressly added *in your Dwellings and throughout your Generations.*

But, to proceed, at the Feasts of *Passover*, *Pentecost*, and *Tabernacles* all the Males were obliged to appear before the Lord; but how could this possibly be from all Parts of the World? Or how could *Jerusalem* receive such Multitudes? Or the Temple admit such infinite Oblations? Or where could be found Priests to sacrifice?

And yet after all the Difficulty will increase, if it be remembered that there were many other Occasions for repairing to *Jerusalem*; which render it impracticable to perform; and therefore the *Mosaic* Law, could never be designed for the Discipline of the *Messiah*, whose Kingdom was to extend over the whole Earth.

Perhaps it may be urged against us, that the *moral* Law, which is confessedly in Force, is yet impossible to be observed as well as the *ceremonial*. And why then should that Impossibility, which cannot vacate the Obligation in one Respect be judged to do so in the other? But who does not see in this Case the Disparity; that the Impossibility of observing the *moral* Law to Perfection, arises not from the Nature of the Law, but from the Corruption of Man; whereas the Impossibility of

observing

observing these Rites in all Nations, arises from the Nature of the Rites themselves, without any Fault of Men.

Again it may be said, that the *Jews* assert the Perpetuity of the *Law* as to themselves, and not to the *Gentiles*. But this discriminating Law cannot be continued, when the Difference of Nations shall be abolished in the Days of the *Messiah*. Either then the Law must be universal in its Obligation, or must be superseded in the Days of the *Messiah*, whose Kingdom reaches over all. Besides the Prophets, as we shall see hereafter, have made Mention of *Priests* and *Levites* to officiate, of *Sacrifice* and *Incense* to be offered among all Nations; which however inconsistent with the literal Prescriptions of the *Jewish* Law, and therefore necessary to be mystically interpreted, must argue at least that there should be but *one Law* and Worship prescribed both for the *Jew* and *Gentile*.

Lastly, it may be alledged that in such Cases as are utterly impracticable, God may relax the Rigour of his *Laws*, and yet as to all other Matters the Law may continue in full Force. But this is an arbitrary Solution of the Difficulty without any Foundation in the *Law*. The Instances which have been mentioned do make up a main Part of that Body of ceremonial Precepts of the *Mosaic Law*. They are prescribed in the same strict Manner with the Rest. What Reason is there then to imagine, that so great a Part of the ritual Precepts, should be dispensed with, tho' no such Thing was intimated by *Moses* or the *Prophets*, which will not argue with greater Probability, that the whole was meant to be set aside? The Conversion of the *Heathen* World was foreseen and foretold; and had it been designed that they should become subject to the rest of the *Mosaic* Precepts, it would have been

easy

easy to have excepted the impracticable ones, which would have confirmed their Obligation to the rest; but since no Exception has been made, it is more reasonable to conclude there is no Need of it, because the whole System of ritual Observances is expired, and so the Objection of Impossibility set aside. Upon this Foot we are able to defend the Honour of the divine Laws, the Harmony that is between them, the Order and Beauty of the whole Oeconomy; but they who would assert the perpetual Obligation of the legal Precepts, will have the Difficulty to account how such extraordinary, such impossible Things should be prescribed; and yet no Provision be made to dispense with them in any Case. But,

(4). We have express Predictions in the Old Testament that some of the principal *Mosaic* Rites, such as the Ark of the Covenant, the Priesthood and the Sacrifices should be altered or abolished; much more Matters of less Importance.

(1). Then as to the *Ark of the Covenant*, (which was as it were the Centre and Compendium of all legal Ceremonies, the Throne of God exercising a peculiar Kind of Jurisdiction, and the principal Symbol of the whole typical Covenant,) the Prophet *Jeremy* foretold the Absence, and utter Abolition of it, *Jer.* iii. 16; and this not as a Calamity, such as the taking of it by the *Philistines* was deemed, and the final Loss of it at the *Babylonish* Captivity, but indeed as a Privilege and Note of happy Times, they should esteem it no more; they should in the Prophet's Phrase *no more speak of it*, *no more remember it*, neither should it come into their Mind, neither should they *vent* or *seek* after it; neither should *that be done any more*. So that here is no Room for any Objection of the *Jews*, that the Abolition of the other Ceremonies cannot

cannot be inferred from the Abſence of the *Ark*, becauſe they continued to be neceſſary after the Captivity, tho' the *Ark* was wanting; ſince we do not argue merely from the *Abſence* of that Utenſil, but from the ſetting aſide of any *Value* for it, and this mentioned as a Note of Happineſs.

Nor have the *Jews* any better Refuge in that other Pretence, that this is not ſpoken of an utter Abolition of the *Ark*, but only in a certain Reſpect, that *Iſrael* ſhould meet with ſuch a ready Submiſſion of the Nations, that they ſhould have no more need to carry out the Ark into the Wars.

It does not appear that this was any original Deſign of the Ark, and though it might be ſometimes carried out upon ſpecial Occaſions, and by the expreſs Command of God, yet the only Inſtance we read of it without ſuch Authority, was in the Days of *Eli*, when it was taken by the Enemy. Beſides that upon the Erection of *Solomon*'s Temple the Ark was ſhut up, and never was removed from its place, till the Temple was deſtroyed. It muſt then be abſurd in the Prophet here to foretel the diſuſe of a Practice which had been left off Ages before his own time.

(2). The *Levitical Prieſthood* was foretold in the old Teſtament to be aboliſhed; which will imply the conſequential Abrogation of all that ceremonial Worſhip, that Train of ritual Obſervances, for the Sake of which the Prieſthood itſelf was inſtituted. As the Apoſtle argues. *The Prieſthood being changed, there is made of Neceſſity a Change alſo of the Law.*

Let us ſee what Proof we have from Scripture, that the Prieſthood was to be changed in the Days of the *Meſſiah*. The High Prieſthood in particular was deſigned to figure out the Offices of *Chriſt*, who, as *Zachary* foretold, ſhould not only *ſit upon his Throne*; but ſhould *be a Prieſt upon his Throne.*

But

But yet there are such Circumstances in the Letter of the Institution, as could not consist with *Christ*'s Investiture with that Dignity, which is therefore an Argument that the *literal Priesthood* must expire, when once the spiritual one of *Christ* took place.

The most remarkable Passage to this Purpose is this, *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of* Melchisedeck. I have already observed that the *Messiah* is the Subject of this *Psalm* in whom the *regal* and *sacerdotal* Offices were to be united. And tho' the *Jews* have excepted that the Word *Cohen* does not necessarily signify a Priest, but is sometimes applied to secular Princes; but the Word *Cohen* in a political Sense is never put for the royal Majesty of the King's Person himself, but at most for the next after him. Since then the *Messiah* is represented with the Character of Majesty, it remains, that when the Title of *Cohen* is ascribed to him, it cannot be understood in the political Sense, but in the Ecclesiastical, as it had been anciently ascribed to *Melchisedeck* King of *Salem*, who was also the *Priest of the most high God.*

Now this Prediction that the *Messiah* was to be a *Priest*, amounts to a clear Implication that the *Levitical Priesthood* was to be abolished. For by the *Law* none could be a Priest but one of the Tribe of *Levi*, but the *Messiah* was to spring of the Tribe of *Judah*; and therefore, if he were invested with the *Priesthood*, the *Mosaic Law* must be set aside. See *Heb.* vii. 13, 14.

Besides the *Psalmist* expresly refers him to another Order of *Priesthood*, and thereby clearly intimates the Insufficiency of the Order then subsisting to bring them to Perfection. To this Purpose the Apostle argues, *Heb.* vii. 11, 15, 16, 28, 23, 24.

After this we may the less wonder to find it

mentioned by *Isaiah*, as the Privilege of the Gospel Times, that God would take unto him *Priests and Levites out of all Nations*, such as might be proper *Ministers* of this great *High Priest*, who was to be of the Tribe of *Judah*. We may the less wonder to read of an *Altar* to be erected *in the midst of Egypt*, that *in every Place Incense* should *be offered* to his *Name*, which was of old limited to *Jerusalem*. The *Priests* and the *Levites*, the *Altar* and the *Incense* here foretold, are called so by a Figure: but the very Translation of these Names to Places, and Persons disqualified by the Law, implies the Dissolution of it. But,

(3). The Cessation of *Sacrifices* will deserve a more attentive Consideration.

Sacrifices made up a great Part of the ceremonial Precepts, and therefore if these were to cease in the Days of the *Messiah*, the whole Body of ceremonial Institutions must fall with them.

That they were to cease then is plain from *Dan.* ix. 27.

I may have farther Occasion to pursue this Argument hereafter. At present we may add, that the *Renting* of the *Veil of the Temple* at the Time of our Saviour's Crucifixion, gave a signal Testimony to the Expiration of the legal Mysteries; and the Destruction of the Temple, where only *Sacrifices* could be offered, with the utter Dissolution of the whole *Jewish* Polity, has caused an actual Cessation of those bloody *Sacrifices*, that since their Significancy ceased at the Appearance of the Antitype, their Continuance might no longer be permitted.

(4). I add some traditional Sentences of ancient *Rabbins*, which contain some Footsteps of a general Opinion, that a great Alteration should be made in the Precepts of the Law. To this Purpose is this

this Saying, that *all Oblation* (except the *Eucharistical*) *shall cease in the future Age*, the Age of the *Messiah*.

To the same Purpose we have another Tradition, that *all Festivals shall cease, besides the Feast of Purim and the Day of Expiation.* And there is no Reason to be given why these should be excepted, when all the Rest were to expire.

It is a very lame Evasion which *Abarbanel* has Recourse to in this Matter, that the Tradition implies not an utter Abolition of the Festivals themselves, but only an Oblivion of those Benefits, upon Occasion of which, the Feasts of *Passover*, *Pentecost* and *Tabernacles* had been instituted, because the Deliverance wrought by the *Messiah* shall so far exceed all others, that the People of *Israel* shall no more attend to the Remembrance of them. *Jer.* xxiii. 7, 8. But this Solution is not applicable to the Case, because the Tradition is express for the Cessation of the Festivals themselves; nor is it consistent with itself, because the principal Ends of those Festivals, (next to their typical Relation, which the *Jews* disown) was to preserve a grateful Memory of ancient Benefits; and therefore if those Benefits should be forgotten, it will imply the Festivals to be no more in Use.

Nothing can be replied, except it be, that the Deliverances wrought by the *Messiah* may happen, and the *Ancients* did believe they should happen at the very Season of these Festivals; and then the Festivals may be continued, but instead of being applied to the Commemoration of those ancient Deliverances, they shall then be applied to those new and great Deliverances wrought by the *Messiah* at the same Season of the Year. But I answer that this is inconsistent with the Continuance of the Law, which not only prescribes the Festival, and the Services pe-

culiar to it, but likewiſe the expreſs Commemoration of thoſe ancient Deliverances, and that they ſhould carefully inſtruct their Children in this Meaning of thoſe Services. So that whilſt the Laws preſcribing them were ſet aſide, they would then be no longer *Moſaic* Feſtivals. Or if that can be ſuppoſed to be fulfilled by commemorating another Deliverance, this will greatly countenance our typical Expoſition of the Law, and argue that its literal Preſcriptions may myſtically be referred to Matters of another Nature, and in future Times.

Another Inſtance to ſhew that the ancient *Jews* expected an Alteration of the Law in the Days of the *Meſſiah* is in Reſpect of the Prohibition of Meats. *Whatſoever Creature is unclean in this Age*, i. e. under the *Moſaic* Diſcipline, it is ſaid, *God ſhall make it clean in the Age to come*, inſomuch that *Swine's Fleſh* ſhall be lawful to be eaten; which is therefore ſaid to have its Name from a Root that ſignifies *to return*. Now whoever obſerves how ſcrupulouſly the *Jews* have abſtained from Meats forbidden, cannot but preſage the Abrogation of the Law with theſe Obſervances.

Abarbanel has ſuggeſted two poor Solutions of this Matter. One is, that this may be underſtood only of a temporary Suſpenſion of theſe Precepts, that in Caſe of ſome Neceſſity the Diſtinction of Meats may be ſuſpended for a while. But beſides that the Law has made no ſuch Proviſion for any Caſe, and this is a Caſe not more to be expected in the Days of the *Meſſiah*, than in the Ages before him: Beſides this, it is clearly mentioned as the Privilege of the future Age to have all Meats reſtored to their primitive Indifference, which argues it not to be meant of any occaſional Relaxation of the Law, but of a total Abolition.

2. He

He suggests farther, that these Dispensations themselves being matter of Tradition may be understood to be of the Substance of the Law, because the Law taken in its whole Latitude, includes not only the Books written by *Moses* but likewise those Precepts which were delivered by Word of Mouth, whereby the written Law is explained, and Rules laid down for amplifying or restraining it in Time to come: and then such Restrictions taken from the Substance of the Law, ought not to be reckoned Contradictions to it. But till the Authority of the *oral Law* is established, and the Way shewn for preserving it pure, it is too obscure and precarious a Principle to give us any real Satisfaction. Besides that in Effect it vacates the whole *written Law*, to suppose it liable to change, by that which is *unwritten*; which how it may consist with the Honour of the divine Oeconomy, and the Opinion they so stiffly contend for, of the Perpetuity of legal Rites, let them, who advance this Paradox, consider at their Leisure.

Having shewn that the principal Rites of the *Mosaic* Law were to be abolished, I proceed now in the,

(5). *Fifth* Place to infer the same Conclusion from the express mention that is made of a new *Law* to be given by the *Messiah*.

It is insisted by some, that as the Covenant of the *Messiah* is a Covenant of Grace and Mercy, importing the Pardon of Sin, and the Justification of those who by the Covenant of Works are liable to Punishment, he cannot for that Reason in a proper Sense be termed a *Lawgiver*, which would import the Prescription of certain Terms of Duty, with the Sanction of Penalties annexed to them. So that though there are Rules of Practice set before us in the Gospel, yet these are thought by such

Perſons not to be given properly under the Notion of a Law, in which View its Obligation muſt be fetched from the former Covenant, but propoſed as the Reſult only of that gracious Aid, which is vouchſafed us by the Spirit of *Chriſt*, to diſcharge ſuch Obedience as God will now accept by pardoning our Defects. And though again there are Penalties threatned, yet this is conſidered, not as any Thing introduced by the *Goſpel*, but as the Remainder of the former *Law* of Works, to the Curſe whereof they are ſtill expoſed, who by neglecting the Motions of the ſpiritual Life do forfeit the Terms of the Goſpel Covenant. I ſhould be loth to diſpute about the Uſe of the Word, if we can agree in the main, as to our Notion of the Thing. And therefore ſince the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel is indifferently termed in Scripture, a *Law* or *Covenant*, I ſhall uſe thoſe Terms, and ſhall have enough from them, on either Scheme to anſwer the Purpoſe of our preſent Enquiry. Withal it ſhould be added that the *Jews* themſelves have ſome Fragments of a Tradition, which ſpeak of a *new Law* to be given by the *Meſſiah*. (*Vid. Raymund. Martin. Pug. Fid. par.* 3. *diſt.* 3. *cap.* 20.)

The Prediction of a *Prophet like unto* Moſes has already been explained. At preſent it is material to remind you of that Part of the Prediction, where God promiſes to *put* his *Words into the Mouth* of this Prophet, that he might *ſpeak unto them all that* God ſhould *command him*, requiring the People to *hearken* unto him. The Ground of this Prediction was that Terror which had ſeized the People, when they heard God, with a tremendous Voice, delivering the *ten* Commands; which moved them to petition, that he would no more ſpeak unto them in that Manner, but make known his *Laws* by *Moſes*. They were not only gratified in this Requeſt;

queſt; but they were moreover aſſured, that another Prophet ſhould ariſe, who ſhould deliver *God's Words* in the ſame eaſy Manner, and he would no more interpoſe with that awful Solemnity, which he had uſed in pronouncing the *Decalogue*. This intimates that the *Moſaic* Diſcipline would then be at an End; and then there would be Occaſion for another Prophet to deliver anew the *Words* or *Will* of God.

Particularly it deſerves to be remembered, that the *Moſaic Law* was delivered only to the *Hebrew* Nation. But the Law of the *Meſſiah* was to reach to other Nations. *Iſa.* xlii. 4. Now though this makes no Alteration in the ſubſtantial Parts of Duty, which muſt be eternal as thoſe Relations upon which they are founded, and that divine Sanctity to which they are conformable, yet it muſt import a material Change in the outward Oeconomy, when the divine Law ſhould reach to thoſe, who ſeemed to have been diſregarded, and be propoſed without Terror.

Another remarkable Paſſage to this Purpoſe, is that of *Jeremy* xxxi. 31, 32, 33, 34. which is ſtrongly urged, *Heb.* viii. 8, *&c. Behold the Days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant*, &c.

The Mention of a *new Covenant*, as the Apoſtle argues, implies the *old* to be growing out of Date. Now the *old* was not the Covenant of Works ſimply conſidered, which had been given to Man originally in the State of Innocence, and was vacated by the Covenant of Grace made with him after his Fall. But it was the *Sinaitical* Covenant made between God and *Iſrael*, and this conſidered as an outward Rule, confirmed by typical Sacrifices and the ſprinkling of Blood, and containing as well ritual as moral Precepts, to the Diſcharge of which

the People had obliged themſelves. If this be taken with a View to the inward Meaning of the whole, it will be underſtood to refer to that Covenant of Grace, which took Place from the Time of Man's Fall, and is the only Method of Acceptance with God under every Diſpenſation. But when it is conſidered literally, for a rigorous Preſcription of outward Precepts on the one Hand, and an Engagement for the ſtricteſt Obedience on the other, it is then a diſtinct Thing from the Covenant of Grace, and properly oppoſed to it. And ſo it muſt be taken by the Prophet in this Place, becauſe the *new Covenant* is expreſsly ſet in oppoſition to the *Covenant made with their Fathers*, which ſhews their Abſurdity who will not allow the Introduction of a *new Law* to be here intended, but only a Confirmation of the Old one. The inward Part of the Law is the ſame in all Ages; but the outward Method of preſcribing it, was alterable, and ſo the Law of *Moſes* muſt give Way to that of *Chriſt*.

The Covenant therefore, propoſed with all its outward Force, and without the Cover of ritual Precepts, is the *new Covenant* here mentioned to be *written* in *our Hearts*, to convey the Knowledge of divine Truths, and contract for Pardon. And ſo it is plainly diſtinct from the *Moſaick* Covenant, if literally taken, as conſiſting of Rites and Ordinances.

Not that they who lived under the former Diſpenſation were deſtitute of the *Benefits* of this *new Covenant*, for it took place from the Time of Man's Apoſtacy, and was in a different manner notified through all Ages of the World. But when this Covenant came to be diſplayed, and manifeſted in a clear Light, its Benefits propoſed without Ambiguity, its inward Influence moſt expreſsly avowed, without the Cover of ceremonial Precepts, it is then aptly repre-

represented as a *new Covenant*, in respect of that former ritual one, under which it lay concealed, and which the People had abused to make it ineffectual.

That ritual Dispensation, as it stood literally ratified at Mount *Sinai*, made no express Promises of Grace and Pardon, but the People in their own Names undertook for the exactest Obedience. *Exod.* xxiv. 7. But they fail'd of the Obedience for which they undertook, and therefore wanted a more gracious Dispensation to assure them of the Pardon of their Sins, and convey such spiritual Aid as might help them to render acceptable Obedience, in and through the great Atonement made for their Defects. To which Purpose *Jeremy* observes that in the Days of this *new Covenant*, under the full and clear Manifestation of such Grace, God would *put his Law in their Hearts*, and extend to them so full a Pardon of their Sins, as even to blot out the Remembrance of them.

There were Atonements appointed by the Law for particular Trespasses and ritual Pollutions: But there seems to have been none appointed for the main Points of Immorality; so that the Curse of the moral Law remained in Force for any Thing the *Mosaick* Law could do to remove it.

The Nature of the legal Atonements was such, that some Beast used to suffer Death for the Offender. But in Cases of grosser Immoralities, as well as those Offences that were committed against the ritual Law, *presumptuously*, there was no Pardon. *Numb.* xv. 30.

There is nothing looks like an Overture of Pardon for such Offences, except it be the yearly Expiation, which is represented as designed to expiate *all the Iniquities of the Children of Israel.* Levit. xvi. 21. But then this perhaps might reach only to Such Sins as were consented to in Compliance with

some strong and sudden Impetus of Passion or Appetite, and forsaken again: It might extend to such Sins as were done with an *high Hand*, the Authors of which are by the Law directed to be cut off without any Expiation. And therefore it may be thought there should no Benefit accrue to these Persons from the *Day of Atonement*. Or if the Benefit did reach to such Persons, yet still it was nothing but the outward Privilege, which could be given by the Law, and only typically of that Salvation which is proposed by the Gospel: For the Atonements of the Law themselves were but *ritual* or *symbolical*. They had an outward and symbolical Effect, in restoring to the Privilege of Church Membership, but they had no inward Efficacy of their own, as pertaining to the Conscience; and whatever Effect of that Sort may seem to be ascribed to them, can be reasonably understood only in their typical Relation, as they served to figure out the Benefits of that future Sacrifice of the new Covenant, which was to procure the real Pardon of Sin. And the mention of this leads me to the,

(6.) Sixth Argument to shew that the Obligation of the *Mosaick* Precepts was never meant to be perpetual, and that is taken from the plain Tendency of the ancient Rites to prefigure and introduce the Gospel Benefits.

But because the *Jews* do not admit they were instituted for this End, but rather rest in them for their own Sake and look to be justified by a regular Observance or Obedience to them; that I may effectually overthrow this fundamental Error, I proposed it as the,

III. Third general Head upon this Subject to explain how the *Law* did prepare the Way for the *Gospel*, by its Types, which foreshewed the Office and Character of the *Messiah* and made such Appli-

cation

cation of his Benefits, as was suited to that Age of the World, and proportioned to the Faith and Sincerity of its Observers.

Which that I may do in the cleareſt Manner,

1. I would enquire what Grounds may be assigned for this typical Interpretation of the ancient Rites, as prefigurative of the Gospel Mysteries.

2. I would remove the principal Objections that lie againſt it.

3. I would shew how apt and natural this Interpretation is, and how beautifully it unfolds to us the antient Institutions.

1. I would enquire what Grounds may be assigned for this typical Interpretation of the ancient Rites, as prefigurative of the Gospel-Mysteries. Which are taken partly from the ancient Usages of other Nations, partly from what has been already observed of the *Jewish* Discipline. And lastly from the uniform View which it appears to have upon the Christian Exposition, and the Confirmation which is given to it by the Miracles and other Evidences of the New Testament.

1. For the ancient Usages of other Nations:

Those who are conversant in ancient Writings, know that it was the Custom of their Authors to convey their Instructions into vulgar Minds under the Cover of Fables, or parabolical Allusions, and express by symbolical and *hieroglyphical* Representations their theological and moral Sentiments.

Whence this Practice had its Rise is not material to enquire; yet we are able to assign such Grounds of this Method of Oeconomy, as are not unworthy of God, nor unsuitable to the ancient Condition of his Church.

To teach Men Humility and to exercise their Industry are no inconsiderable Ends of Religion, and yet such as were properly consulted by involving its Doctrines

Doctrines in such Degree of Obscurity, as might shew them the Weakness of human Faculties, with the Need of Study and Application.

Again there were some considerable Points in the Scheme of our Redemption, which were to be brought about by the Wickedness of free Agents. And as an open Discovery of these Matters might have tended to have defeated them, so neither was it fit that the Depths of the divine Counsels should be proposed to Persons of such malicious Affections, as would have been apt to ridicule them. And therefore, though these Mysteries were in some measure discoverable by Men of humble Minds and earnest Industry, yet it is no Wonder if they who were slack in their Enquiries, or had no Relish of spiritual Knowledge, and were averse from God, that he would chuse to hide himself from them.

And if thus it appears worthy of God, under the covering of Types to conceal his Mysteries from the wicked Opposers of his Laws: It may be added on the other Hand, that such Method of Instruction, so far as it was understood and explained, was fitted to make a stronger Impression upon vulgar Minds, which would better understand what was represented before them by some visible Symbol, than if it had been foretold in simple Terms as future. 'Tis true, the Completion of all under the Gospel Light has more evidently displayed the Order and Beauty of the whole Scheme, but whilst Events were treated of as future, and in so covert a Manner, that free Agents might not be hindred from bearing their Part in them, the Addition of outward Signs was of Use, to create some Idea of the Benefits intended, though less clear than might reasonably be looked for as the Happiness of after Times, when the Thing itself should be actually effected.

These

These then might be the Grounds for dispensing typical Institutions. And so far as the meaning of those Institutions can be fixed, they will have altogether the same Force, in arguing for those future Events, to which they are referr'd, with those Prophecies which are delivered in express Words. The only Use of Words is to stand as the Signs of Ideas, and if Types and Figures are understood, and allowed to signify the same Ideas, where will be the Difference of Certainty, between these Predictions which are delivered by Signs, and those which are expressed by Words?

It was upon this Foot I advanced that the Law of *Moses* was a standing Prophecy of the *Messiah*, inasmuch as the Rights ordained by it, were calculated to point out his Offices, with the Benefits to be procured and conferred by him. So far as this View appeared to *those who waited for Redemption in Israel*, to the humble and sedate Enquirers after Truth, so far it had as much or more Efficacy, than the plain Method of a verbal Prophecy. And if that View had been cleared up to after Times, if it has been justified by the due Accomplishment of every Particular, if the Application of *Mosaick* Rites upon this Foot to the *Christian* Scheme, has been uniformly drawn out, and confirmed by all the Evidences of the Christian Revelation; surely we may be allowed to produce this Argument among the Proofs of our Religion; and are so far from reckoning the Gospel to stand excluded by the old Law, that we are bold to appeal to that very Law itself for the Proof of it.

That the Law has that typical and figurative Meaning we ascribe to it, remains to be shewn by other Arguments. To which Purpose,

(2.) I propose to argue from what has been observed before of the very Nature of the *Jewish* Discipline. The

The selecting the *Jewish* Nation was not meerly to aggrandize them, but to dispense by their Means some Knowledge of divine Truths, to preserve some Expectation of that great Deliverer, who had been promised to the first Parents of Mankind. But in such Terms and in such Conveyance of Tradition that the Promise was in Danger of being lost, if Care had not been used to train Men up to the Belief of it. Upon this Foot it is natural to conclude, that the *legal* Rites must be calculated with a View to this great End of their Establishment, and some mystical Meaning concealed under them, something which refers to the same Promise of Redemption; and under the Cover of typical Observances, Points out the future Certainty and Method of its Accomplishment.

This Conclusion appears more necessary, because there is no other common End assignable for that great Burden of Ceremonies. Barely to keep the *Jews* separate from other People without any higher End of such Separation, might have been secured with much less Difficulty. And though it be true that God may have wise Reasons for his Institutions, which we cannot discern, and that his Command is Ground enough for our Obedience, though no other Reason should appear besides: Yet where there is a clear Account to be given of the Reasons of his Institutions, an unprejudiced Mind will naturally close in with such Accounts, and judge it more expressive of the Honour and Goodness of God to have acted with this View, than to have conducted his Church under a ritual Dispensation for so many Ages, without any apparent Reason at all. And when to all this it is added, that some of the *legal* Rites are explained in the Old Testament to have a spiritual Meaning, this cannot but give great Countenance to such typical Explica-

tion of the whole, as is given of it in the *Chriſtian* Scheme, whereby at once it adds Luſtre to the *Moſaic Oeconomy*, and gains a farther Manifeſtation of its own. For if once we admit a myſtical Meaning to lie concealed under the Letter of external Obſervances, and it is alſo evident that the Interpretation aſſigned in the New Teſtament is rational, and not clogged with the Incumbrances of any material Differences; it will lie upon the Adverſaries of Chriſtianity, either to aſſign a better Interpretation of theſe ancient Myſteries, or elſe acquieſce in this Account of them, which recommends itſelf by the Uniformity of all its Parts, and is clear from the Accuſation of any palpable Abſurdities. But this Conſideration may be farther urged,

3. Under the third Argument which was mentioned, as taken from the uniform and harmonious View which the *Moſaick Law* appears to have upon the Chriſtian Expoſition, and that Confirmation which is given to it by the Miracles and other Evidences of the New Teſtament.

It will appear hereafter what is the View aſcribed to the *Moſaick Law* by the Chriſtian Expoſition; and tho' there may be other ſubordinate Regards attended to in ſome particular Precepts, yet that there is one grand Deſign kept up throughout the whole to which all its Parts are reconcilable. This cannot but be thought a reaſonable Inducement to admit it as the beſt Expoſition till ſome other be offered to exceed or equal it. We have the Satisfaction of ſeeing the whole Syſtem placed in an advantageous Light, ſuch as diſplays the Wiſdom and Uſefulneſs of the former Diſpenſation, at the ſame Time that it bears Witneſs to the preſent. And ſhall we reject an Account ſo rational, that we may ſuppoſe the ancient Syſtem either to have had no determinate View at all, or none to be aſſigned with ſuch Uniformity

formity in its Parts. A candid Mind would rather accept of such Exposition as is most for the Honour of divine Revelation; especially when it is considered after all, that this Exposition, being advanced in the Writings of the New Testament, has a Claim to all that Evidence, by which those Writings themselves are attested, this must confirm it to us with the greatest Certainty; and then the *Christian* Scheme which explains to us the ancient Types will be in return explained by them.

That the Books of the New Testament are genuine, that they were anciently received as Matter of divine Revelation, and contain the Records of our Religion: That they were proved so by the Miracles of those who wrote them; that the same Power is to be argued from the Success that followed them, and bore Witness that God was with them of a Truth.

All this and more has been often urged to assert the *Christian* Revelation; and if it be sufficient for that Purpose, it must approve at the same Time that Exposition of the legal Rites, which is clearly asserted by the *Christian* Revelation and contained as Part of it.

Look in the New Testament and you will find the Style and Phrases of the *Mosaick* Law transferred from the literal Meaning to which *Moses* applied them, to denote those spiritual Benefits which are proposed to us in the Church of *Christ*. The Pomp of Sacrifices and outward Services are made to signify the inward Devotion of the Mind; and the express Construction of the ancient Ceremonies import the whole Mystery of *Christ*'s eternal *Priesthood*, and *Sacrifice*, and *Intercession* for us.

Thus far of the Grounds to be assigned for such typical Interpretation of the ancient Rites, as prefigurative of the Gospel Mysteries. I come now in the

(2.) Second

(2). *Second* Place, to remove the principal Difficulties and Objections that may seem to lie against this Method of Interpretation. And they are reducible to three Heads, (1) That it is obscure. (2) That it is arbitrary. (3) That it is inconsistent.

(1). It is obscure.

But in answer to this, so long as there appears no palpable Absurdity in the Reason of the Thing, it is not for us to pronouce what Method may be *most worthy* of God. His Wisdom may have wise Ends to serve, by his Dispensations, which we cannot penetrate, whose Views are confined, by the Condition of our Being, to a very narrow Compass.

But though this Answer may suffice to satisfy an humble Mind, yet it has been shewn, that this Method of Instruction is proper to teach vain Man a Lesson of Humility, in shewing them that their own Reasonings and Faculties cannot instruct them fully in their Duty, but they must submit to be taught of God, by the unerring Precepts of Revelation. This surely is an End *worthy of God*, to design, and highly conducing to the Benefit of Man. And this End will further be promoted by that Care which is required for the thorough Knowledge of such Mysteries. Nay let it be remembred, that if the Prescription of Symbolical Rites were attended with some Obscurity, yet it made however a stronger Impression upon vulgar Minds, than bare Prophecy, and so became rather an Help than any real Disadvantage to human Weakness.

Nor is it perhaps the least Ground of such a Method of Proceeding to conceal the sacred Mysteries from evil Spirits and evil Men. Had the Notices of the *Messiah* been so full as to make it impossible for the most obstinate Prejudice to have mistaken it, who would have imagined that *Judas*

das or his Countrymen, should have run the Lengths they did? It seems as if *Satan* himself was not apprized of the Mystery of the Cross of *Christ*, and therefore armed to defeat the Design of our Salvation by the very Method that was proper to effect it. *Heb.* ii. 14. *Col.* ii. 15. But had there been no Obscurity in the Method of our Redemption, it is likely the Tempter would have employed his Malice any other way, than in promoting that Effect which he aimed to defeat. So much for the Objection of Obscurity.

(2). It is objected that this typical Interpretation of the ancient Rites is arbitrary.

To which I answer, that so far as this Interpretation is already authorised by Men inspired of God, whose Character has been attested by Prophecies and Miracles, so far it must be as well grounded as any literal Interpretation. And though it may not be pretended, that there is no Type to be alledged, which has not been expresly applied to that Purpose by some inspired Writers; but rather on the contrary that the Instances we meet with of this sort in the inspired Writers, do afford an Intimation that the like latent Meaning remains to be searched out in other Instances; yet those who are cloathed with such Authority, are ever to be received with greatest Difference and Certainty: and for the rest, there are certain Rules to be prescribed, which may serve to guard us against any Exorbitances of a crazy Brain.

The principal Direction in that Case, is to keep to the *Analogy* of the Faith, and not to admit any Interpretation of a Matter mystical, that shall any way clash with what is clearly revealed. The Doctrines expresly taught are as a Guide to direct us to avoid all Absurdity in interpreting such Passages as are obscure and mystical. So again the

Rites

Rites literally delivered in one part of Scripture, if they be explained to have a mystical View in another, that Explication gives an Handle for expounding other Rites in order still to the same View, and in Subserviency to the same Design; which far from overthrowing what is clearly revealed, helps to illustrate what might otherwise be obscure.

We should be careful however whilst we are looking after a *mystical* Meaning, that we do not exclude the *literal*.

Our Argument from the typical Interpretation of the ancient Rites, and the allegorical Explication of ancient History, must depend upon the Supposition of their having been literally transacted; and in vain shall we look after the hidden Meaning, if the Fact under which it is said to be concealed be fictitious. If the History of the Creation and the Fall of Man be by themselves supposed to be fictitious, no Allegory, that is built upon them, can have any weight. And if the Rites of the Mosaic Law were not literally prescribed, it can be to little purpose to look after their Significancy.

Lastly, it should also be remembred, that where we have not the express Authority of some inspired Writer, to support our Interpretation, we are not to lay any great Stress on any single Type or Allegory, but to go through the whole System of Revelation, preserving the Harmony of all its Parts, and ever giving Preference to those Expositions, which best suit with the uniform Design of the whole taken together.

And from these same Considerations, which have been thus far urged to give Satisfaction to the second Objection, we may also proceed to satisfy the

(3.) *Third* that remains, (*viz.*) that this way of interpreting the Scriptures by Types and Allegories, is inconsistent with itself.

To which I answer, that if in assigning such mystical Interpretation, we keep within the Limitations before laid down; if we keep the Analogy of the Faith constantly in view; if we do not advance our mystical Interpretations upon the Ruins of the literal; if we lay not too great a Stress on any single Type or Allegory, but preserve the Harmony of all the Parts of Revelation, there can be little Danger of Inconsistency among us.

Or if in some Particulars there should be different Interpretations, yet they shall not affect the great Concerns of Religion; where the Analogy of Faith is preserved, there can be nothing contrary to Faith admitted; and if in other Respects there should be some Variety, it is what happens in assigning the literal Sense of Scripture, as well as the typical or allegorical. So that if the difference of Interpretations be any Objection against the Method of interpreting, it will lie against every Method that shall ever be proposed.

I come now in the

(3.) *Third* Place to shew how apt and natural this Method of Interpretation is, and with what Beauty and Significancy it displays and unfolds the ancient Mysteries.

I shall here confine myself to that internal Evidence which arises from the Fitness of such Interpretation, from its being suited to the *Genius* of the *Jewish* Discipline, and giving a most consistent Account of the End and Purport of the old Oeconomy. And in order to shew this, it will be enough if the main Heads of the ceremonial Law may be fairly deduced to this View, and accounted for by this Method of Interpretation. To this purpose, I would

would take the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, with other Places of the New Testament, for my Guide, in these three essential Instances of the *Levitical* Worship, *viz.* the *Tabernacle* or *Temple*; the Method of worshipping by *Sacrifice* and Incense, and the Administrator, which was in some Cases the High Priest alone, and in the rest, any of the Sons of *Aaron*.

But here I must premise, that it is declared in general, that the ritual Precepts of the Law were calculated with a view to the *Messiah*, that its great End was to point out the principal Parts of his Office and Character, together with those Benefits which the Church was to expect from him.

Therefore they are wrong who affirm that the principal of the *Jewish* Rites were ordained in imitation of the *Heathen* Superstition, to which the People had been so long addicted, that God thought fit to indulge their Fondness for outward Ceremonies, and transfer to the Worship of himself, what had been abused to Idolatry. For the Old Testament labours every where to reclaim the *Jews* from every Appearance of idolatrous Practices. And can we imagine, that God should prescribe the Ceremonies of such idolatrous Worship, in order to indulge in his People that Fondness to them, which was one principal End of all his Discipline to extirpate.

As then it is asserted without Proof, that many of these Rites had been used in Ages elder than *Moses*, and applied originally to idolatrous Worship; so if that Fact could be maintained of any of them, some other End of the Resemblance ought to be assigned, which may consist with the general Tenor of the Old Testament, and not this of a Compliance, which contradicts itself. It might be rather supposed, that one of the *Mosaic* Usages

had been in uſe among the ancient Patriarchs, which was true of *Sacrifice*; and as the Nations that ſunk into Idolatry had not loſt all Footſteps of this traditional Religion, ſo without Doubt it was carefully preſerved among the *Hebrews*, and God thought not fit to diſcard it in his legal Worſhip. And ſince a conſiſtent End of the whole is aſſigned by the Writers of the New Teſtament, referring the Origin of all to God, and their Interpretation is confirmed by Miracles; we ought to admit the Senſe which they have given, and eſteem that the juſt account of the Ordinances of the legal Diſpenſation.

This allegorical Genius of the old Law is ſet forth by St. *Paul* under the Type of *Moſes* receiving a *Glory* in *his Countenance* by converſing with God, which when the *People were not able* to behold, he veiled it from their Sight. *Moſes* is here propoſed as the Miniſter of the former Diſpenſation, whoſe Miniſtry was not without its *Glory*, as it revealed the Will of God, and pointed out to *Chriſt*, the *Mediator of a better Covenant*. But ſince the People *could not ſtedfaſtly look* into this great End of the Law, it had a Veil caſt over it till the *Time* was to come, *when that Veil ſhould be taken away, and all with open Face behold, as in a Glaſs, the Glory of the Lord.*

The *Jews* themſelves, though they deny the Chriſtian Expoſition, yet are not backward to acknowledge ſome allegorical Meaning to lie concealed under the Precepts of the Law. (*Maimon. More Nevoch. ex verſion. Buxtorf. par.* 3. *cap.* 9.)

And whilſt the *Jews* own a myſtical Meaning, and the Goſpel has ſhewn *Chriſt* to be the End or Purport of the *Moſaic* Diſcipline, we may with more Confidence ſearch into Particulars.

lars. And though all Particulars are not expreſly applied by the Writers of the New Teſtament, yet the Specimen which they have given, authoriſes us to enquire after the reſt; eſpecially ſince they have aſſured us, that the whole had the ſame Deſign. There is not indeed the ſame Certainty in thoſe Particulars, which are ſearched out by human Sagacity, as on thoſe of which expreſs Application has been made by ſome inſpired Writers. But yet when they are not urged apart by themſelves, but in Conjunction with the whole Syſtem of ritual Religion, not to gainſay the Applications that are made in Scripture, but conformably to them, there is then a Weight in ſuch Interpretations, they diſplay the Harmony of the *Moſaic* Precepts, and ſhew how the ſame Wiſdom, which had been more evidently taught of ſome, did really run throughout, and give Sanction to the whole.

Now as *all the Treaſures of Wiſdom are hid in Chriſt*, ſo there is great Variety of Benefits in his Religion which centre in himſelf. We are not to wonder, if on the one Hand many of the legal Preſcriptions ſhould be calculated to ſignify the ſame Myſtery, and on the other Hand, variety of Myſteries ſhould be referred to by one and the ſame Rite.

Thus much being premiſed, I proceed more particularly to give ſome Specimen of them in the Inſtances abovementioned.

1. *Firſt* then I propoſed to explain the Myſtery of the *Tabernacle*, afterwards the *Temple*. In theſe Places God was pleaſed to vouchſafe a ſymbolical Manifeſtation of his Preſence. From whence the Tabernacle had its Name *Miſchan*, as being the *Habitation* of God; and the like Name of *Shechinah* is given by the *Jewiſh* Writers to that bright Appearance of divine Glory which reſided in it. This

figured out that Mystery to be accomplished when the Son of God should cloath himself with Flesh, who is therefore said *to make his Tabernacle* (σκηνῶσαι) *with us*; to have the *Fulness of the Godhead*, (answering to that Fulness of *Glory* sometimes manifested in the Old Sanctuary) *dwelling* in him *bodily*.

Again, the Temple was also fitted to denote every private faithful Member of *Christ*, who are the *Temples of God*, and in whom *Christ* dwells, and sanctifies and enlightens by the gracious Influence and Direction of his Spirit. (*See* Rom. viii. 9, 10. 1 Cor. vi. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 5. Eph. ii. 20, 21, 22.)

The Skins and baser Materials which covered the Sanctuary, whilst its inward Utensils were of great Value, figured out our Redeemer, who, tho' in his outward Form, may appear *despised and rejected of Men*; yet by Faith we can easily *behold his Glory, the Glory as of the only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth*. So also was figured out his Church by them, which though outwardly despised, *is all glorious within*.

Once more, the Condition of the *Israelites* being at first moveable, the Tabernacle was of such Materials, as might be easily removed; till at last when they were in peaceable Possession of the promised Land, its sacred Utensils were fixed in the *Temple*. So *Christ* was in this World, as in a *Wilderness*, not *having where to lay his Head*; but being *raised from the Dead*, he sitteth at God's right Hand, in a State of endless Triumph. So also is his Church in a State of Travel at present, but shall hereafter be translated to a State of everlasting Rest and Glory.

But besides this general Consideration of the whole Sanctuary taken together, we may find Mysteries

Mysteries concealed in every part of it. The great Court which surrounded the Sanctuary, and in which were the *Laver*, and the *Altar*, &c. fitly represents to us the visible Church of *Christ*, which has its own Enclosure, separating its Members from the *Heathen* World, admitting them to the Privilege of outward Worship, but still retaining them in Hope of better Things that are invisible.

The *Altar* and the *Laver*, which were situated in this Court, were *Types* of *Christ*, the one as he is the *Fountain opened to the House of* David, *Zech.* xiii. 1. the other as he is our only Mediator. 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. At the same Time the *Laver* prefigured *Baptism*, called the *Laver of Regeneration*, and the *Altar* the *Eucharist* as the *Memorial* of that Atonement *Christ* has made for Sin. *Luke* xxii. 19. The sacred Fire is a Type of that *eternal* Spirit, *through* whom *Christ offered himself without Spot to God*, and without whose sanctifying Vertue the Oblation of ourselves will never be acceptable. The *Horns* of the *Altar* may set forth the Power and Acceptance of our Redeemer, *Luke* i. 69. *Heb.* vii. 5.

So much for the Court, by which the Sanctuary was encompassed. The Sanctuary was divided into two Parts, the one called the *Holy Place*, the other the *Holy of Holies*. None entered the *Holy Place* but the *Sons of Aaron*, who do figure out all the true and faithful Members of *Christ*'s invisible Church, who are declared to be a *royal Priesthood*, and to be made *Kings* and *Priests unto God*, inasmuch as they are admitted to those unseen and spiritual Advantages, to which the carnal Professors can never penetrate. In another Respect they prefigure the Ministers of *Christ*, who negotiate the Affair of our Salvation.

Here was the Table of *Shewbread* to denote Christ set forth as the *Bread of Life* to his Servants.

Here also was the *golden Candlestick*, with *seven* burning *Lamps* to denote the Illuminations and Graces of the Holy Ghost. They were lighted every Evening and required to continue till Morning, to intimate, that that Light might have its Use, during the Night of ritual Types, but might be superseded when *Christ* should *arise* to *give* us stronger Light. 2 *Pet.* i. 19.

Lastly, here was the *golden Altar of Incense* in the neareſt Situation to the *Holiest* of all, whose *Horns* were yearly sprinkled with the Blood of Sacrifices, but whose daily Use was the burning of *sweet Odours*, not only as a Symbol of the People's Prayers daily offered, but likewise of that continual Intercession of *Christ before the Throne of* Heaven, which alone can render our Prayers acceptable.

Beyond this *holy Place* was the *Holiest of all*, the Emblem of the highest Heaven, containing the most significant Symbol of divine Glory and of Christ in his State of Exaltation. This was divided from the former Apartment by a *Veil*, as that was from the inner Court, which as it denoted the Concealment of these Mysteries under the Darkness of legal Shadows, and the *veiling* of divine Glory in the Person of *Christ*, under a Covering of Flesh; so the *High Priest* turning it by and *entering once every Year*, imported that that Obscurity should be removed, and Gospel Truths be openly revealed, when a *Forerunner* in our Name should *enter into Heaven itself to appear in the Presence of God for us.*

Within this Veil was the most remarkable Symbol of the old Oeconomy, the *Ark of the Covenant*, and over it was that Manifestation of divine *Glory*, distinguished

distinguished by the Name of *Shechinah*. This seems to be that Throne of God mentioned. *Jer.* xvii. 12. *Ezek.* xliii. 7. And what could it more aptly signify than *Christ* represented as our King and Governor, through whom God is gracious to his People. But whereas this *Ark* was hid from vulgar Eyes, which could not penetrate to look into the Mysteries of our Redemption, we find the *Temple of God* is represented in the New Testament to be laid *open in Heaven*, (Rev. xi. 19.) so that *the Ark of his Testament was seen in it*. Immediately then upon Christ's Expiration, the *Veil of the Temple* was *rent in twain from the Top to the Bottom*, to import that the legal Mysteries are now unveiled, and those Benefits conferred in Truth, which were formerly dispensed in Types and Figures.

I need not after this enlarge upon the Things that were reposed in or near the *Ark*, *The Tables of the Covenant*, *the Book of the Law*, the *Pot of Manna* and Aaron's *Rod* that *budded*, which might fitly imply with what Care we ought to keep and observe God's Commandments, and how punctually they were fulfilled by our Redeemer, how *Christ is the living Bread that came down from Heaven*, figured by the *Manna which fed the Fathers in the Wilderness*, and they who hold a constant and invisible Communion with him, are admitted to a farther Privilege, in partaking with him of the *hidden Manna* typified by the incorruptible *Manna* within the *Veil*, of which none under the Law might eat: Lastly, how his Priesthood is efficacious, so that though put to Death in the Flesh, yet like *Aaron's Rod* he quickned and bore Fruit, *and remaineth a Priest for ever, after the Power of an endless Life.*

(2.) I am to consider what was the Method of worshipping by *Sacrifice* and *Incense*.

Of *Sacrifices* some were of the Fruits of the Earth, as Corn and Wine and Oil, which had the Name of *Mincha* and *Nesek*, *Meat* and *Drink Offerings*; Others were taken from among clean Beasts and Birds; and these besides having their Blood partly sprinkled about the Altar, or towards the Mercy-Seat, and partly poured out at the Bottom of the Altar, were either consumed whole as *Burnt-Offerings*, or else had certain *Segments* offered in that Manner, whilst the rest was disposed, in Proportion to the different Nature of the *Sacrifice*, either burnt without the Camp, and afterwards without the City of *Jerusalem*, or else eaten by the Priests alone within the holy Place, or partly by the Priests, and partly by the Offerers. (See *Outram de Sacrific.*)

Some of the *Sacrifices* were *eucharistical*, others, *euctical*, to pray for the Continuance of Blessings; others *expiatory* designed to make Satisfaction and Atonement for Sin.

Some of their *Sacrifices* seem to have partook of every Kind, though from their principal View they are referred to one, rather than another. And of all of them it is observed, that they had something of an expiatory Vertue, insomuch that *Burnt-Offerings* are said to *make Atonement*, Lev. i. 9, 13, 17. from whence they are represented to have made a *sweet Savour unto the Lord*. The same is to be argued from the Ceremony of sprinkling the Blood, which was used in these as well as in the *Sin* and *Trespass-Offering*, the declared Use whereof was altogether *expiatory*. See *Lev.* xvii. 11.

Now that these had no real but only a symbolical Efficacy in the Atonement of Sin, will appear both from the Nature of the Thing itself, and from the Terms of the *Mosaic* Institution. *Heb.* x. 4. *Psal.* xlix. 7, 8. *it is not possible that the Blood of Bulls*, &c.

&c. should put away Sin, much less could brute Beasts give Merit to their Sufferings. The Matters to be expiated were generally either legal Impurities or involuntary Trespasses, and if some willful Immoralities were allowed the Benefit of Expiation, they were such as were done with less aggravating Circumstances, whilst the more grievous Violations of Duty were punished by the Death of the Offender, who had no *special Sacrifice* appointed for him. I say no *special Sacrifice*, because where the Matter was concealed, or the Law not duly executed, it does not appear that such Offenders stood excluded from all Benefit of that general Expiation, which was annually made on the great Day of Atonement, as well by the scape Goat, as by bloody Sacrifices. *Lev.* xvi. 21. But then having no express Application to such Cases, and having them exposed to the Rigour of the Law, is an Argument of the Weakness of legal Sacrifices, and the Want of some more perfect Sacrifice to purge us from all Sin. The *Priest* and the *Altar* appointed for such Atonement were manifestly chargeable with Imperfection, and wanted to be cleansed themselves.

And after all the Effect was plainly symbolical and leads us to acknowledge the Benefit of Christ's Redemption, and those invaluable Privileges he has purchased for us. That temporal Death which was denounced by the Law, will denote that everlasting Punishment to which Sinners are exposed; the legal Impurity will denote the Defilement of Sin; the outward Admission to the Service of the Temple will denote our spiritual Privilege of Access unto God, as well in the present Ordinances of his Church, as in the future Inheritance of his eternal Kingdom. And all this being performed by the Oblation of *Sacrifices*, clean and perfect in their Kind, will import our *being redeemed with the pre-*

cious Blood of Christ, *See* 1 Pet. i. 19. Heb. ix. 14. Eph. v. 2. Heb. ix. 24.

I proceed now to the,

(2.) Third Instance, under which I was to consider the mystical View and Meaning of the Levitical Worship, and that respects the Administrator, which was in some Cases the *High Priest* alone, and in the rest any of the Sons of *Aaron*.

We have already observed how strictly the Priesthood was confined to the Family of *Aaron*; and as this did figure out all sincere Members of Christ, who are set apart from the rest of Mankind to be *a royal Priesthood* offering up spiritual Sacrifices; so more especially did it in another View figure out *Christ* their Head making a perfect Expiation for Sin. The Sacrifice he offered was his human Nature, paying a perfect Obedience to God, and submitting to Death. For as the Law could do nothing of itself, so it was forced to lay together a Variety of Figures, which under different Views, might represent to the Church the one great *Antitype*, who is himself our *Altar*, *Priest*, and *Sacrifice*.

He was not of the Family of *Aaron* to import that his *Priesthood* is not of the same Order. But there were such Lines of Resemblance between the Sons of *Aaron* and him, as were fit to be observed between the Type and the Reality. The Descent from *Aaron* was not of itself sufficient, except they were descended from such honourable Marriage as the Law prescribed, to legitimate their sacred Services, and qualify them to approach to God. This shadowed out the divine Generation of the Son of God, together with that immaculate Conception of a Virgin, whereby he submitted to be made the Son of Man. *Heb.* v. 5.

The

The *Aaronical Priests* were to be free from any Blemish or Defect of Body, and to be of a religious Frame of Mind, which did but faintly represent the unexampled Purity and Perfection of our great *High-Priest*. Heb. vii. 26, 27, 28.

The Method of Consecrating and Appointing the *legal Priests*, was also calculated to Figure out the Perfection of our great *High-Priest*, who had all that internal Virtue and Sanctity, which they could only signify by outward Ceremony. The external *Washing of Water*, at the same time that it upbraided their natural Impurity, did withal betoken the Necessity of unspotted Holiness in him who should approach to God. To their figurative Services a figurative Cleansing might suffice.

But the spiritual Service of the New Testament required a Priest that should be absolutely clean, through whom we may draw nigh unto God, having our *Consciences purged from dead Works*.

Again, the putting on of the Sacred Vestments was another Rite of Consecration, which being partly *Linnen*, were fit to represent the perfect and unspotted Righteousness of *Christ*, for which we are accepted of the Father, who are therefore said to *put on Christ*, Rom. xiii. 14. and to be *arrayed in fine Linnen*, Rev. xix. 8. And partly being adorned with Gold and Gems and curious Workmanship inscribed with the Character of *Holiness*, and the Names of the twelve Tribes, and figure out the transcendent Glory and Dignity of our Redeemer, communicated in a fit Proportion to his faithful Members, who are in him a *royal Priesthood*, together with his care over them as the *Israel of God*.

The Unction of the holy Oil did not only signify the Graces of the Holy Spirit, but him, in a more particular manner, who is emphatically styled the *Messiah*, or *Anointed* of the Lord. *Psal.* xlv. 7.

Once

Once more, in the first Consecration of *Aaron*, Exod. xxix. there were *Sacrifices* offered, first for *Expiation* of their Sins, then for *Burnt-Offerings*, and lastly for *Peace-Offerings*. Admitting them, as it were, into the Family, and to the Table of their God. In these *Moses* acting the Part of a Priest, was an illustrious Type of *Christ*, as well in granting a divine Commission to the Ministers of the New Testament, as in sanctifying all the faithful Members of his Church, and qualifying them to draw near unto God.

So far of the Appointment of the Priests. The Office of the Persons thus appointed was chiefly exercised in *Sacrifice* and *Incense*.

I have formerly shewn how these prefigured the Sacrifice and Intercession of Christ: But since we are now considering him under the Character of the Priest that offered it, I shall attend more particularly to those more solemn Circumstances with which the Oblation of the *High-Priest* was performed the Day of the annual Atonement.

At that Time besides the two Rams for Burnt-Offering, and the Scape-Goat which was sent alive into the Wilderness, there was a Bullock and a Goat appointed for Sin-Offerings, (*Lev.* xvi. 3. 28.) of whose Blood the High-Priest having open'd the *Veil* of the most holy Place, sprinkled before the Mercy Seat, proceeding then to consume the Fat upon the Altar, and send their Carcases to be burnt without the Camp or Gates of *Jerusalem*.

How beautiful is the Application of all this to the *Christian* Scheme! The Blood as being the Life of the Beast, might fitly figure out the reasonable Soul, and therefore *Christ*, when considered as our *Victim*, is said to shed his Blood for us, when considered as a rational *Agent*, he is said to *pour out his Soul unto Death*. At the same Instant that Christ extend-

ed

ed on the Altar of his Cross, expired without the Gates of *Jerusalem*, the *Veil of the Temple was rent in twain* to import, that what was anciently figured out by those Mysteries was now accomplished; that his divine Nature putting off the *Veil* of Flesh, and carrying his Soul within the *Veil* of Heaven, presented it before the Father as the Price of our Redemption.

The Ceremony of the High-Priest performed once *every Year*, was fully expressive of this Atonement of *Christ* made for all. *Heb.* ix. 25, *&c.* Which being perfect, his Body was not, like the legal Victims, to remain under the Sentence of Death, nor therefore to be burnt, but to testify the Conquest he had made by a speedy Resurrection, and Exaltation to the highest Glory. Then was the whole Humanity presented before God, and the Heavens have received him, not only as our Priest to offer, and intercede, but also as the Lamb, that had been slain for us.

It is in the Continuance of this Oblation, that his Intercession consists; whereby he makes Application of his own Merit to obtain the Pardon of our Sins, and withal to recommend our Addresses at the Throne of Grace, represented by the *Incense* of the *High-Priest* offered as the Symbol of the People's Prayers. In Allusion to which the great *Angel* of the Covenant is mention'd by St. *John* to have a *golden Censer and much Incense*. Rev. viii. 3, 4.

This may suffice to illustrate how commodious a Sense arises from the *Christian* Exposition of the ancient Ceremonies, which being added to other Arguments taken from the Drift and Genius of the Old Testament, and enforced by the Miracles, by which the Writings of the New Testament, and consequently this Exposition is supported; there can be no Reason to reject a Method of Interpreting so amply

amply recommended, both by its internal and external Evidence. If there might be any Doubt of ſome Particulars, when taken by themſelves, yet when the whole Syſtem is ſurveyed together, ſo harmonious in all its parts, Diſplaying ſuch Beauty in the ancient Inſtitutions, as well as giving Teſtimony to the Doctrine of the Goſpel; and all this confirmed by every ſort of Evidence by which the Books of the New Teſtament are atteſted; there can be after this no reaſonable Doubt, as to the Purport of the whole, which was clearly calculated to lead Men to the Knowledge of Chriſt, and had no farther Significancy after his appearing.

I have not particularly ſtated the Evidences of the New Teſtament, which do at the ſame Time confirm the Expoſition given of the Old; what I pretend to, is, that there are reaſonable Inducements to acquieſce in this Expoſition of the Old Teſtament, even abſtracted from the Authority of the New; but when that was taken into the Account, what was rational before, becomes certain. They are Arguments which add Luſtre to each other; for as the Authority of the New Teſtament confirms this Expoſition of the Old; ſo this Expoſition, when ſhewn to be rational and conſiſtent, prepares us to receive the New Teſtament itſelf with greater Reverence.

Here therefore I conclude my Subject, as having only undertaken to propoſe thoſe Evidences of the Chriſtian Religion which are to be gathered from the Old Teſtament. And I hope I have ſhewn, that however the fuller Knowledge of this Myſtery might be reſerved for the Goſpel Times, ſome Notice of ſo great a Truth had been diſpenſed from the Beginning, and was opened more and more through the ſucceſſive Ages of Time.

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ERRATA.

VOL. II. pag. 195. l. 5. for *Arguments*, read *Parts*.
Vol. III. p. 221. l. 31. for *end*, r. *tend*.
Vol. IV. p. 44. l. 26. r. *The Credibility of the Hiſtory of the Children of* Iſrael. P. 173. l. 32--33. for *of that*, r. *to be*.

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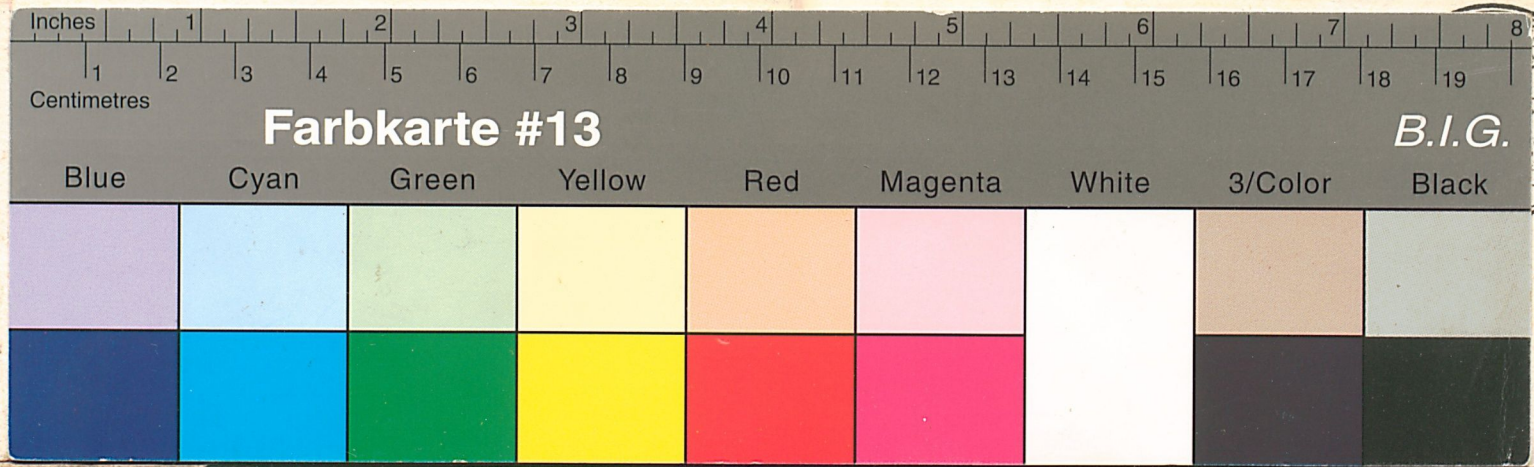
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