

A TREATIES ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

Taken from Sermons and Tracts Volume III
By Dr. John Gill

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY,
STATED AND VINDICATED.
1778

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*Introduction; With the proof of the unity of the Divine Essence
or, that there is but one God*

THE INTRODUCTION;

Being the Substance of several Discourses on that important Subject;
reduced into the Form of a Treatise.

CHAPTER 1

*Introduction; With the proof of the unity of the Divine Essence, or, that there
is but one God.*

THE Doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence is, without controversy, a great mystery of godliness. The ancient Jews used to call it the *sublime mystery*,¹ and sometimes the *mystery of all mysteries*²; which if a man did not endeavour to make him feel acquainted with, it would have been better for him if he had never been created: And sometimes they called it the mystery of faith; a phrase which the apostle uses in 1 Timothy 3:9. where he makes it one part of the qualification of a deacon, to” hold the *mystery of the faith*³ in a pure conscience”. By which, perhaps, agreeable to the use of the phrase among the Jews, he may chiefly design the doctrine of the Trinity. And if this is to be held in a pure conscience by deacons, much more by the ministers of Christ, who are stewards of the mysteries of God, and whole business it is to make known the mystery of the gospel to others.

This is a doctrine of pure revelation. That there is a God, and that there is but one God, who is a Being possessed of all divine perfections, may be known by the light of nature: But that there is a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, who are distinct, the not divided from each other, is what natural reason could never have discovered. The books of the Old and New Testament contain the “sure word of prophecy, to which we do well if we “take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place”. This is and ought to be our guide in all such abstruse and mysterious doctrines; if we leave this, and are led and governed by the false reasonings of our carnal minds, no wonder if we run our selves into mazes, and their find it difficult to get clear. “To the law and to the testimony, if *any* speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them⁴”. (Isaiah 8:20) Since this doctrine is revealed in scripture, it ought to be an article of our faith; though it may

1 ראהו רוא דא עלאה in Genesis fol. I. col. 3. Ed. Sultzbach, fol. 3. Ed. Cremon.

2 רוא דכל רוי Zohar in Exodus fol. 66. col. 3. fol. 71. col. 4. Ed. Cremon.

3 רוא דמהמוחא Ibid.

4 Ifa. viii.20.

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be attended with some difficulties, which we cannot account for. That it is a doctrine of great importance, needs no other evidence, though other may easily be given, than the great opposition which Satan has made against it. He, indeed, has recourse to many stratagems, wiles, and cunning devices to support his own interest, and hurt the interest of Christ. But there are two ways more especially, which he has taken for this purpose: One is, to depreciate the divine Being in one or other of the three glorious persons wherein it subsists, in their characters or offices:

And the other is, to magnify and exalt the reason of man, his intellectual powers, and the freedom of his will, in spiritual and divine things. For while man is set up as a creature invested with powers and abilities to convert himself, to do every thing that is spiritually good, and that may conduce to his present or future happiness; the design of which is, to throw a veil on the glories of divine grace, and render the merits of Christ, and the operations of the spirit, unnecessary: At other times he employs all his strength and cunning, either to destroy the proper Deity of the Son and Spirit, and to bring into contempt their respective characters, offices and works; or to introduce a total confusion into the sacred Trinity, by denying a distinction of persons in the Godhead, the whole of which may be properly called anti-christianism; for “he is Antichrist that denieth the father and the Son”. He that says⁵, The father is the son, and the son is the father, and allows of no distinction between them, confounds them both; and by confounding them both, tacitly denies that there is either. Now it being my present design to treat of the doctrine of the Trinity, I shall observe the following method in discoursing on this argument:

I. I shall endeavour to prove the unity of the divine essence, or that there is but one God.

II. That there is a plurality in the Godhead.

III. That this plurality is neither more nor fewer than three, which three are the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. And,

⁵ Viderint igitur Antichristi, qui negant patrem & filium. Negant enim patrem, dum eundem filium dicant, & negant fillum, dum eundem patrem credunt, dando illis quae non runt, auferendo quae sunt. *Tertullian.* adv. Prax. c. 30.

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IV. I shall consider the several characters, the proper Deity, and distinct personality of each of these three.

I. I shall endeavour to prove the unity of the divine essence; or, that there is but one God. This is a truth which the wiser fort⁶ of the heathens, their philosophers and poets, have assented to, who laughed at, and derided the polytheism of their own people: The Jews have always retained it even to this Day, as an article in their Creed; and no wonder they should, since It is written, as with a sun-beam, in the writings of the Old Testament: And as for us Christians, “we know, as the Apostle says, (1 Corinthians 8:4) “That an idol is nothing in the world; and that there is none other God but one”. So that we are all Unitarians in a sense, though not in the same sense. The method I shall take in discoursing on this head, will be this:

First, I shall endeavour to prove the assertion, that there is but one God.

Secondly, Explain in what sense we use the words, when we say, there is but one God.

Firstly, I shall endeavour to prove the assertion. Now that there is but one God, will admit of proof from the consideration of the being and perfections of God, and his relation to his creatures; as well as from the testimonies both of the Old and of the New Testament.

1st . That there is but one God, may be concluded from the consideration of the being and perfections of God, and his relation to his creatures.

It may be argued from the necessary existence of God. He that is God, necessarily exists: If he does not necessarily exist, his existence must be owing to some cause, which cause must be either himself or another; not another, for then he that is the cause of his existence, must be God, and not he himself: And if he was the cause of his own existence, then he must be, and not be at the same moment, or be before he was; either of which is a contradiction in terms. It remains then, that God exists necessarily: And if he exists necessarily, then there is but one God; for a reason cannot be

⁶ Mercurius, Trismegistus, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Proelus, Plotinus, Porphyry, Aristotle, Epictetus, Seneca, Cicero, Plutarch, Homer, Hesiod, Theognis, Sophocles, etc. *Marnaeus* de verit. Christ.

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given, why there should be more than one that necessarily exists.

The same truth may be proved from the eternity of God. He that is God, is eternal; he is before all things; he is from everlasting to everlasting; he is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, and without either; he only hath immortality; eternity is peculiar to him; so as it cannot be ascribed to any other being; nor can there be more than one eternal, and therefore no more than one God: For if, as he says, “before him there was no God formed; neither shall there be after him” (Isaiah 43:10) and again, that there is “no God with him”; (Deuteronomy 32:39) then it follows, there can be none but himself.

The immensity and infinity of God are strong proofs of his unity. God is infinite in his being and perfections: “His understanding is infinite”, (Psalm 147:5) and so are his power, his goodness, his justice and his holiness, etc. As his eternity is that perfection by which he is not bounded by time, so his immensity, or infinity, is that perfection by which he is not bounded, or circumscribed by space. He that is God is every where; there’s no fleeing from his presence; he fills heaven and earth with it; and by filling them, is not contained in them: “The heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain” (1 Kings 8:27) him. Now more infinities than one there cannot be: If we suppose two, either the one must reach unto, comprehend, and include the other, or it must not; if it does not, then it is not infinite and immense, and so not God; if it does reach unto, comprehend, and include the other; then that which is included by it, is finite, and so not God. In short, there cannot be more infinities than one; and if there cannot be more infinities than one, then there cannot be more gods than one.

The argument will receive some strength from the consideration of God’s omnipotence. He, that is God, is almighty; can do all things; sits in the heavens, and does whatsoever he pleases: And if there is one that can do all things, what need is there of more? or what reason can be given why more should be supposed? The word, almighty, admits of no degrees; it cannot be said that there is one that is almighty, and another that is more almighty, and another that is most almighty; no, there is but one almighty, and therefore but one God.

The goodness of God may be brought in to support this truth. He that is

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God is good originally, and essentially; he is the fountain and cause of all goodness in and towards others; he is good, and he does good; all the streams of goodness flow from him; and if what our Lord says is true, as it certainly is, “there is none good but one, that is, God”: (Matthew 19:17) Then it follows, that if there is but one good, there is but one God.

I might go on to prove the unity of the divine being from the perfection of God. He that is God is perfect in his nature and works. If we suppose more gods than one, there must be some essential difference, by which they are distinguished one from another; and that essential difference must be either an excellency, or an imperfection. If an imperfection, then he, to whom it belong, cannot be God; because he is not perfect; if it is an excellency, he, in whom it is, is thereby distinguished from all others, in whom it is wanting; and so can only be God: Take it which way you will, there can be but one God. Moreover, he, that is God, is *EI Shaddai*, God all-sufficient; he stands in need of nothing, nor can he receive any thing from others: “Who hath first given to him: and it shall be recompensed to him again”? (Romans 11:35) Now all-sufficiency cannot be properly said of more than one.

Besides, there is but one first cause of all things, and therefore but one God. Men, from the consideration of effects, arrive to the knowledge of causes, and from the consideration of them, to the cause or causes of them, until they come to the first cause of all things, in which they fix and center, and which they truly call God: And thus by the things that are made, the Gentiles might come at the knowledge of the eternal power and Godhead, or of the unity of the divine essence or being; so that they are without excuse. Now, as there is no reason to believe that there is any more than one first cause of all things; so neither is there any reason to believe that there is more than one God.

In fine, this may be concluded from the relations of God to his creatures. He is their creator, their king, their judge, and lawgiver: Now there is but one creator, who is the first cause of all things. There is but one King of Kings, and Lord of lords; but one, whose is the kingdom, and who is the governor among the nations. From the government of the world we have no reason to conclude that there is any more than one governor; neither are there any more lawgivers than one, who is able to save and to destroy; and, but one judge of all the earth, who will do right. As God is one in his nature

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or essence, and cannot be multiplied or divided, so he is one in his relation to his creatures.

But I go on;

2dly. That there is but one God may be sufficiently proved from the books of the Old and New Testament.

1. From the books of the Old Testament. That famous and remarkable passage in Deuteronomy 6:4. fully expresses this truth: "Hear, O *Israel*, the Lord our God is one Lord". This is one of the sections of the law which the Jews put into their Tephillin or Phylacteries, and bind on their foreheads and arms, to put them in remembrance of their duty. This place of⁷ scripture they read every morning and night, with great devotion; and at every turn, object it to the Christians, as asserting the unity of God, to the exclusion of the doctrine of a Trinity of persons; though to little purpose, as I shall show hereafter. The prophecy of *Isaiah* abounds with proofs of this truth. In *Isaiah* 43:10. God says: "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me". And in *Isaiah* 44:6. "Thus saith the Lord, the King of *Israel*, and his redeemer, the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God". And in ver. 8. the latter part: "Is there a God besides me? yea, there is no God, I know not any". And in *Isaiah* 45:5, 6. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there's no God besides me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me, I am the Lord, and there is none else". And ver. 14 latter part "Surely God is in thee, and there is none else, there is no God". So ver. 18, 21, 22. The same may be observed in *Isaiah* 46:9. "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is none else, I am God, and there is none like me".

These are some of the proofs of the unity of the divine being from the Old Testament; and therefore we need not wonder that the Jews so closely adhere to this article.

2. The New Testament is as full and as express for this as the Old Testament. Our Lord Jesus Christ not only cites (*Mark* 12:20) that text in Deuteronomy 6:4. but addresses God after this manner, *John* 17:3. "This is life eternal to

⁷ Vid. Talmud, Beracot, fol. 2. 1, 2.

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know thee, the only true God”. And the apostles from him, as well as from the writings of the Old Testament declare, That there is but one God. The apostle *Paul*. “It is one God, which says, in *Romans* 3:30. shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the un-circumcision through faith”: And in *1 Corinthians* 8:6. “To us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus, by whom are all things, and we by him”. So *Ephesians* 4:6. “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all”: And in that famous text, *1 Timothy* 2:5. “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”. And to close this account, the apostle *James* commends persons for assenting to this truth, when he says, *James* 2: 19. “Thou believest that there is one God, thou dost well; the devils also believe and tremble”. I have not made any remarks on these texts of scripture, because I shall have occasion to consider them hereafter, and give the sense of them.

I now proceed, Secondly, To explain the sense of this article, or show what we mean, when we say, that there is but one God. And,

1st , We do not understand this in an *Arian* sense; that there is but one supreme God, and two subordinate or inferior ones. Those phrases of scripture, which express the unity of God, are not so much levelled against the notion of more supreme gods than one⁸, this being a notion which could never much prevail among the Gentiles; nor is there much danger of people falling into it, seeing the notion is so absurd and contradictory; but they are chiefly levelled against the vast: number of petty and inferior gods, which men have been inclined to embrace and worship. Nor can any reason be given why two inferior gods should not stand as much excluded as two hundred, by there expressions; and why we may not as well allow of the latter as of the former. Either there two inferior gods are creators, or creatures; if they are creators, they are the one supreme God; for to be a creator is peculiar to the supreme God: If they are creatures, as there is no medium between a creator and a creature, then “they are the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth”, and therefore shall “perish from the earth, and from under there heavens”: Nor ought they to have religious worship and adoration given them; because to do so would be a breach of that divine command, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me”; (*Exodus*

⁸ Vid. Dr. Waterland’s sermons, p. 125. 126. And his first defense of queries, p. 4, 5.

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20:3) and would be serving the creature more, or besides the creator, complained of in the Gentiles, *Romans 1:25*. Nor,

2. Do we understand it in a Sabellian sense, that God is but one person. For though there is but one God, yet there are three persons in the Godhead. Though the Father, Word, and Spirit are one, yet not one person; because if so, they could not be three testifiers. And when our Lord says, (John 10:30) “ I and my Father are one”, he cannot mean one person; for he speaks of himself as distinct from the Father, and of the Father as distinct from himself: And as it would be absurd to say, I and my self are one; which he must mean if there is no distinction of persons; so it would be contradictory to say, that I, who am one, and my Father, who is another, are one person: His meaning is, that they were one in nature, essence, power, and glory. Nor,

3. Do we understand it in a Tritheistic sense; that is to say, That there are three essences, or beings numerically distinct, which may be said to be one essence or being, because they are all three of one and the same nature: Just as three men may be said to be one man, because they are of the same human nature. But this is to make three gods, and not one; their essences being numerically distinct: Whereas,

We say, that there is but one divine essence, which is common and undivided to Father, Son and Spirit; and in this sense we assert that there is but one God. There’s but one essence, though there are different modes of subsisting in it. A late writer has very wrongly represented us as holding,⁹ That the divine nature of Christ is distinct from the father of Spirits; that the divine nature is partly in the father, and partly in the son; and that the son of God, in his divine nature, is a part of God. This we cannot but complain of as an injury done us, and must insist that the author retract it. If he thinks that these are consequences justly deducible from our principles, he ought not however to represent us as holding them, when we at the same time utterly disavow them: This is not fair dealing. We say that the whole divine nature or essence is in the Father; and that the whole divine nature or essence is in the Son; and that the whole divine nature or essence is in the Holy Ghost; and that it is simple and undivided, and common to all three.

Moreover, when we, with the scriptures, assert that there is but one God, we

⁹ The great concern of Jew and Gentile, p. 17, 40, 41, 47, 50.

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mean that there is but one only true God, in opposition to all false gods, to the idols of the Heathens; to all nominal gods, or such that are only called so, and are not so really, are not gods by nature: And also, in opposition to all figurative, or metaphorical gods: Thus angels, civil magistrates, and judges, are called gods, because of their exaltation and dignity. *Moses* is said to be a god to *Pharaoh*, and to *Aaron*: A man's belly is called his god, when he indulges it in an Epicurean way: And Satan, because of his usurped domination, is called the god of this world.

Again, when we say, there is but one God, we thereby design, and so do the scriptures, to include, and not exclude, the deity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; which will appear by considering the forementioned scriptures. To begin with;

Deuteronomy 6:4. "Hear, O *Israel*, the Lord our God is one Lord:" Which words are truly rendered by the author of "The great concern of *Jew* and *Gentile*;" "Hear, O *Israel*, *Jehovah*, our Gods, is one *Jehovah*." And the same author justly observes, That "those words spoken by *Moses*, in so remarkable a stile, and after many ages, by Christ himself, when he appeared in the world, call for the special regard and attention of such, who, in all nations, professed his worship, etc." But the account which this author gives of these words, I must be obliged to make some few scriptures upon. His sense is this¹⁰: "By the first mention of the name *Jehovah*, in this place, I consider him, says he, as the only living and true God, who has one of his names Jealous, and will not give his glory to another: By the second name or character, our Gods, I consider him in our nature, in his Christ, the man his fellow; whom he has taken into union with himself, under the character of the Word; and having so done, in the appointed time, made his soul an offering for sin, for the gracious purpose of our redemption and salvation: And by the third, that is, the same sacred name, *Jehovah*, as the first; I understand the same God, making himself known to his people through his Christ, in whom he was to reconcile the world unto himself." I agree with this author in his sense of the first name, *Jehovah*, as intending the only living and true God; but can by no means assent to his interpretation of the second name or character, as he calls it, our Gods; which he makes to be the same only living and true God, in our nature; which he hath taken into union with himself, under the character of the Word. Now by the only

¹⁰ Ibid. p.7.

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living and true God, he means either God personally, or God essentially considered; not God personally considered, because he disallows of a distinction of persons: I apprehend, therefore, that he means God essentially considered. Now let it be observed, that the divine nature or essence, simply and absolutely considered was not united to the human nature; but as it was in such a mode of subsisting: Or in other words, the divine nature, as it subsisted in the person of the *Logos*, or Word, was united to the human nature. Otherwise, the Father and the Holy Ghost might be truly said to be incarnate, and to suffer, die, and rise again, as well as the Son: Whereas it was not the Father, nor the Holy Ghost, but” the Word that was made flesh, and dwelt among us:” It was not the Father, but the Son that was” made of a woman, made under the law.” And after all, it is somewhat shocking and surprising to me, that the human nature, being united to the divine nature, should make a plurality in the Deity, which is the only reason of this plural expression, our Gods, hinted at by this author: For though the human nature, by its union to the divine nature, is greatly exalted and dignified, yet it is not deified; it is not transmuted into the same nature; it is not made a God of; nor does it give any plurality to the Deity. As for the author’s sense of the third name, *Jehovah*, I must confess, I do not understand it; it is altogether obscure and unintelligible to me; and therefore this author must not be displeased, if I take up his own words, used by him in the same page, and say, It is “a confused meaning, and the language of *Babel*.” The true meaning of the text, I take to be this: *Jehovah*, our Gods, Father, Son, and Spirit, are one *Jehovah*. How the ancient synagogue, or the old Jewish writers understood these words, you will see by an instance or two out of their book of *Zohar*. The author in *Genesis* fol. 1. col. 3. mentioning this text, and the three names, *Jehovah*, *Elohenu*, *Jehovah*, says: “These are the three degrees in respect of the sublime mystery. In the beginning God, or *Elohim*, created, etc. :” And in *Exodus* fol. 18. col. 3, 4, “This is the unity which is called *Jehovah*, the first, *Elohenu*, *Jehovah*; lo! They are all one, and therefore called one, to show that those three names are as one; and therefore we call them one, because they are one; which is made known by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and indeed is abundantly manifest.” And then he explains it by a simile taken from the voice, which though but one, consists of three things: So, says he, “*Jehovah*, *Elohenu*, *Jehovah*; there are one; these three יהוה modes, forms or things, are one.” Once more on *Numbers* fol. 67. col. 3. “There are two, and one is joined unto them, and they are three, and these three are one: These are the two names which

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Israel heard, Jehovah, Jehovah ; and *Elohenu* is joined unto them; and they become the seal of the ring of truth.” I need not observe to you, the sense of Christian writers on this text; therefore will only mention a passage or two out of *Fulgentius*, because they contain some reasoning and argument. He, mentioning this text and the other, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,” makes this remark.¹¹ “Which God, says he, we believe, is not the Father only, but the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. For our faith, by which we serve and fear the one God, is not contracted by a personal union, nor disjoined by a substantial difference, lest we should either, after the manner of the Heathens, worship gods by worshipping different substances; or with Sabellius, deny the Son and the Spirit, not preferring the persons in the Trinity.” And in another place:¹² “If by the Lord God we understand the Father only, then we should neither serve nor worship the Son as God; for whatsoever does not belong to the nature of the Lord God only, ought not to be worshipped by us as God.”

In fine, if the Son, or Holy Ghost, stand excluded from the one Lord, in this text, then they must also stand excluded from that love and affection which we are required to pay him, in the following verse.

The texts, which have been produced out of the prophecy of *Isaiah*, for the proof of the unity of God, are not to be understood exclusive of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost. In *Isaiah* 44:6. one of the texts cited, the only Lord God calls himself the first and the last; which title our Lord Jesus Christ takes to himself, *Revelation* 1:8. which he certainly would never have done, had he stood excluded from the one Lord God in this text, in *Isaiah*. Again, another of these texts, viz. *Isaiah* 45:22, 23. is manifestly applied to Christ, in *Romans* 14:10, 11. which would never have been, had he stood excluded by it. _____

¹¹ *Audi, Israel, Dominus Deus tuus, Dominus unus est, & Dominum Deum tuum adorabis, & illi soli servies. Quem Deum, non patrem solum credimus, sed patrem, & filium, & spiritum sanctum. Fides enim noltra, qua unum Deum colimus & timeamus, nec unione personali contrahitur, nec substantiali diversitate disjungitur: Ne aut Deos Gentiliter colamus diversas colendo substantias, aut filium & spiritum cum Sabellio denegemus, non servantes in trinitate personas. Fulgent. Respons. contr. Arrian. obj. 4.*

¹² *Quod si Dominum Deum, solum patrem accipere debemus, filio ergo nec ut Deo serviamus, nec eum adoremus: Quicquid enim ad naturam Domini Dei solius non pertinet, at Deus a nobis adorari non debet. Fulgent. ib. obj. 10.*

*Introduction; With the proof of the unity of the Divine Essence
or, that there is but one God*

As for the texts in the New Testament, already cited, it will quickly appear, that they are not to be understood to the exclusion of the Deity, either of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost.

John 17:3. is the first passage cited. “This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” Now had Jesus Christ, by this text, stood excluded from the only true God, he would never have joined himself with him¹³. besides, eternal life is made as much to depend upon knowing Jesus Christ, as upon knowing the only true God. And after all, Christ is expressly called the true God, in *John* 5:20. “This is the true God and eternal life:” i.e. This, his Son Jesus Christ; for he is the immediate antecedent to the relative, *this*.

Romans 3:30. where “one God is said to justify the circumcision by faith, etc.” cannot be understood so as to exclude Jesus Christ; seeing it is prophesied of him, in *Isaiah* 53: 11, that he should justify many: Nor of the Holy Ghost; because it is “in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God that we are justified.” If none can forgive sins, or justify sinners, but the one God; and yet the Son, and the Holy Ghost do forgive sins, and justify sinners; then they, with the Father, must be the one God.

As for *1 Corinthians* 8:5,6, where it is said, That “there is but one God the Father.” It ought to be observed, that the one God here stands opposed to the polytheism of the Gentiles, to them that are called gods, which were many. Moreover, he is not called the Father of Christ, and so not to be considered personally, but essentially, as the one God, the Father of spirits, the former and creator of all things; from which character neither the Son, nor Spirit stand excluded, besides, if Jesus Christ, stands excluded from this one God the Father; then, by the same rule of interpretation, God the Father must stand excluded from the one Lord; which is said of Jesus Christ in the very same text. The same remarks may be made on *Ephesians* 4:5, 6, and the same reply given to like objections formed upon it. Nor is Christ excluded from the one God, in *1 Timothy* 2:5. “There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” It is true, Christ is spoken of in his lower nature, as man; yet there are some things said of him, which prove him to be God. Was he not God, he could not be a Mediator between

13 Vid. Dr. Waterland’s first Defence of some queries, p.9.

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God and men: He could not draw nigh to God, and treat with him about the peace and reconciliation of his people, much less effect it, or be a ransom for them, as he is said to be in the following verse. As to Galatians 3:20. I do not take it to be a direct proof of the unity of God, and have therefore neglected it in my collection of proofs. The meaning of the text, I apprehend, is this: A Mediator supposes, at least, two parties, between whom mediation is made. "Now, says the apostle, a mediator is not of one, that is, of one party, but God is one"; i.e. one party: Now as *Moses* (for of him the apostle is speaking) was a Mediator between God, as one party, and the people of Israel as the other: So Jesus Christ is a Mediator between God, and his elect people. I shall conclude this discourse, on the unity of God, with a passage ascribed to *Ignatius*: "Whosoever asserts the one only God, to the exclusion of the divinity of Christ, (and, I may add, of the Holy Ghost)" is a defamer, and an enemy "of all righteousness".

CHAPTER 2

Proving That There Is A Plurality In The Godhead.

Having, in the preceding chapter, proved the unity of the divine Being, or that there is but one God, I now proceed,

II. To prove that there is a plurality in the Deity, which shall endeavour to do;

First, From the plural word *Elohim*, so frequently used when the divine Being is spoken of; and that in different forms of construction: As, 1. It is sometimes in construction with a verb singular, as in *Genesis* 1:1. "In the beginning God, or *Elohim*, created the heavens and the earth". *Elohim* being a word in the plural number, and *Bara*, which is rendered created, being singular, many think It is designed to express the truth of a plurality of persons in the unity of essence. *Moses* might have made use of some of the names, or appellations of God in the singular number: He might have said, *Jehovah Bara*, *Jehovah* created; a name by which God had made himself known to *Moses*, and by him, to the people of *Israel*; or he might have made use of *Eloab*, the singular of *Elohim*, which he has made use of in *Deuteronomy* 32:15, 16. So that he was not obliged to make use of this plural word, from any want of singular appellations of God, or from any barrenness in the Hebrew language. And when we consider that one design of *Moses* writings is to oppose and extirpate the polytheism of the Heathens, it may

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well seem strange that he should make use of a plural word, when speaking of God, which might have a tendency to strengthen them in their notion of a plurality of gods: Nor certainly would he have used it as he does, thirty times in this history of the creation, and, perhaps, five hundred times more, in one form of construction or another, in the five books of his writings, had he not designed some kind of plurality or another. Now a plurality of gods he cannot mean; because this is contrary to what he asserts Deuteronomy 6:4. "Hear, *O Israel*, the Lord our God is one Lord"; nor a plurality of names or characters, to which creative powers cannot be ascribed, but a plurality of persons. For the words may be cast into a distributive form, in perfect agreement with the idiotism of the *Hebrew* language, and be thus read:" In the beginning every one of the divine persons created the heavens and the earth"; and then the historian goes on to take notice of some of these persons, as concerned in the creation. He makes mention of the spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters, in ver. 2. which the ancient¹⁴ Jews understood of the spirit of the Messiah: And in ver. 3. he observes, that "God said, that is God, the Word said, Let there be light, and there was light"

2. This word is sometimes in construction with a verb plural, of which there are several instances, as *Genesis* 20:13. "And it came to pass, when התעו אלהי אבי the gods caused me to wander from my Father's house". And so *Genesis* 35:7, "And he, i.e. Jacob, built there an altar, and called the place *El-bethel*; because there גלו אליו האלהי, the gods appeared to him, etc." And once more, in *2 Samuel* 7:23. "And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom הלכו אלהי the gods went to redeem for a people to himself". Now as one a well¹⁵ observes, "That however the construction of a noun plural, with a verb singular, may render it doubtful to some, whether these words express a plurality or no; yet certainly there can be no doubt in those places, where a verb or adjective plural are joined with the word *Elohim*". The plurality here expressed, cannot be a plurality of gods, for the reason above given; nor of meer names and characters, but of persons; for to these *Elohim* are ascribed personal actions; as their removal of *Abraham* from his father's house; their appearance to Jacob, and their redemption of the people of *Israel*.

3. It is sometimes in construction with adjectives and participles plural, as

14 Zohar. in *Genesis* fol. 107. col. 3. and 128. 3. *Bereshit Rabba*, Parash.

2. and 8. *Vajikra Rabba*, Parash, 14. Caphtor. fol. 113, 2. *Baal Hatturim* in loc

15 Allix's judgment of the Jewish Church, p. 124.

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Deuteronomy 4:7. and 5:26. And in other places, where mention is made of the living God, It is expressed in the plural **אלהי טי** the living gods; as in 2 *Samuel* 7:26, 36. *Genesis* 33:36. A very remarkable construction of this kind we have in *Jeremiah* 10:10. where It is said, “But the Lord is the true God; **הוא אלהי טי** he is the living Gods”; expressing, at once, a plurality of persons in the one divine Being. Of the same kind is *Joshua* 24:19. where *Joshua* says to the Israelites, “Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is an holy God”; which, in the **ורבה הוא קרי אלהי** the holy Gods is he; which, in the natural construction of the words, should have been **אלהי קדי ה** the holy Gods are they, had not this mystery of a plurality in the one God been intended. Hence we read of more holies than one, in *Proverbs* 30:3. “I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of **קדי** of the holy ones” Once more, in *Psalms* 58:11. “Verily there is **אלהי פשי** gods that judge in the earth”. Now of these *Elohim* it is said, that they live, are holy, are near to God’s people, and judge in the earth; all which are personal characters; and therefore they, to whom they belong, must be persons. This is the first kind of proof of a plurality in the Deity. I do not begin with this because I judge it to be the clearest, and strongest proof of the point, but because *Elohim* is one of the names, and one of the most usual names of God. Nor do I lay the stress of the argument on the word. *Elohim* itself, but as it appears in a very unusual form of construction. I am sensible that the word is used of a single person in the Deity, in *Psalms* 45:6, 7. And it need not be wondered at, that a name that is common to all the three divine persons, should be appropriated to one of them; especially when it is considered, that each divine person possesses the whole essence and nature common to all three. I know it is also given to *Moses*, who was appointed to be a god, or *Elohim*, to *Aaron* and *Pharaoh*: And good reason there is for it, when he represented and stood in the room and stead of the trine-une God to them. Wherefore It is of little service to the Jews to object this to us¹⁶: Nor ought it to be thought strange, when the idols of the Gentiles, in imitation of the true God, are called *Elohim*; whose names, as well as worship, Satan has endeavoured to mimic. The ancient Jews not only concluded a plurality, but even a Trinity, from this word *Elohim*; as appears from a passage in the book of *Zohar*¹⁷, where the author says: “Come, see the mystery of the word *Elohim*: There are three **דרגי** degrees, and every degree is distinct by himself, notwithstanding they are all one, and are bound together in one, and one is not divided from the other”. This is so full an account of the Trinity, that one would rather

16 Vet. Nizzachon, p. 4. Ed. Wagenseil.

17 In Lev. fol. 27. col. 2. Ed. Sultzbach. fol 29 Cremon.

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have thought it came out of the mouth of a Christian, than of a Jew. Was an Athanasian to give an account of his faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, he would do it in much the same language, except, that instead of degree he would use the word person. And yet we find *Tertullian*¹⁸, an ancient Christian writer, uses the word degree, when speaking of the persons in the Trinity ; and calls the Holy Ghost particularly the third *degree*. I have took no notice of the word, Adonim, as applied to God; which though it is sometimes used of one, for the sake of honor, in the second and third, yet never in the first person plural, as it is of God in Malachi 1:6. “If אדוני אני I am lords, where is my fear”? But I go on;

Secondly, To prove a plurality in the Godhead, from some plural expressions which are used of the divine Being in scripture: And shall begin, 1. With *Genesis* 1:26. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness”.

The pronouns *us* and *our*, do so manifestly express a plurality, that he must wilfully shut his eyes, who does not see it; and yet, lest we should from hence conclude a plurality of gods, the words image and likeness are expressed in the singular number; a plurality in the Deity being entirely consistent with the unity of essence. Nothing is more plain from hence, than that more than one was concerned in consultation about, and in the formation of man. Hence we have those plural expressions used of the divine Being, when he is represented as the Creator of men; as in *Job* 35:10. “Where is God, עשׂי my Makers ?” And *Psalms* 149:2. “Let *Israel* rejoice בעשׂיו in his Makers”. And *Ecclesiastes* 12:1. “Remember בראׂי thy Creators in the days of thy youth”. And *Isaiah* 54:5. “For בעליד thy husbands are עיד thy Makers; the Lord of Hosts is his name”. Now what reason can be given for these plural expressions, if there was not more than one concerned in man’s creation ?

The Jews have tried at many things to evade the force of this text¹⁹ Sometimes they tell us, that God consulted with the souls of men, and with second

18 Tres autem non statu, sed *gradu*; nec substantia, sed for-ma; nec potestate, sed specie; unius autem substantiae & uni-us status & unius preestatis; quia unus deus, ex quo & Gradus isti, & formae & species, in nomine patris & filii & spiritus sancti deputantur, *Tertullian*, adv. Praxeam, c. 2. Hoc mihi & in *tertium gradum* dictum sit, quia spiritum non aliunde puto, quam a patre per filium, ib. c. 4.

19 Vid. Menasseh ben Israel, conciliat, in *Genesis* quaest. 6.

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causes; with the elements, and particularly with the earth²⁰, out of which he formed man; and then breathed into him the breath of life: So that, in respect of his body, which is of the dust of the earth, he was made after the image of the earth; and in respect of his soul, after the image of God; and so in respect to both, after our image. But this is so wretchedly stupid, that it deserves no further notice. Others of them say²¹, that God consulted with his angels, and speaks to them about man's creation, which is the reason of this plural expression. But it ought to be observed, that angels are creatures, and so not of God's counsel: For" who hath directed (Isaiah 40:13,14) the spirit of the Lord; or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel"? Not with any of his creatures; no, not with the highest angel in heaven; they are none of them equal to him, nor equal to the work mentioned in the text, under consideration: They are creatures, and therefore cannot be possessed of creative power; nor were they concerned in man's creation; nor was man made after their image and likeness. Others of them say²², that God here speaks *regio more*, after the manner of kings; who in their edicts, proclamations, etc. use the plural number to express their dominion, honuor, and majesty. But it ought to be considered, that the reason why kings and princes use plural expressions in their edicts, proclamations, etc. is because they connotate other persons, kings acting by the advice of their ministers, or privy counsel. Besides, this aulic or courtly way of speaking is not so ancient. No one instance can be produced in scripture, where the kings of Israel speak after this manner nor indeed, where those proud, haughty and arrogant monarchs, *Pharaoh*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, and *Belshazzar* use the plural number, when speaking of themselves only. The instances which are usually produced are foreign to the purpose; and as a learned Jew observes, are קר עדי false witnesses. And as a worthy prelate observes²³, "'Tis a very extravagant fancy to suppose that *Moses* alludes to a custom that was not (for "what appears) in being at that time, nor a great while after". The first instance of this royal way of speaking, is in the letters of *Artaxerxes*, king of *Persia*, mentioned in *Ezra* 4:18. and 7:23. which, as it is the most early intimation of this mode of expression, so it ought to be observed, that it first appears in the latest accounts of things which the scriptures of the Old Testament give; and further, that It is only a proof of this way of speaking in the *Chaldee*, and not in the Hebrew language, and

20 So Ver. Nizza hon, p. 5. Lipman. Carmen memorial

21 Bereshit Rabba, Parash. 8. Jarchi. & Aben Ezra in loc.

22 R. Saadiah Gaon in Aben Ezra in loc. R. Bechai in loc

23 Bp. Kidder's demonstration of the Messiah, part 3. P. 90. Ed. Fol.

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probably might take its rise in the court of Persia, from the conjunction of *Darius the Mede*, and *Cyrus the Persian*, in the government of the empire; in both whose names edicts and decrees might run, and letters be sent. This might occasion the first use of such plural expressions, and their successors might continue them to express their power and glory. After all, the Jews are conscious to themselves, that these words do furnish out an argument for a plurality in the Deity. Hence in one of their ancient commentaries upon this place²⁴, they say, That when *Moses* was writing the six days works, and came to this verse, he made a stop, and said, Lord of the world, why wilt thou give an occasion to heretics to open their mouths against the truth? And add, that God should say to him, Write on; he that will err, let him err. Now this fabulous story is hatched on purpose to defend themselves against the argument of the Christians, for a plurality in the Godhead, founded on this text; and sufficiently discovers the sense they had of the force of it²⁵, and the self-convictions they laboured under from this passage. They also tell us, That the seventy two interpreters, who were employed by *Ptolemy*, king of Egypt, to translate the law, when they came to this text, read it not *נַעֲשֶׂה*, let us make; but as if it was *אֶעֱשֶׂה* I will make: And this change was made by them, lest *Ptolemy* should think that they held a plurality of gods as well as he. And for the same reason they made the like change in other places, where there is an intimation of a plurality, as *Genesis* 11:7. And *Philo*, the Jew²⁶, affirms, That these words declare *שְׂקָה־לֵב*, a plurality; and are expressive of others, as co-workers with God in the creation.

A late writer tells us²⁷, That he “can conceive “how God is laid to do this, i.e. to make man in our image, and after our likeness, by his word and spirit; for that he acted, in those respective characters, in his Christ, and through his holy child Jesus”. That the Word and Spirit were concerned with God in the creation of man, is a truth, and is the true reason of this plural expression; but then, these are not to be considered as mere characters, under which God acted; for mere names and characters cannot be consulted with; nor can creative powers be ascribed to them; nor have they any image and likeness after which man could be made. The words are a manifest proof

24 Bereshit Rabba, Parash. 8.

25 Talmud, Megilla, fol. 9. 1.

26 Εἶπε γὰςσομεν ἀ[νθρώπων κατ ἐφικο>να ἡθμετε>ραν κι< καθ οἱ Πηίλο δε χονσουσιονε λινη. p. 344. Ed. Par. He asserts the same in his book De Profugis, p. 460

27 The great concern of Jew and Gentile, p. 20.

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of a plurality of divine persons, who were equal to one another, and to the work of man's creation, in which they were jointly concerned.

2. Another scripture, which bears a testimony to a plurality in the Deity, is *Genesis* 3:22. "And the Lord God said, the man is become as one of us".

Which words are not spoken to angels, as say the Jewish writers²⁸; for they are not God's socials or equals, nor any of the Deity, as these here are said to be. Had the words any reference to angels, they should have been read, The man is become as one of you. The words of the serpent to *Eve* determine the sense of there, when he says to her: "Ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil". Now whatever equivocal, ambiguous, fallacious, or deceitful meaning, the Devil had in there words; yet it is certain, that he intended she should understand him of the divine Being; and so she did. The bait which he laid for her, and which took with her, was not an equality to angels, but to God: This our first parents affected, and this was their ruin. The words may be considered either as an irony, or sarcasm on man's folly and vanity, in affecting Deity; and then It is as if he had laid Behold the man whom Satan promised, and who himself expected to be as one of us. See how much like a God he looks; who, but just now, was covered with fig-leaves, and now stands clothed with the skins of slain beasts; and who, by his sin, has brought ruin and misery on himself, and all his posterity: Or else, they may be considered as a comparison of his pail: and present state: "Behold the man אִדָּם²⁹, was as one of us, i.e. he was made in our image, and after our likeness; but he has sinned, and come short of his former glory: He has defaced this image; he is not like the man he was; and since he has done this, What will he not do? And now therefore, lest: he put forth his hand, etc. Consider the words either way, they prove a plurality in the Deity. *Philo*, the Jew³⁰ acknowledges that there words are to be understood of more than one.

3. Another passage of scripture, which expresses the fame thing, is *Genesis* 11:7. "Go to; let us go down, and there confound their language"

Which cannot be meant of Angels, in which sense the Jewish writers understand it; for God never speaks in such language to them: Had he spoke to them, it would have been in such a form as this: Go ye down, and do ye

28 Bereshit Rabba, Parash. 21. Aben Ezra in loc.

29 Vid. R. Abendana in loc.

30 Και< παλιν ε+ιπεν οθ θεο>π, ιδου< γε>γονεν Αδαν Το< γαφ εθνονων τιθεται , Philo de confuf. ling. p. 344

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confound their language. But he does not thus speak; but let us go down, etc. Besides, the work to be done, was such as angels could not do, nor any mere creature. The same God that gave man the faculty of speech, and use of language, could only confound it. There was as great a display of divine power in the confusion of language, as there was in bestowing the gift of tongues on the apostles, at the day of Pentecost. No, this was not the work of angels, but of those divine persons, who are the one Jehovah; who, in ver. 8. is said to scatter the people abroad from thence, upon the face of all the earth. *Philo*, the Jew³¹, says, That it is plain that God speaks to some here as co-workers with him.

4. Another text, which might be produced as a proof of a plurality in the Deity, is *Isaiah* 6:8. “also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, here am I, send me” These are not the Seraphim, in ver. 2, 3. who are here speaking, but the Lord, who says, whom shall I, Jehovah, send, and who will go for us?

Neither the name, nor the work agree to angels. Not the name *Jehovah*; for that is incommunicable to creatures: Nor the work, which is the sending forth ministers to preach the gospel. For Angels themselves “are ministering spirits; sent forth to minister to them, who shall be the heirs of salvation”. These are divine persons, and are no other than the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Of the Father, there is no question; nor need there be any of the Son, since he expressly refers the words to himself, *John* 12:39, 40, 41, as the Targum on the place does, to the Word of the Lord: Nor ought there to be any with respect to the Holy Ghost, seeing they are manifestly applied to him in *Acts* 28:25, 26.

5. There’s one passage more in this prophesy of *Isaiah* 41:21, 22, 23, which I’ll just mention: “Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the king of *Jacob*: let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: Let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare unto *us* things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that *we* may know that ye are Gods: Yea, do good or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together”. In which words It is manifest, that the Lord, the Jehovah, who is the king of *Jacob*, continues speaking all along in the

31 Και< παλιν ε>πιεν οθ θεο>π, ιδου< γε>γονεν Αδαν γαφ εθνονων τιθεται , *Philo de confuf. ling.* p. 344

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plural number; upbraiding the gods of the Gentiles for their ignorance and imbecility. These are proofs out of the Old Testament, to which some have added *Song of Solomon* 1:11.

6. I might now produce some passages out of the New Testament, which discover a plurality in the Godhead. Some have thought the words of our Lord, in *John* iii. 11. are an indication of it; where our Lord may be thought to use the plural number, not on the account of his disciples, who were not concerned in that discourse of his, with Nicodemus; but with respect to the Father, and the holy Spirit. For he was not alone but there spoke in him, and bore witness with him. But I shall conclude this kind of proof with *John* 14:23. “Jesus answered and said unto him, If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him; and we will come unto him, and make *our* abode with him”. That more than one person is here intended, is certain; nor can we be at a loss about two, and who they are: For the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, are expressly mentioned, as divine persons, having personal characters and actions, such as coming to the man that loves Christ, and making their abode with him, ascribed unto them. But I proceed,

Thirdly, To endeavour to prove a plurality in the Deity from those places of scripture which speak of *Jehovah*, and of the Angel of *Jehovah*; which angel is also said to be *Jehovah*. And my argument from thence will be this: That if there is one who is *Jehovah*, that sends; and another who also is *Jehovah*, that is sent; then there must be a plurality in the Godhead. Let us attend to some instances.

The first passage I shall take notice of is in *Genesis* 16:7. where we read of an angel of the Lord who found *Hagar*, *Sarah*'s maid, in the wilderness, and bid her return to her mistress; which angel appears to be *Jehovah*; for in ver. 10. he promises her that he would “multiply her seed exceedingly, that it should not be numbered for multitude”; which a created angel, or any mere creature, could never perform. And to put it beyond all doubt, that this angel of the Lord was *Jehovah*, in ver. 13. It is said, that “she called the name of the Lord, which spake unto her, thou God seest me”.

Again, in *Genesis* 18: 1, 2. we read, that the Lord appeared to *Abraham*, in the plains of *Mamre*; and that when he lifted up his eyes, and looked up,

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lo, three men stood by him; which were angels, as appears from *Genesis* 19:1. Now one of these was the great *Jehovah*, as is manifest from the name *Jehovah* being given to him, ver. 1 3, 20, 26. and in many other verses; and from his separation from the other two, ver. 22. and from the works of *Jehovah*, which are ascribed to him, ver. 14, 17. Yea, he is called the judge of all the earth, who will do right, ver. 25. And *Abraham* all along pays the utmost deference, and gives the profoundest respect unto him, ver. 27, 30, 31, 32. So that from the whole, there's sufficient reason to conclude that one of these three angels was *Jehovah*.

The angel of the Lord, who appeared to *Abraham*, when he was about to sacrifice his son, and bid him desist from it, *Genesis* 22:11, 12. was no other than *Jehovah*; for he tells him, that he had not withheld his Son, his only Son, from him. Now it was at the command of God, and not a created angel, that *Abraham* went about to sacrifice his son; it was to the Lord *Jehovah* that he devoted him, and to whom he was going to offer him up in sacrifice, and not to a created angel. And because the Lord himself thus opportunely appeared to him, he called the name of the place *Jehovah Jireh*, that is, the Lord will appear. And again, a second time, the same angel of the Lord called unto him, and swears by himself, which no creature ought to do, and promises that which no creature can do, that in blessing he would bless him; and in multiplying, he would multiply his seed as the stars of heaven: All which the author of the epistle to the *Hebrews* applies to the great God, *Hebrews* 6:13, 14. So that we may be assured that the angel of the Lord, who here speaks, spoke in his own name, and not ministerially in his who sent him³².

The angel mentioned in *Genesis* 48:16. cannot be understood of a created, but of an uncreated one. He stands upon a level with the God of *Abraham*, and *Isaac*; and as great an act of divine power and goodness is ascribed to him as to that God, before whom *Abraham* and *Isaac* walked: As he fed *Jacob* all his life long; so this angel redeemed him from all evil. Yea, he makes him the object of his supplication, and invokes a blessing from him as from God, upon the lads, the sons of *Joseph*.

The angel of the Lord, which appeared to *Moses* in the bush, *Exodus* 3:2. was no other than *Jehovah*; which appears from the names by which he is called, viz. *Jehovah*, God, the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*; I am what I am, ver. 4, 6, 13, 14, 15. As also from the divine works and actions ascribed to him: As, seeing the afflictions of the *Israelites*; hearing their

32 See The great concern of Jew and Gentile, p. 34. -- Ibid. p. 24.

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cries; coming down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians; and to bring them out of their land into a land flowing with milk and honey.

The same may be said of the angel in *Exodus* 23:20. whom the Lord promised to send before his people *Israel*, to keep them in the way, and to bring them into the place which he had prepared. Here he requires them to yield obedience to him; to be cautious of provoking and offending him; and assures them, that he would not pardon their iniquities; which would have been needless to have observed to them, had he been a creature. None can forgive sins but God. Besides, he says his name was in him; that is, as a late writer well enough observes, his name *Jehovah*; and if that: is in him, which is incommunicable to a creature, then he must be the most high God, whose name alone is *Jehovah*. Moreover, the apostle Paul has assured us, that he who led and guided the people of Israel through the wilderness, and against whom they there rebelled, was Christ; when he says, *Corinthians* 10:9. “Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents”.

We read also of an angel of the Lord, in *Zechariah* 3:1. who not only is called *Jehovah*, in ver. 2. but declares to *Joshua*, in ver. 4. that he had caused his iniquity to pass away from him, and would. clothe him with change of raiment; which none but the most high God can do: For who can take away sin, pardon it, or acquit from it, or clothe with a justifying righteousness but him ?

Now it is easy to observe, in many of these instances, that obedience to this angel is required; that he is invoked and represented as the object of worship and adoration; which would not be, was he not the true *Jehovah*.

This the author of “*The great concern*”³³, etc. seems to be aware of; and therefore tells us, That this angel personated *Jehovah*, and had his likeness; and that the people of God, under that shadowy dispensation, were permitted to worship him. But to do this, is a breach of that command (*Matthew* 4:10), “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve”; and to be guilty of that which is condemned by the apostle, *Colossians* 2:18. even worshipping of angels. As we have no instance of divine worship and adoration given to angels, but on the contrary, that they are called upon to worship God’s first begotten Son, *Hebrews* 1:6. So when an offer of this kind has been made to them, they have always rejected it: An instance of which we have *Revelation* 22:8, 9. Indeed this author intimates, that since

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the Messiah, the substance, is come, it is not proper or lawful to worship angels: As the change of the dispensation made any change in the object of worship. Since the coming of Christ, some things have been altered, as to the outward form or manner of worship; but the object of worship is invariably the same: Though God may change the one, he cannot change the other without denying himself.

It is expected from us³⁴, that we should reconcile these appearances of *Jehovah*, under the Old Testament, to the invisibility of God. When our Lord says, in John 1:18. That “no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him;” he means God the Father, who is manifestly distinguished, in the text, from his only begotten Son. And still more plainly does he express himself, in *John* 5:37. “And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath born witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.” It is a rule, which, I believe, will hold good, that whenever any voice was heard under the Old Testament-dispensation, which is ascribed to *Jehovah*, it is always to be understood, not of the Father, but of the Word; and whenever any visible shape was seen, it was the shape and form of the human nature, which the *שׁוּבָה*, or Word assumed as a pledge and presage of his future incarnation. Betides, that God should, in some form or other, make some singular appearances of himself, or afford his singular grace and presence to his people, is no ways inconsistent with the invisibility of his nature or essence. For though he is that God, “whom no man hath seen, or can see,” i.e. his nature or essence; yet there is a state of glory and perfection, in which the saints shall see him as he is. To conclude this head: My argument from these passages of scripture, as I before observed, stands thus: That if there is one who is the true *Jehovah*, that fends and another distinct from him, who is also the true *Jehovah*, who is lent by him; then there must be more than one who is *Jehovah*; and so consequently there must be a plurality in the Deity: Which is the thing I have undertaken to prove. But,

Fourthly, This will also admit of proof from those passages of scripture, which speak of two as distinct from each other, under the same name of *Jehovah*, or God. I’ll just mention two or three instances of this kind. In Genesis 19:24. it is said, That “the Lord, or *Jehovah*, rained upon *Sodom* and upon *Gomorrah*, brimstone and fire from the Lord, or *Jehovah*, out of heaven.” This wonderful conflagration was not made by the ministry of

34 See The great concern of Jew and Gentile, p. 34. -- Ibid. p. 24.

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angels; for wherever it is mentioned, as in *Jeremiah* 50:40. *Amos* 4:11. it is represented as the work of *Elohim*, of every one of the divine persons. In *Psalms* 45:6, 7. it is said: “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever — Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” *Jeremiah* 12:5, 6. is another instance of this kind; where *Jehovah* promises to raise up to David, a righteous branch, whose name should be called *Jehovah*, our righteousness. And to add no more, in *Hosea* 1:7. *Jehovah*, or the Lord God declares, That he would “have mercy on the house of *Judah*, and save them by the Lord their God ;” or, as the *Targum* paraphrases it, by the word of the Lord their God. Now, in all these passages, it is manifest, that two are spoken of, as possessed of divine perfections, and as distinct from each other. He that rained fire and brimstone upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, must be distinct from him, from whom this fire and brimstone was rained, and must: be one of equal power with him. He that was anointed with the oil of gladness, or the Holy Ghost, must be distinct from him, by whom he was anointed: The anointer and the anointed cannot be, in all respects, the same. And so likewise *Jehovah*, who raised up the branch to David, must be distinct from the branch which was raised up by him; as he also that promises to save his people, must: be distinct from him, by whom they are saved. Now this distinction must be either nominal or real; not nominal, because they both bear the same name in all these passages. The distinction therefore, must be real; and if it is real, it must be either essential or personal; not essential, for there is but one divine nature or essence; otherwise there would be more gods than one. It remains then, that the distinction is personal, and consequently that there is a plurality of divine persons in the Godhead.

There is one passage, which I have not taken notice of under any of the foregoing heads, which seems to express a plurality in the Deity: It is in *Daniel* 4:17. “This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones.” These words are commonly understood of angels. And I deny not, but that they may be called watchers, and holy ones; and that they may be said to declare the decrees of God, and be the executioners of them: But then these decrees are not theirs; not any affair, that is done in this world, done in consequence of any decree of theirs, much less a matter of so much importance, as this which concerned so strange a revolution in the *Babylonia*, monarchy. Besides, this decree is called the decree of the Most High, in ver. 24. from whence we learn who these watchers and holy ones were. They are no other than the divine persons in

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the Godhead, who are holy ones, and watch over the saints for their good; and over the wicked, to bring evil upon them. They are called watchers and holy ones, to express a plurality in the Deity; and they are called the Most High here, and the watcher, the holy one, in the singular number, ver. 13. to secure the unity of essence. This I take to be the true sense of these words: Nor am I alone in it³⁵. There are now some of the proofs of a plurality in the Godhead, which the scriptures furnish us with; there are many more which I might have collected; but as they also prove a Trinity, I have referred them for their proper place.

CHAPTER 3

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Essence.*

Having, in the former chapter, proved that there is but one God, and yet that there is a plurality in the Godhead; I now proceed,

III. To prove that this plurality is neither more nor fewer than three; which three are the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: Or, in other words, that there is a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence. The doctrine of a real distinction of three Persons in one God, is denied by the *Sabellians*, called so from *Sabellius*, who lived in the middle of the third century; and held that there was but one *subjectum*, *suppositum*, *hypostasis* or *person* in the Godhead. This was not first broached by him; for before him *Noetus* strenuously asserted³⁶, that there was no plurality in the Godhead; that the Father and Son were but one person. From him his followers were called *Noetians*, and sometimes *Patripassans*; because they held, in consequence of their former notion, that the Father was incarnate, suffered and died. Yea, before Noetus, *Praxeas*³⁷, who was strengthened by *Victorinus*, was much of the same opinion; against whom *Tertullian* wrote, and by whom his followers are called *Monarchians*. The fame Christian writer tells us³⁸,

35 Vid. L'Empereur not. in Jachiad. in loc. And Allix's judgment of the Jewish Church, etc. p. 152, 153

36 Vid. AuguR. de Haeret. c. 36.

37 Tertullian. de praefeript. Haeret. c. 53. & adv. Praxeam, c. 1. 2.

38 De praeicript. Haeret. c. 52

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That one sort of the *Cataphrygians* held, that Jesus Christ was both Son and Father. Indeed one of the tenets ascribed to *Simon Magus* is³⁹, that he held but one person in the Godhead; and that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were only different names of one and the same person, according to his different way of operation. *Simon* said of himself⁴⁰, that he was the Father in Samaria, and Son in *Judea*, and the Holy Ghost in the rest of the nations. He seems to have received his notion of unity, in opposition to a Trinity of Persons in the Deity, from the Jews, who were now turned Unitarians; having exploded their anciently received doctrine of the Trinity, in opposition to the Deity and Messiahship of Jesus Christ. I do not mention these things to make any odious comparisons, or to fix any invidious names on persons, but to show the rise and progress of this error; and lest any should think that they have got new light, when they have only embraced an old stale error, that has had its confutation over and over.

The opposers of the doctrine of the Trinity, and of the distinction of Persons in it, are not reconciled to the use of the words, Trinity, Unity, Essence, and person; because they are not literally, and syllabically expressed in scripture. But since we have the things themselves signified by them, why we should scruple the use of the words, I see not. As for the word Trinity, though it is not formally expressed, yet the sense of it is clearly signified in scripture: For if there are three which are some way or other really distinct from each other, and yet but one God, we need not scruple to say, there is a Trinity in the Godhead. Nor have we the word Unity in scripture; yet we are told, that the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit are one; and that Christ and his Father are one: Now if they are one, then there is an unity, and that is a sufficient reason why we should make use of the word. The word Essence is not used in scripture; but we are told, that God is that he is, טו , which is, and was, and is to come; and if God is, then he has an essence. An essence is, that by which a person or thing is what it is; and seeing God is, essence may be truly predicated of him. As for the word person, it is used in *Hebrews* 1:3. of God the Father; where Christ is said to be “the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.” It is not indeed agreed, whether the word ουποαααω , should be rendered substance or person; I would only observe, That the Greek fathers, when speaking of the Trinity, use the word in the same sense, in which our translators have rendered it.

³⁹ Vid *Danaeum* in *August. de Haeret. c.1*

⁴⁰ Vid. *Irenaeum*, *adv Haeres. 50:1. c. 20.*

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There is another word, which they also make use of, when they speak of the Persons in the Trinity, and that is προσωπον ; which is used by the apostle when he is speaking of Christ, in 2 *Corinthians* 4:6. which our translators render “the face of Jesus Christ:” The words might be translated, the person of Christ; and without such a version, the sense of the words is not very easy. Besides, they have rendered the same word so in 2 *Corinthians* 1:11. where the sense requires it. Justin Martyr uses the word in abundance of places in his writings, if the *Expositio Fidei*, and *Quaest. & Respons. ad Orthodoxos* are allowed to be his; and defines it to be. τροπω υθηπαρξεωπ , a mode of subsisting in the divine essence; and says, That there were τρια προσωπα , three Persons in God. *Tertullian*, a little after him, who was one of the first Latin writers, frequently uses the word persona⁴¹ ; and tells us what he means by it⁴²: “Whatsoever, says he, was the substance of the Word, that I call a person; and to it I give the name of a Son: And whilst I own a Son, I maintain a second from the Father.” A person has been since defined by Boetius⁴³, “An individual substance or subsistence of rational nature.” And by others,⁴⁴ “An individual, that subsists, is living, intelligent, incommunicable, is not sustained by another; nor is a part of another.” It is an individual, and therefore something singular: It differs from universal natures. It subsists of itself, and therefore is not an accident; which does not subsist of itself, but inheres in another. It is living; hence a stone, or any other inanimate being, is not a person. It is intelligent, or understands; wherefore an horse, or any other brute, is not a person. It is incommunicable, and so it is distinguished from essence, which is communicable to more. It is nor sustained by another; hence the human nature of Christ is no Person, because it is sustained by the person of the Word. It is not a part of another; hence a human soul is no person, because it is a part of man. In one word, I say, with *Dr. Waterland*,⁴⁵ “ That each divine person is an individual

41 Οτι το μνηνητον κι γεννητο ν κι εφκπορευτοαπ οφνο>ματα αφλλα τροποι υθηπα ρξεωπ οθ δε τρο ποω τη~π υθηπα ρξεωπ τοι~π ο]νο μασι χαρακτηρι ζεται του>τοιω . θυστιν. Expos. Fid.

42 Ibid. p. 3, 6. *Quaest. & Respons. ad Orthodoxos*. p. 401.

43 Persona est naturae rationalis in- dividua substantia. Et, paulo post: Longe vero illi signatius naturae ration- alis individuum sub-sistentiam, u]pova>sew nomine, vocaverunt. Boetius de persona, & natura, c. 3.

44 Vid. Wendelin. *Christian. Theolog.* 50:1. c. 2. *Thes* 2. p. 93, 94. & *Essenii System. Theolog* par. 1. disp. 16. p. 140.

45 First defense of queries, p. 350.

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intelligent agent: But as subsisting in one undivided substance; they are altogether, in that respect, but one undivided intelligent agent.” Or, as he elsewhere expresses it⁴⁶: “A single person is an intelligent agent, having the distinctive characters of I, Thou, He, and not divided or distinguished into more intelligent agents, capable of the same characters” Now, according to either of these definitions, we may argue thus: A person is an individual, that subsists, lives, understands, etc. but such is the Father, therefore a person; such is the Son, therefore a person; such is the Holy Ghost, and therefore a person. From the whole, there seems no reason to lay aside the use of this word. I am not however so attached to it, but that I could part with it, provided a more apt and suitable word was substituted in its room; whereby a real distinction in the Deity, might be maintained: But it would be apparent weakness to part with this without the substitution of another, and that a better word; though it is a difficult thing to change words, in such an important article as this, without altering the sense of it. It is a rule, that in many instances holds good, *Qui, fingit nova verba, nova gignit dogmata*; he that coins new words, coins new doctrines. If those, who dislike the use of this word, think it is a lessening or diminishing of the glory of the eternal Three, to call them Persons, it must be ten thousand times more so, to bring them down to mere names and characters; and therefore we shall never care to exchange Persons for respective names and characters. If we cannot speak of God as he should be spoken of, let us speak of him as we can; If we cannot speak with the tongue of angels, let us speak as men, in the best and most becoming way we are able. To reject the use of human phrases, because they are not formally expressed in scripture, is, as Dr. Owen observes⁴⁷, “to deny all interpretation of the scripture, all endeavours to express the sense of the words of it, unto the understanding of one another; which is, in a word, to render the scripture itself altogether useless: For if it be unlawful for me, to speak, or write, what I conceive to be the sense of the words of scripture, and the nature of the thing signified, and expressed by them; it is unlawful for me also to think or conceive in my mind, what is the sense of the words, or nature of the things; which to say, is to make brutes of ourselves, and to frustrate the whole design of God in giving unto us the great privilege of his word.” Having premised these things, I shall endeavour to prove the doctrine of a Trinity of Persons, in the one God. Now this being a doctrine of pure revelation, it cannot be expected that it should be demonstrated by

46 Second defense of queries, p. 766.

47 On the Trinity, p. 21

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arguments taken from the reason of things: Nor shall I go about to illustrate it by natural similes, which have been observed, by some, to advantage; as that of the soul of man, which consists of the mind, and understanding, and will; which are so distinct from each other, so that the one is not the other, and yet are all but one soul: And also, that of the sun; its beams, and light, which are but one sun: And that of the spring, fountain, and streams, which are but one water. But leaving there, I shall endeavour to prove the point from testimonies of scripture, out of the Old and New Testament. And shall begin,

Istly. With the creation of all things in general. I before endeavoured to prove a plurality in the Godhead, from thence; and shall now attempt to establish a Trinity of Persons. I need not long insist on the proof of the Father's concern in the creation of all things; since he is said (Ephesians 3:9. Hebrews 1:2.) to have "created all things by Jesus Christ⁴⁸;" and by him, his Son, to have" made the worlds." The apostles (Acts 4:24,26,27) addressed him as the Lord God, who "made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is⁴⁹;" against whose Christ, and holy child, Jesus, "both *Herod and Pontius Pilate*, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together". Nor need there be any hesitation concerning the Word, or the second person's having an hand in this great work; seeing the Evangelist John says of the Word (John 1:3), who was in the beginning with God, and was God; that" all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made". It was he, the Word, that so often said, Let it be so, and it was so. And as for the holy Spirit, it was he that "moved upon the face of the waters", and brought the rude and confused chaos into a beautiful order. The Lord, "by his Spirit, hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent". (Job 26:13. *Psalm* 104:30.) When he sent forth his Spirit, all his creatures were brought into being; and by him, the face of the earth is renewed every returning spring; which is little less than a new creation. And you'll find all these three mentioned together, as concerned in the great work of creation: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth". (*Psalm* 33:6) Where by the Lord, is meant God the Father; and by his word, the Λογῶν , or Word that was with him from everlasting; and by the breath or spirit of his mouth, the Holy Ghost. Now here are three who were

48 Eph. iii.9.Heb. i.2.

49 Acts iv 24, 26, 27.

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manifestly concerned in the production of all creatures, into being; nor can any one of them be dropped, nor can a fourth be added to them. It remains then, that there is a Trinity in the Godhead.

2ndly. This will further appear from the creation of man in particular; in which, as it is easy to observe a plurality, so it is to behold a Trinity. If God the Father, made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; then he must have made man the principal inhabitant of the lower world: And if without the Word was not any thing made that was made; then without him man was not made, who was made. Betides, Christ, the Word, is called the Lord, our Maker: (Psalm 95:6,7,8) “O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand; to day if ye will hear his voice”. Which words are expressly applied to Christ, by the author of the epistle (*Hebrews* 3:6,7) to the *Hebrews*. In his hand are all God’s elect, who may be truly called the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand; being his care and charge, and constantly fed and preserved by him. To none so properly as to Christ do those words belong in the prophesy of Isaiah : “Thy Maker is thine husband, and thy Redeemer the holy one of Israel”; he being in a peculiar sense, the Husband and Redeemer of his people. And as for the Holy Ghost, it is expressly said of him, by *Elihu* (Job 33:4): “The Spirit of God hath made me; and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life”. From the whole it appears, That as there was a plurality concerned in the formation of man, this plurality was neither more, nor fewer than three; which are the Father, the Word, and the Spirit; and which three are but one God: For “have (*Malachi* 2:10) we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us”?

3rdly. In the account which is given *Isaiah* 63:7, 9, 10, 11, 14. of the people of *Israel’s* deliverance out of *Egypt*, and of their protection and guidance through the wilderness, is a clear testimony of a Trinity of Persons in the Deity; where there are three distinctly mentioned; and to them distinct personal characters and actions are ascribed. There is, first, the Lord, *Jehovah* the Father, whose mercies and loving kindnesses towards the house of *Israel*, are taken notice of in ver. 7. and they are said to be his people, and he to be their Saviour, in ver. 8. And betides him, there is mention made in ver. 9. of the angel of his presence, as distinct from him; and who also showed to the people of *Israel*, great love, pity, and compassion; and

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in consequence of it, saved them, and redeemed them, and bore them, and carried them all the days of old; all which cannot be said of a created angel: Nor are they applicable to mere frames and characters. And then the holy Spirit is introduced, not as a mere name or character, but as a distinct divine person, in ver. 10. 11, 14. against whom the *Israelites* rebelled, and whom they vexed; insomuch that he turned to be their enemy, and fought against them: And yet, though they thus provoked him, he led them on, and caused them to rest, to make himself a glorious name.

4thly. This truth may receive some further confirmation, from the consideration of the covenant of grace; in which, all the three persons are manifestly concerned. The Father made the covenant; the Son is become the Surety, Mediator, and Messenger of it; and the Spirit of God stands by, as a witness to it; and to see all the articles agreed upon between the Father and the Son, performed on each side. The Father's part in this covenant, was to fill it with all spiritual blessings and suitable promises; the Son's part was to receive them all, in the name, and on the behalf of all the elect; and the Spirit's part is to apply all, in time, to the promised seed. You have them all distinctly mentioned in *Haggai* 2:4, 5. where the Lord, by the prophet, exhorts *Zerubbabel*, and Joshua, the high priest, and all the people of the land, to be strong, and work, in rebuilding the temple; and for their encouragement, adds: "For I am with you, faith the Lord of Hosts, *Cum verbo, quo pepigeram vobiscum*, with the Word, in whom I covenanted with you, (as *Junius* reads the text) when ye came out of *Egypt*; so my Spirit remaineth among you: Fear ye not". Where it may be observed, That here is *Jehovah*, the Lord of Hosts, the first person who promises to be with them, together with the Word, the second person, in whom he covenanted with them, when they came out of *Egypt*; at which time God was pleased more largely than heretofore, to reveal the covenant of his grace, which he had made with his Word, from everlasting: And then here is the Spirit of God, the third person, who was remaining, עֹמֵד standing, continuing, and abiding among them, to see that there was a performance, and to make an application of all that *Jehovah*, and his Word, had covenanted about, and had agreed unto.

But before I proceed further, I shall briefly consider the notions of a late

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writer⁵⁰; concerning the covenant, who seems to be aware, that the common notion of the covenant of grace, as an agreement, or compact by stipulation, between two, at least, will furnish out an argument for a distinction of Persons in the Godhead; which he is not willing to allow of. I overlook his mistake in calling that a covenant of peace, in *Zechariah* 6:13. which is only a council of peace, and has no reference to any eternal transaction between God and the Lamb; the transaction being past in eternity: And this whatever is meant by it, was future, was to come, when the prophesy was given forth. The text does not say, the council of peace was, but shall be between them both. It is true indeed, there was an eternal transaction between God and Christ, which may be called a council of peace; because it was concerning the peace and reconciliation of God's elect: And it is, perhaps, in allusion to this text, that it is so called by divines; but the thing it self is not intended in it, but something else; namely, that peace which should be between Jew and Gentile, as the consequence of peace made by the blood of Christ, and of his preaching it to them both, by his apostles. But to proceed: This author tells us, That by the covenant, "we are not to understand a striking of hands, as some men boldly speak, as the Father proposed conditions to the Word, which he complied with on the behalf of sinners". As to the phrase of striking of hands, It is used among men to express a mutual agreement; and so it is used in scripture, *Job* 17:3. *Proverbs* 6:1. and 22:26. And when it has been used by divines, with respect to the covenant, and the concern of Christ in it, they only design by it to express the suretyship-engagements of Christ, and the mutual agreement between the Father and him, respecting the elect. And this figurative expression need not be accounted a bold one, since the act signified by it, was performed by one who thought it no robbery to be equal with God. Moreover, the Father did propose conditions to the Word, or things upon condition to him. For instance, upon condition of his making" his soul (*Isaiah* 53:10,11,12) an offering for sin"; he proposed to him, that he should "see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied and by his knowledge justify many". He proposed to him a great reward, and promised to "divide him a portion with the great, and the spoil with the strong", on condition of his "pouring out his soul unto death; being numbered with the transgressors, and bearing the sin of many; and making intercession for transgressors". And with all this, the Word, or Son of God, complied, and said: "Lo, I come: In the volume of the book it is written of me, I

⁵⁰ The great concern of Jew and Gentile, p.30.,32,33.

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delight to do thy will, O my God: Yea, thy law is within my heart". (*Psalm* 40:7,8) This author goes on, in order to remove the notion of agreement by stipulation from the covenant, to tell us, That the word covenant is used to signify a promise; and for the proof of this, cites *Galatians* 3:15, 16, 17. Now granting this, that the covenant of grace is a promise of eternal life to God's elect; it should be observed, that this promise was made before the world began; and so could not be made to the elect, as personally existing; but must be made to Christ, with respect to them, into whose hands it was certainly put: Hence we read (*2 Timothy* 1:1) of "the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus". So that the argument for a distinction of Persons, is as strong, when taken from a promise, as from the covenant. For if the Father made a promise to the Word, the Word, to whom this promise is made, must be distinct from him, by whom it is made. And after all, this author is obliged to acknowledge, that the "sure and everlasting covenant is made of our God with his Christ and in him, and with respect to him, with his people"; which is the substance of what sound divines say concerning the covenant.

5thly, The doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, may be learnt from the economy of man's salvation, in which the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, are concerned, and take, by agreement, their distinct parts. Thus we find in scripture, that election is, in a more peculiar manner, ascribed to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Spirit. And we meet with them all in one verse (*1 Peter* 1:2): "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ". But no where are those acts of divine grace more distinctly ascribed to each person, than in the first chapter of the epistle to the *Ephesians*; where, in ver. 3, 4, 5, 6. the God and Father of Christ, is said to bless his people with all spiritual blessings in him; to choose them in him before the foundation of the world; and to predestinate them unto the adoption of children by him; and to make them accepted in the beloved. After which, in ver. 7. Jesus Christ is spoken of as the author of redemption, in whom the saints have the remission of sin, and a justifying righteousness, whereby they come to have a right to the glorious inheritance, ver. 11. and then in ver. 13, 14. the holy Spirit is mentioned with a distinction from the Father, and from Christ, as the earnest of this inheritance, by whom believers are sealed up, until they come to the

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full and actual possession of it.

6thly. The Lord Jesus Christ was sent in the fullness of time, to work out the salvation of his people; and the account which is given of his mission, to this work, in *Isaiah 48:16* “And now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me”, is a clear proof of three distinct Persons in the Deity. The only difficulty in determining the sense these words, lies in fixing the person who is said to be sent by the Lord and his Spirit. And, that a divine person, and not the prophet *Isaiah*, as some think, is here intended, will appear from the context. He that speaks here, and says, “I have not spoken in secret from the beginning, from the time that it was, there am I; and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me”; is no other than he, who in ver. 12. 13. says of himself, “I am he, I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens”, And this same person is continued speaking, in ver. 14. 15. unto the words under consideration, From whence it is manifest, that it is a divine person, the mighty *Jehovah*, the Word of God, who is here said to be sent by his Father and the Spirit; which are not so many names and characters of one and the same person. For then the sense of the words would be: And now I, and my fell, have sent myself; which is no sense at all.

7thly. The Son of God, being sent in the fullness of time to redeem his people, was made of a woman. God was manifest in the flesh, the divine Word was incarnate; upon which occasion all the three Persons appear; though but one of them was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Mention is made of them all three in the account of the incarnation, which was given by the angel to *Mary*, in *Luke 1:32.35.* where we read of the Highest, that is, the Father, who is the most high God; and of the Son of the Highest, which is the Lord Jesus Christ, who took flesh of the virgin; and of the Holy Ghost, or power of the highest, to whose overshadowing influence the mysterious incarnation is owing.

8thly. Christ being sent, and having united an human nature to his divine person, he was anointed by, and with the Holy Ghost; whereby he was fitted and qualified for his office, as Mediator. This is prophetically expressed, in *Isaiah 63:1.* “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me, etc.” where it is easy to observe three divine Persons: The

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Anointer is the Spirit of the Lord; the Anointed is the Messiah, the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ: And besides there, here is the Lord, or Jehovah, by whose Spirit he was anointed. Much to the same purpose is Isaiah 42:1. Under this head may be very properly reduced the unction and sealing of believers with Christ; the account of which is given in 2 Corinthians 1:21. 22. "Now he which establisheth us, with you, in Christ, and hath anointed us is God, who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts". Where God the Father is considered as the Establisher and Anointer; and Jesus Christ, as a distinct person, in whom the saints were established and anointed; and the Spirit as distinct from them both, as the earnest of their future glory.

9thly. Christ, the Word, being made flesh, and dwelling among men, when he was about thirty years of age was baptized of *John* in *Jordan*; at which time the Holy Ghost descended like a dove, and lighted on him; and a voice was heard from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased". (Matthew 3:16,17) Here was the Son of God submitting to the ordinance of baptism; and the Father, by a voice, declaring him to be his Son; and the Spirit of God descending on him as a dove. This has been thought so full a proof of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, that it was a common saying with the ancients: Go to Jordan, and there learn the doctrine of the Trinity. A late writer seems to intimate, that this proof is insufficient; and that it was not the Father's voice which was heard; since our Lord has said: (*John* 5:37) "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath born witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape". The meaning of which words I take to be this, That though the Father's shape was never seen, nor his voice heard, under the Old Testament dispensation, but only that of the Word, who was to be incarnate; yet the Father had, by a voice from heaven, born witness to the Son-ship of Christ: And therefore the Jews were the more inexcusable in not believing on him; since the Father had, in such a peculiar way, which he had never used before, given testimony to him. The said author endeavours to support his hypothesis from a text in *John* 12:28. 29. where, upon hearing a voice from heaven, some of the people that stood by, said it thundered; others said, that an angel spake to him. Upon which, this writer observes, that he "doubted not, many amongst us, who profess themselves Christ's disciples, would think both those sentiments of the Jews alike mistaken, had not our

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Lord himself determined it". And I must take the liberty to tell this author, That many do think, and that very justly, that both those sentiments of the Jews were alike mistaken; and that because our Lord himself, in ver. 28. has determined it to be the voice of his Father. It was not an angel that spoke; nor was it the voice of an angel that was heard at his baptism, any more than at his transfiguration; when "he (2 Peter 1:17) received, from God the Father, honour and glory; when there came such a voice to him, from the excellent glory," This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased". The same writer insinuates as though it was not the likeness of the holy Spirit, which was seen at Christ's baptism; because the holy Spirit is invisible; but that this likeness was ministerial: And gives, as he thinks, a parallel instance in the book of the *Revelation*; where, he supposes, a created angel appeared in the likeness of Christ; and in his name, said, I am the Alpha and Omega, etc. which I apprehend to be a very great mistake. For the angel, by whom Christ made known the Revelation to *John*, is not the same with him, whom John saw in the vision, in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and who said the above mentioned. It is not usual for those who are messengers, ambassadors, or legates, to say, they are the very persons by whom they are sent; nor could a created angel, without blasphemy, say, that he was the first and the last, which is peculiar to the Most High God. In fine, I apprehend that the voice, which was heard at Christ's baptism, was an articulate voice, formed by God; that it was not the voice of an angel, nor the voice of the Son, nor of the Spirit, but of the Father only: And the likeness which was seen, was not the likeness of an angel, nor of the Son, nor of the Father, but of the Spirit, which was assumed *pro tempore*; as he afterwards appeared in the shape of cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost. And now I am speaking of the baptism of Christ, it may be proper to mention ours, which ought to be performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy". We are not baptized into three names or characters, but in the one name of three Persons distinct, though not divided from each other: "Not into one of three names, as an ancient writer has observed, nor into three incarnates, but into three who are of equal honour and glory."

10thly. Our Lord Jesus Christ, not long before his sufferings, and death, made several promises to his disciples, that he would send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, unto them; in which there are plain traces of a Trinity of Persons; as when (*John* 14:16) he says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall

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give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” Nothing is more manifest, than that there are here three distinct Persons. Here is the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the person praying; and the Father, another person, who is prayed unto; and here is another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth as distinct from the Father, and the Son, who is prayed for. He that prays, cannot be the same person with him who is prayed unto; nor he that is prayed unto, be the same with him that prays; nor he that is prayed for, be the same with him who prays, or is prayed unto. In short, if the distinction between them is not personal, but merely nominal, the sense of the words must be this: I’ll pray myself, and I myself, will give you myself to abide with you for ever. A writer, I have lately mentioned, acknowledges, that I, Thou, and He, are personal characters; and if so, then they, to whom they belong, must be Persons: And if these personal characters belong to Father, Son, and Spirit, they must be Persons. Again, when our Lord says, (John 14:26) “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will fend in my name, he shall teach you all things, etc.” he gives a plain intimation of a Trinity of Persons, to whom he ascribes distinct personal actions and characters: For otherwise the sense of the words must be, I’ll send myself, in the name of myself, who shall teach you all things, etc. Once more, when he says, f64 “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me;” John 15:26 we may fairly infer a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead. We are indeed told, That “if we consider, the Father dwelleth in, and is one with the Son, he might well say, The Comforter should be sent by him, from the Father, to denote his being enriched immeasurably, by his Father and his God, who is a Spirit.” That the Father dwells in the Son, and is one with him in nature or essence, is allowed; but unless there is a distinction of Persons between them, he could not well say, that the Comforter should be sent by him, from the Father.

11thly. Our Lord Jesus Christ, by his sufferings and death, procured eternal redemption for his people. Now the redemption price was paid, the atonement made, and the sacrifice offered up to God, in the person of the Father; and that by the Word, or Son, the second person in human nature; and all this through the eternal Spirit, or third person in the Deity, according to Hebrews 9:14. “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, etc.” Some indeed, by the eternal Spirit, understand the divine nature of Christ.

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But it is not an usual phrase in scripture, to say, That Christ did this, or the other thing by his divine nature; but it is usual to say, That he did this, or the other thing by the Spirit. Thus he is said (Matthew 12:28. Haggai 1:2.) to “cast out devils by the Spirit of God;” and to “give commandments to the apostles, through the Holy Ghost ;” and in some copies of *Hebrews* 9:14. it is read, through the Holy Spirit⁵¹.

12th. Christ having suffered and died in the room and stead of his people, was buried, and the third day was raised from the dead; when “he was declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness:” (*Romans* 1:4) All the three divine Persons were concerned herein. That God the Father raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, will not be denied: And it is very evident, that he railed himself according to his own prediction. Nor must the Spirit be excluded, who will have so great a share in the resurrection of our bodies at the last day: For “if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (*Romans* 8:11)

13th. And now I am speaking of Christ’s resurrection, it may not be improper to take notice of the work of regeneration, which is sometimes ascribed to it; and which work is the work of Father, Son, and Spirit Sometimes it is given to the Father of Christ, as in 1 Peter 1:3. and sometimes to the Son, as in 1 John 2:29. and sometimes to the Spirit, as in Titus 3:4, 5, 6. where you’ll meet with all the three Persons together, by observing, that God, our Saviour, in ver. 4. is manifestly distinguished from Jesus Christ our Saviour, in ver. 6. and the Holy Ghost is distinguished from them both, in ver. 5 to whom the washing of regeneration and the work of renovation are ascribed.

14thly. Adoption is an act of divine grace, in which all the three Persons appear. The Father of Christ predestinates to the adoption of children; Christ gives the right and power to as many as believe in him, to become the sons of God; and the Spirit witnesseth, with our spirits, that we are the children of God. Hence one of his titles is, The Spirit of adoption. And they are all three to be seen together in one verse. “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father;” (*Galatians* 4:6) where God the Father is spoken of as distinct from his Son, 51 *Vide* Crotium in Loc.

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and his Son as distinct from him, and the Spirit as distinct from them both.

15th. The children of God, after conversion, need fresh divine illuminations; for which the apostle prays, in Ephesians 1:17, 18. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, etc." Which prayer is no inconsiderable proof of the doctrine of the Trinity. Here is the God and Father of Christ, who is prayed unto; and the Spirit of wisdom who is prayed for; and that in order to the saints increase in the knowledge of Christ, who is distinct both from the Father and the Spirit.

16th. The apostle not only prays for greater illuminations, but, in Ephesians 3:14, 15, 16. for larger supplies of grace and strength: "For this cause, says he, I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man." He bows his knees to the Father of Christ, as a distinct person from him, whom he describes as the God of the universe, and implores his Spirit to strengthen the saints with might in their inner man.

17th. Though the love of God is plenteously shed abroad in the hearts of his people, at their first conversion, yet they have need to be afresh directed into it by the Spirit of God. Hence the apostle put up such a fervent prayer for the *Thessalonians*, "The Lord direct your hearts in to the love of God, and patient waiting for Jesus Christ." 2 *Thessalonians* 3:5. By the Lord, we are to understand the Lord the Spirit, as he is called in 2 Corinthians 3:18. being manifestly distinguished from God the Father, into whose love, and from Jesus Christ, into a patient waiting for whom, he is desired to direct their hearts, which is his proper work and business.

18th. And since I have mentioned several petitions, it may not be amiss to consider the object of prayer, and our manner of address to him. The object of prayer, is the one God, the Father, Son, and Spirit. Sometimes the God and Father of Christ is tingly addressed, as in some of the preceding instances; and frequently grace and peace are wished for from Jesus Christ, as well as from the Father; sometimes supplication is made to the Spirit,

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as in the instance last mentioned; and sometimes we find them all three addressed together, as in *Revelation* 1:4, 5. "John to the seven churches which are in *Asia*: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come:" Which is a periphrasis of *Jehovah* the Father. "And from the seven spirits which are before his throne:" By whom we are not to understand angels, the worshipping of them being forbidden. Besides, it is absurd to imagine that grace and peace should be wished for from them, equally as from God; or that they should be put upon a level with *Jehovah*, and set before the Lord Jesus Christ. But by these seven Spirits are meant the Holy Spirit of God; so called because of the fullness and perfection of his gifts and grace; and in allusion to his revert names in *Isaiah* 11:2, 3. and with a view to the seven churches of *Asia*, who were under his influence. And then it is added, "And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth ;" about whom there is no difficulty. Our manner of address in prayer is to God, in the person of the Father, though not exclusive of the Son, and Spirit; and through the Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator; and by the assistance of the blessed Spirit: Which furnishes out a considerable argument for a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, and is very fully and distinctly expressed by the apostle, in *Ephesians* 2:18. "For through him, i.e. Christ, we both have an access, by one Spirit unto the Father." A late writer conceives, the words "should be thus understood, that God brings Jews and Gentiles, by his powerful influence, as one Spirit through Christ unto himself, as their common Father:" And to this purpose our Lord says, No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me, draw him." But it ought to be observed, that the apostle is speaking, not of God's bringing souls to himself, through Christ, by his powerful and efficacious grace, as at conversion, but of the comfortable access of his people already converted to himself, through Christ, by the Spirit of Grace; much less does he speak of their being brought as one Spirit, but by one Spirit; and that unto God, as their Father, in a way of special grace and favour. But to go on,

19. I might instance in the inspiration of the scriptures, which is wholly a divine Work, and is peculiarly ascribed to the Holy Ghost, though not to the exclusion of the Father, and of the Son: For David, in his last words, assures us, That the writings which he was the penman of, as the sweet psalmist of *Israel*, were dictated to him by the eternal Three; when he says, in *2 Samuel*

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23:2, 3. "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, The rock of Israel spake, to me, etc." By the God of Israel I understand God the Father, the mighty God of Jacob; from whence is the Messiah, the shepherd and stone of Israel: And by the rock of Israel, I understand the Messiah, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and prince of peace; who is sometimes figuratively called the rock: And by the Spirit of the Lord, the third person, under whole influential motions and directions the psalmist spoke and wrote.

20. There are several passages in scripture, where the name Jehovah is three times mentioned, and that only; and where an epithet of the divine Being is three times repeated; which, though they do not prove the doctrine of the Trinity, yet they cast some light upon it; and one cannot well read them without taking some notice of it, as Numbers 6:24, 25, 26. "The Lord bless thee and keep thee: The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Isaiah 33:22. "The Lord is our Judge., the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us." Daniel 9:19. "O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord hearken and do, etc." The angels, in their adoration of God, say, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts," Isaiah 6:3. Revelation 4:8.

Lastly, I shall conclude this argument with the apostle's final benediction to the church at Corinth, 2 Corinthians 13:14. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." Where not only three distinct Persons are mentioned, but distinct personal actions are ascribed to them. Now this account I may venture to call the scripture-doctrine of the Trinity. And though I do not suppose that every proof I have produced, carries equal evidence in it; yet, when taken altogether, that man must wilfully shut his eyes, that cannot see plain intimations of a Trinity of Persons in one God, in the scriptures.

CHAPTER 4

*Wherein The Special Character, Proper Deity, And Distinct Personality Of
The Father, Are Considered.*

Having proved, not only a plurality, but a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead,

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I proceed,

IV. To consider the several characters, proper Deity, and distinct personality of each of these Three, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit.

And shall begin,

Firstly, With the Father, and consider the relation he stands in, or the character of a Father, which he bears; give some proofs of his Deity, and show his distinct personality.

1st. I shall consider the relation or character of a Father, which he sustains.

Now it must be observed, that the word Father, when applied to God, does not always intend the first person, to the exclusion of the Son or Spirit, as Deuteronomy 32:6. *Isaiah* 64:8. *Malachi* 2:10. Hebrews 12:9. where the one God, Father, Son, and Spirit, is called a Father; because he is the common parent, creator, and former of all things: On which account, neither the Son, nor the Spirit, as I have before observed, are to be excluded in those scriptures, which speak of one God, the Father of all things, as 1 *Corinthians* 8:6. *Ephesians* 4:6. By the word Father, sometimes is understood the first person in the Trinity, as distinct from the Son and Spirit. Who is so called either with a peculiar regard to his people, whom he hath predestinated to the adoption of children, and has sent his Son to redeem, that they might receive this blessing; and into whose hearts he has also sent his Spirit, crying, Abba Father: Or rather, he is called so with a peculiar regard to the second person, the Word; who is his only begotten Son; and his Son in such a way of filiation, as neither angels nor saints are. For “to which of the angels, and it may be said also, to which of the saints, said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?” (*Hebrews* 1:5) And again, “I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son.” Jesus Christ always owned him as his Father, addressed him as such, and frequently distinguished him from his earthly parents, by calling him his heavenly Father; or his Father which is in heaven. But because Father and Son are correlates, and suppose each other; and because I design to insist at large on the Sonship of Christ, I shall, for the present, dismiss this character and relation of the Father; and go on,

2dly. To give some proofs of his Deity. And though the Father’s Deity is

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not scrupled, or called in question, and therefore I need not enlarge upon it; yet it will be necessary to say something concerning it. And besides express texts of scriptures, such as *Romans 15:6. 2 Corinthians 1:3. Philippians 2:11.* and many others, where the Father is expressly called God; the thing will admit of proof, 1. From the divine perfections he is possessed of. He that is God, necessarily is; he owes his being to no other; nor does he depend upon another, but subsists of himself: Such is the Father of Christ. “For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son, to have life in himself.” (*John 5:26*) He that is God, is from everlasting to everlasting; he is without beginning, and shall be without end: Such is the Father of Christ. For he it is (*Revelation 1:4. Ephesians 1:4. 1 Corinthians 15:28.*) “which is, and which was, and which is to come.” He chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, and blessed them in him, with all spiritual blessings; and will be all, and in all, to them for evermore. He that is God, is immense, infinite, and omnipresent; as he cannot be bounded by time, neither can he be circumscribed by space: He fills heaven and earth, and is contained in neither; there is no going from his presence, nor fleeing from his Spirit: Such is the Father of Christ; whom Christ often speaks of, as in heaven, and yet with him on earth, and with all his people, at all times, in all ages, and among all nations; insomuch that they can say, “Truly our (*1 John 1:3*) fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” He that is God, is omniscient; he knows the hearts, and tries the reins of the children of men: Such is the Father of Christ, who knows the Son in such a sense as no other does; and knows that which neither the angels, nor the Son as man, do; even the day and hour of judgment. The time and season of that, as well as of many other events the Father has put in his own power. The apostle Paul (*1 Corinthians 11:31*) appeals to the Father of Christ, as the omniscient God, for the truth of the narrative he gave of his sufferings and labours, when he says: “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.” Omnipotence is a perfection which belongs to God. He that is God, can do all things; and so can the Father of Christ: “Abba Father, says Christ, all things are possible unto thee.” (*Mark 14:36*) And he intimates as much, when he bid Peter put up his sword, and. said unto him: (*Matthew 26:53*) “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels” And yet more fully, when speaking of the safety and security of his people, he says: “My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand”. (

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John 10:29) Once more, He that is God is immutable, the Lord who changes not, who is subject to no variation whatever. Now he that is the Father of Christ, “is the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning”. He is unchangeably the same in his purposes in Christ, and in his promises through him; and in the blessings of his Grace which he bestows on his people in him; nor can there be any separation of them from the love of God towards them, which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. In fine, there’s no perfection that belongs to Deity, but what is to be seen in the Father of Christ.

2. The Deity of the Father may be proved from the divine works and actions which are ascribed unto him: Such as creation, providence, and. the like. He created all things by Jesus Christ; by him, his Son, he made the worlds; and his hands have laid the foundation of the heavens and the earth: He supports the world by his power, and governs it by his wisdom. “My Father, says Christ worketh hitherto, and I work”; (*John* 5:17) , i.e. in the preservation and government of the world, as heretofore in the creation of it. And hence, in another place (*Matthew* 11:25) he calls him “the Lord. of heaven and earth”; which he would not do, was he not both the creator and preserver of it. Forgiveness of sins is peculiar to God. It is a maxim that will hold good: No one can forgive sins, but God only. But the Father of Christ forgives sinners. Christ himself applied to him for them, while on the cross; when he said: (*Luke* 23:34) “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”. The resurrection of the dead is a work purely divine, and is frequently ascribed to the Father. As he raised up his Son Jesus Christ, and gave him glory, so he will raise up the dead at the last day: For “the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth whom he will”. Now from these, as well as from many other divine works and actions, ascribed to him, we may strongly conclude the Deity of the Father. Which,

3. May also be argued from the worship which is ascribed unto him. None but he, who is the most high God, ought to be the object of religious worship and adoration: “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve”. Now the Father is frequently represented in scripture, as he whom we are to love, to hope and believe in; as the object of prayer and supplication, to whom, both Christ and his apostles prayed; and stands first in the form of baptism; which is a solemn act of divine and religious worship. But I shall no longer insist on this: But,

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3dly. Proceed to consider the distinct personality of the Father: And that he is a person, I shall endeavour to prove,

1. From his being expressly called so, in *Hebrews* 1:3. where Christ is said to be “the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person”. Our translation is indeed blamed by some, who contend that the word $\upsilon\theta\iota\pi\omega\omega\sigma\iota\omega$, should be rendered substance, and not person. I shall hint a few things in vindication of our version. Let it be observed, that the word is only used in the New Testament, in this epistle, and in the second epistle to the Corinthians; and but five times in all. In *2 Corinthians* 9:4. the apostle uses it to express his confidence in boasting of the forwardness of the Corinthians, in their contributions to the necessities of the poor saints.

And in the same epistle, Chap. 11:17. he uses it also to express his confidence in boating of his own labours in the gospel, and his sufferings for it. And in this epistle to the Hebrews, it is twice used, concerning faith, Chap. 3:14 and 11:1. and here it is applied to the divine Being. Now the word being used in such a different sense, “The mere use of it, in one place, as Dr. *Owen* observes, will afford no light unto the meaning of it in another; but it must: be taken from the context, and subject treated of”.

Moreover, it ought to be observed, That not only our translators, who were learned and judicious men, but many other learned men, have rendered the word, by subsistence or Person; as *Valla, Vatablus, Erasinus, Calvin, Beza, Piscator, Paraeus*, and others. And besides, some of the Greek fathers have used the word in the same sense; and some of them too, who wrote before the council at Nice; as particularly Justin Martyr⁵² if the writings, which bear his name, referred to in the margin, are allowed to be his; and also *Origen*⁵³. The word substantia indeed was used by some of the Latin writers, as answering to $\upsilon\theta\iota\pi\omega\omega\sigma\iota\omega$; but then they understood it of *prima*

52 Το αγε ννητον κι γεννητοαω δηλωτικα σηματικα δε τω~ν υφποπα σεων . Justin. exposit. fidei, p. 374. Edit. Paris. Ενα τοι νυν Θεομενον η+| μεω κι πνευ~μα α[γιον τη~ω μια~ω θεοτητω ταζονταω η= δε Θεοαν κοινοσεων νου~νταω . Idem. p. 379. Vid . eriam Quaest. & Respons. ad orthodox. Quaet. 17, & 129.

53 Ει δε τι>ω εφκ του~των περισπαθη σεται μη πη αφυτομολου~μεν προο ει=ναι υθποσα>σειω πατετω το, η+ν δε πα>ντων τω~ν πισευσα ντων ηθ καρδι α κι ηθ ψυχη< μι>α ι[να θεωρη>ση το εγω κι οθ πατη *Origen. contr. Celsum*, l. 8.

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substantia; and used it just in the same sense as we do the word person. And when they said , there were three substances in the Trinity, they at the same time asserted, that there was but one nature or essence; and so distinguished substance from nature or essence. But finding the word *substantia* to be of ambiguous signification, and having a tendency to lead persons to imagine that there were three distinct divine Beings, they left off using it; and rather chose the word *persona*, as less exceptionable. A difference there certainly is, between $\Upsilon\pi\omega\omega\sigma\iota\omega$ *subsistence*, and $\sigma\upsilon\varphi\sigma\iota$ *essence* or substance. For though “the composition of the word, as Dr. Owen observes⁵⁴, would denote *substantia*, yet so as to differ from, and to add something to $\sigma\upsilon\varphi\sigma\iota$, substance or being; which, in the divine nature, can be nothing but a special manner of subsistence”. Add to this, That the apostle is not so much speaking of the Father, and of Christ, in that wherein they are the same as they are in nature and substance; but of them in those things which carry in them an evidence of distinction between them. Thus Christ is said to be the Son, by whom God hath, in there last days, spoke unto us; and the heir, who is so by his appointment; and by whom he made the worlds: He is the brightness of his glory. And so, though he is of the same nature with him, yet is he distinct: from him, as the sun and its beams; and is also the image of his person; and so distinct from him, as the image is from the person, of whom it is the image. Not that Christ is the image of his Father’s personality; for then, as the Father begat, which is his distinctive personal character, so must the Son. I distinguish between personality and person: Personality is the bare mode of subsisting; a Person, besides that connotes the nature or substance in, and with which he subsists. So that Christ is the image of the Father’s Person, as he is possessed of the whole divine nature or substance. From the whole, I cannot see why any should quarrel with our translation of this word.

2. The definition of a person, which has been given already, agrees with the Father, who is an individual, and so distinguishable from the Godhead, or divine nature, which dwells personally in him, and which is common with him, to the other two persons. He subsists by, and of himself, and is not sustained by another; nor is he a part of another. The Father has life in himself; he does not owe his being to another; nor is he upheld in his being by another; nor is he possessed only of a part of, but of the whole Deity. He is, in fine, a living, willing, and intelligent agent: He is the living Father,

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that sent Christ, whose will, not as opposite to, but as distinct from his, he came to do; who knows himself, his Son and Spirit, and all his works, as none else does.

3. That the Father is a person, may be concluded from those personal actions which are ascribed to him; such as creation, providence, the resurrection of the dead, and the like; which have been already considered as proofs of his Deity. To which may be added, his several acts of grace towards his elect in Christ Jesus: Such as his eternal choice of them in him; his predestination of them, to the adoption of children by him; his entering into a covenant with him on their account; his putting them all into his hand, and there blessing them with all spiritual blessings; his drawing them to himself, and to his Son, with the cords of love and efficacious grace; the several methods he takes to administer divine consolation to them; with the promise of the Spirit, called the promise of the Father, which he has made, and fulfils to them. The mission of his Son Jesus Christ into this world, for the salvation of lost sinners, which the scriptures so much speak of, is a plain proof of his Personality, and of his distinct personality from the Son. It is true indeed, the Spirit is said to send him as well as he: But: then observe, that the Son is sent, both by the Father and the Spirit, and the Spirit is sent both by the Father and the Son; yet the Father is never said to be sent by either; he is always the sender, and never the sent. But what is the grand distinctive personal act of the Father, is his eternal act of begetting the Son in the divine nature or essence; which though inconceivable, and unaccountable by us, yet is plainly revealed in the sacred scriptures; and is the true reason of his bearing the character and relation of a Father; and is what distinguishes him from the Son and Spirit. The Son is never said to beget, either the Father or the Spirit: And the Spirit is never said to beget either the Son or the Father: The act of begetting, is peculiar to the Father. What is meant by it, and the proof of it, I shall consider hereafter. Thus much for the personality of the Father.

Now when we call the Father the first person in the Trinity, we do not suppose that he is the first, in order of nature, or time, or causality; as if the Father was *fons Deitatis*, the fountain of the Deity; expressions which some good men have made use of with no ill design: But since an ill use has been made of them, by artful and designing men, It is time for us to lay them aside. As the Father is God of himself, so the Son is God of himself, and the

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Spirit is God of himself. They all three exist together, and necessarily exist, and subsist distinctly by themselves in one undivided nature. The one is not before the other, nor more excellent than the other.

But since It is necessary, for our better apprehension of them, that there should be some order in the mention of them, it seems most proper to place the Father first, whence we call him the first person; and then the Son, and then the Holy Ghost; in which order we sometimes find them in scripture: Though, to let us see that there is a perfect equality between them, and no superiority or inferiority among them, this order is frequently inverted.

CHAPTER 5

Concerning The Logos Or Word.

Having considered the character, and given proofs both of the Deity and Personality of the Father, I shall now proceed to consider the character of the Logos, or Word; give some proofs of his Deity; enquire into his Sonship; and show his distinct personality. And shall begin,

I. With his name, title, appellation, or character, the WORD; a name which *John* frequently makes use of in his Gospel, Epistles, and Revelation. He makes use of it in his gospel, Chap. 1:1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God":

Which words manifestly declare the Deity, and Eternity of the Word; his co-existence with God, i.e. the Father; as is manifest from 1 John 1:2. and his being a distinct person from him. And that we may not be at a loss which person in the Trinity he intends by the Word, he tells us, in ver. 14.

That the "Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us". *John* also makes mention of Christ, under this name, in his Epistles; as in 1 *John* 1:1. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon; and our hands have handled of the Word of life": i.e. Christ, who was from eternity with the Father, but was now manifested in the flesh; which flesh was real, and not imaginary, as he proves by three of the natural senses, viz. hearing, seeing, and feeling, *John*, with the rest of the disciples, heard him speak, saw him walk, eat, drink, etc. and handled him; and hereby knew that he had a true and real body,

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consisting of flesh, blood, and bones, as their bodies did; and that it was not a mere phantom as *Simon Magus*, and after him *Menander*, *Saturninus*, and *Basilides* asserted. These denied the true and real humanity of Christ; and affirmed, That he had no more than the appearance of a man; that he assumed human nature, died, and suffered, and rose again in appearance only, and not in reality. Now John here calls Christ the Word of life; because he is the life it self; and the author and giver of it to others. Again, in Chap. 5:7. he says: “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: And these three are one”.

So likewise in his Revelation, he speaks of Christ more than once, under the character of the Word; as in Chap. 1:2. where he tells us, That he “bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ”; which may be justly explained by *John* 1:1. 2, 3, 14. Once more, in Revelation 19: 13. where having represented Christ as a mighty warrior, and triumphant conqueror, he says: “His name is called the Word of God”. And now, since he has so frequently spoken of the second person in the Trinity under this appellation, shall,

First , Enquire from whence he may be supposed to receive it.

Secondly, Whether any other inspired writer of the New Testament, makes use of it besides him.

Thirdly, The reason, why Christ is called by this name.

First, I shall enquire from whence John may be supposed to receive this name, Λογωσ , or the Word, which he so often applies to Christ. And, 1. It is thought by some, that he took it out of the writings of *Plato*, or his followers. *Amelius* ⁵⁵ , a Platonic Philosopher, refers to the words of the evangelic, in *John* 1:1. whom he calls a Barbarian, as agreeing with their philosophy, concerning the Λογωσ , or Word. And It is thought: by some⁵⁶ , that *John*, knowing that *Ebion* and *Cerinthus* were acquainted with the Platonic philosophy, that he might the more easily gain upon them, makes use of this expression, The Word; when that of the Son of God would have been distasteful to them: But to me it is much more probable, that Plato had his notions of the Word out of the scriptures, than that John should borrow this phrase out of his writings, or any of his followers; since It is certain that

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Plato travelled into Egypt, to get learning and knowledge; where, it is very probable, he met with the Jewish writings, out of which he collected his best things. And *Numenius*⁵⁷, a Pythagoric philosopher, accuses him of stealing what he wrote concerning God and the World, out of the books of Moses. Hence he used to say, “What is Plato, but Moses in a “Grecian dress” ?

2. It is much more likely that John took the expression out of the Jewish Targums, or paraphrases on the books of the Old Testament, where frequent use is made of it; as also in the works of *Philo the Jew*: But whether he did or no, It is certain, that there is a very great agreement between what he and these ancient Jewish writings say of the Word. I’ll just give some few instances. The evangelist John ascribes Deity to the Word, and expressly affirms that he is God: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God”. And the Targums, in many places, render Jehovah by the Word of Jehovah; from whence it may well be concluded, that they supposed the Word of the Lord was Jehovah himself. And in other places they say, that he is God. Thus in *Genesis* 28:20, 21. it is said: “Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, (*Onkelos*, “If the Word “of the Lord will be with me) and will keep me in this way that I go, etc. Then shall the Lord”, (*Onkelos*, “the Word of the Lord) be my God”. Again, in *Leviticus* 26:12. it is said, “And I will walk among you, and will be your God”. The Targum of *Jonathan* paraphrases it thus: “I will cause the glory of my *Shekinah* to dwell among you, and my Word shall be your God, the Redeemer”. Once more, in *Deuteronomy* 26:17. Thou hast: avouched the Lord this day to be thy God”. The *Jerusalem* Targum renders it thus: “The Word of the Lord, ye have made “king over you, this day to be your God. Like wise *Philo*, the Jew⁵⁸, calls the Word $\theta\epsilon\iota\ \sigma\omega\ \Lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\sigma\omega$, the divine Word; and $\text{Κυρι}\sigma\omega\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$, my Lord; and represents him as the object of faith; whose promises ought to be believed.

Moreover *John* speaks of the $\Lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\sigma\omega$, or Word, as a distinct person from God the Father: He says, “The Word was with God;” i.e. the Father, as we are taught to explain it, from 1 *John* 1:2. and therefore must be distinct from

57 NOYMHNIOS πυθαγορικοςσοφοσ οθ αφπαμευτων- σω δια>νοιαν ηφλεγξον, ωθω εφκ τω μωσα ικω βιβλιων τα περι θεου~ κι κοσμου αφποσυλη σασαν διο κι φησι τι γα ρ εφπι Πλατων η] Μωση~ω αφττικιζων . Hesyh. Miles. de philosophis, p. 50.

58 Ο δε κυ ρι σω μου θειλο>γοσω πρεσβυ τεροσω εφσιν ω+ προσει~να του~το αθναγκη κι πισευειν καλονωι. Philo Leg.

Allegor. 1. 2. p. 101

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him, with whom he was. Agreeably hereunto, as the Targums some times express Jehovah by the Word of the Lord; so they likewise distinguish the Word from Jehovah: Thus, *Psalm* 90:1. “The Lord said unto my Lord”. Targum, “The Lord said to his Word.” Where he is manifestly distinguished from the Lord; at whose right hand he was to sit.

Again, in *Hosea* 1:7. The Lord promises to” have mercy on the house of Judah, and save them by the Lord their God.” Targum, “By the Word of the Lord their God.” Where the Word of the Lord, by whom the people of Judah were to be saved, is also manifestly distinguished from the Lord, who promises to save them by him. This distinction of *Jehovah*, and his Word, may be observed in many places in the Targums, and in Philo’s writings.

Likewise *John* ascribes eternity to the Λογῶν , or Word; and says that it was in the beginning, i.e. of the creation of all things; and therefore was before any creature was made. *Philo* calls him the most ancient Word⁵⁹, the most ancient Angel; and says, That he is more ancient than any thing that is made: Yea, he calls him the eternal Word⁶⁰.

Again, The evangelist says of the Word, That “all things were made by him, and that without him was not any thing made that was made.” The Targumists ascribe the creation of man, in particular, to the Word. We read in *Genesis* 1:27. “So God created man in his own image:” Which the Jerusalem Targum reads, “And the Word of the Lord created man in his likeness.” And in *Genesis* 3:22. “And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us.”

The same Targum paraphrases it,” And the Word of the Lord God said, Behold the man whom I have created, is the only one in the world.” also, in the same writings, the creation of all things in general, is ascribed to the Word. Those words in *Deuteronomy* 33:27. “The eternal God is thy refuge; and underneath are the everlasting arms ;” are by *Onkelos* paraphrased, “The eternal God is an habitation; by whose “Word the world was made.” And in *Isaiah* 48:13. “Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth.” Targum, “Yea, by my Word I have founded the earth.” Just as the apostle

⁵⁹ Ibid Leg. Allegor. 50:2. p 93. Ενδυ αταω δε οθ με ν πρεσβυ τατω του Λοωω ωθω εφσθη τα τοσμον . Ιβιδ. δε προσεγισ, p. 466.

⁶⁰ Σποιδαζε κοσμηι~θαι κατα τογονον αφυτου~ Λογον Ιδ. δε χονουσ. λινγ. π. 341. Ωω ποιμεκην κι νο μον προπησαμενω τογου πρωτο>γονον υι.:ον Ιδ. Δε αγριχυλτυρα, π.

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Paul says, Hebrews 11:3. And *Peter*, 2 Peter 3:5,7. And the author of the apocryphal book of *Wisdom*, Chap. 9:10. With which entirely agree the sentiments of *Philo*; who not only speaks of the Word as an organ⁶¹, or instrument, which God used in the creation of all things; but as the archetype, paradigm, exemplar, and idea, according to which all things were made: Yea, he calls him *δύναμις κοσμοποιητική*, the power which made the world; and ascribes the creation of man to him; after whose image he says he was made: And also, the creation of the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them.

Again, When *John* calls the Word the Light, he makes use of a word which was known among the Jews to be the name of the Messiah, of whom they understand Psalm 43:3. “O send out thy light and thy truth:” And Daniel 2:22. “And the Light dwelleth with him.” *Philo* speaks of an intelligible Light, which he makes to be the image of the divine Word; and thinks it may be properly called *πανσυγεία*, the universal Light; which is pretty much like what *John* says of the Word, whom he calls “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”

Once more, *John* speaks of the incarnation of the Word; and says, That he “was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” *Philo* calls the Word, The man of God; who, he says, being the Word of the Eternal, is himself necessarily immortal. And in the same book⁶², he calls him the man after God’s image. And it is easy to observe an agreement between Jesus Christ, who *εφσκηνώσεν*, tabernacled among us, and the *Shekinah* of the Jews. The words in *Leviticus* 26:11, 12. are thus paraphrased by *Onkelos*; “I will set my tabernacle among you, and my Word shall not reject you: And I will cause my *Shekinah* to dwell among you, etc. And the author of the apocryphal book of *Baruch*, speaks of wisdom or understanding, which is the same with the Word, as appearing on earth, and converting with men⁶³. Now these

61 – Σκια< Θεου~ δε< οθ Λο>γος αφυρου~ ω+| καθα>περ οφρ- γα>νω προσχρησα>μενωσ αφκοσμοποι>ει . Ιβιδ. Λεγ. Αλληγορ. 1. 2. π. 79. And elsewhere, speaking of the most ancient Word, whom the Governor of the universe uses as a rudder to steer and direct all things, he adds; Χρησα>μενωσ οφργα>νω του>τω προτιον τω~ν αφποτελουμε>νων συ>σασιν . Ibid. de Migratione Abraham. p 389

62 P. 341

63 Μετα τουτο εφπι τη γηω ω[φθη κι εφν τοι π αφνθρω>ποιω συνανεπραφη . Baruch,3.37.

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Jewish writers speak of the Word after this manner, either on the account of his appearances in an human form, under the Old Testament-dispensation, or on the account of his future incarnation, which John could speak of as past. And whereas John calls the Word the only begotten of the Father, *Philo*⁶⁴ says, “That he is the Father’s most ancient Son, his first born; who being begotten by him, imitated his Father’s ways; and seeing his exemplars, did the same things he did.” From the whole it is manifest, that there is a great likeness between what the evangelist John, and these Jewish writers say of the Word. And whether he borrowed the phrase from them or no, yet it is plain that he expressed the traditional sense of his nation. *Philo*’s works were wrote before his time; as were also some of the *Chaldee* paraphrases. A *Socinian* writer⁶⁵, in order to show that John did not take Λογῶν from the Targums, endeavours to prove them to be of a later date than they are thought to be; about which, we need not be much concerned: And also, that by the Word they never intend a reasonable person, subsisting by himself; which the instances already produced, confute: To which more might be added, was it requisite. But there is no need to say that John borrowed this phrase from the Jewish Targums; but,

3. From the scriptures of the Old Testament. He manifestly refers to the history of the creation; where, no less than eight times, we read that God said, “Let it be so, and it was so:” Which phrase so often repeated, remains no longer a mystery to us; since *John* has told us, “That by the Word all things are made ;” in perfect agreement with what the Psalmist says, in *Psalms* 33:6. “By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and. all the host of them, by the breath of his mouth.” Many instances may be given, where the Word intends a divine Person. See *2 Samuel* 7:21. compared with *1 Chronicles* 17:19. and *Haggai* 2:4, 5. *Psalms* 107:20. From whence John might easily take this phrase, and apply it to a divine person, as he does. And some have thought that our Lord uses it himself in the same sense, *John* 5:38. So that *John* might take it immediately from him; whose words, in many instances, he takes a peculiar delight in making use of. But I hasten Secondly, To enquire whether any other inspired writer of the New Testament makes use of this phrase, besides the evangelist John. And upon enquiry, it

64 Τουτον μετ ατον υιδοτειλε πατηρωθι πρωτο γονον ωφνο μασε κιοθ γεννη θειντοι μιμουμενω ταγματα Αφρχε τυπα εφκει νου βλεπον εφμο ρφου ειδη . Πηιλο δε χον συσλιγγ p. 329. Which is very much like what the evangelist John says of the Son of God, in *John* 5:19.

65 *Bilibra veritatis*, etc. *Contr. Rittangel*. Ed. *Freistad*. 1700

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nature with him, though a Person distinct from him. And he may also be called the Word, from some action or actions which are predicated of him, or ascribed to him. He spake in the ancient council, when the methods of man's salvation were considered, consulted and agreed on; and declared, that he would be a surety for all the elect. He spoke for every blessing, and every promise in the covenant of grace. He assented to every proposal his Father made; and agreed to every article in the covenant between them. He spoke all things out of nothing in the first creation: He laid, Let it be so, and it was so; he spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. He is the Word that was spoken of to all the Old Testament-saints, and prophesied of by all the prophets, which have been since the world began this is the sum and substance of all the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament. Moreover, he is the interpreter of his Father's mind, even as our word or speech, which is Λογῶν προφορικῶν, the interpreter of our minds; for which reason he may be called the Word⁷⁰. "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten, which is in the bosom of the Father; he hath declared him." Being privy to all his thoughts, purposes, and designs, he was capable of declaring his mind and will to his people; which he has done in all generations. It was he, the Word of the Lord God, whose voice *Adam* heard in the garden; and who said unto him, *Adam*, where art thou? And it was the same Word of the Lord who continued his discourse with him, and his wife, and the serpent; and made the first discovery of grace to Some in Justin Martyr's time called him the Word, for this reason: fallen man. It was the Word who appeared to the patriarchs and prophets in after-ages, and made yet greater discoveries of God's mind and will; but never so fully and clearly as when he was made flesh, and dwelt among us; for then "God, who at sundry times, and divers manners, spake in times part unto the fathers, in these last days spoke unto us by his Son".

Besides, he, as the Word speaks for the elect in the court of heaven, where he appears in the presence of God for them; acts the part of a Mediator
 70 Some in Justin Martyr's time called him the Word, for this reason Επειδη<κι<τααπ φε>ρει τοι~ω αφνθρω>ποιω . Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 358. Ed. Paris. Theophilus of Antioch, calls him λογῶν προφορικῶν, ad Autolyc. 1. 2. p. 100. Του τον τογον εφγεννησε προφορικον πρωτο τοκον πα σηω κτισεωω ουφ κενωθειω του~λογου αφλλα λο γον γεννη σαω κι τω λο>γω| αφυτου διαπαντογωω, ουφκ ου+τορικο Stromat. 1. 5. p. 547. Ed. Sylburg. Let it be observed, that those writers who have used these phrases, did not design them in the same sense, which the *Sabellians* do, as the λογῶν was a mere attribute, and not a real person.

on their account; calls for, and demands the blessings of grace for them, as the fruit of his death; pleads their cause, and answers all charges and accusations exhibited against them. So that upon these considerations, he may be properly called the Word, and Word of God.

CHAPTER 6

Concerning The Deity Of The Word.

Having considered the character of the Λογος, or Word, (Logos), I shall now proceed:

II. To give proof of his proper deity, which I shall do in the following method:

First, I shall endeavour to prove it from the divine names, which are given to him.

Secondly, From the divine perfections, which he is possessed of.

Thirdly, From the divine works, which are ascribed to him. And,

Fourthly, From the divine worship, which is due unto him.

First, I shall endeavour to prove the proper Deity of Christ, from the divine names which are given to him; such as,

1. Jehovah, which is a name expressive of the divine essence, being well explained by **I AM THAT I AM**, in *Exodus* 3:14. And it is truly deciphered by John, in *Revelation* 1:4. By “him which is, and which was, and which is to come”. This is the name by which God made himself known to Moses, and by him, to the people of Israel; by which he had not made himself known to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that is, so fully and largely as he had to them; which name has always been had in great esteem among the Jews; and has been highly revered by them, even to a superstitious abstinence from the pronounciation of it⁷¹, which arose from a mistaken sense of *Leviticus* 24:16. It is indeed that glorious and fearful name which ought to be feared and revered by us; it being proper and peculiar to the divine

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will appear, that the evangelist Luke, the apostles Paul and Peter use it in the same sense. So that though the evangelist John uses it more frequently than they may, yet it is not peculiar to him. The evangelist Luke is thought to use it in Chap. 1:2. and by it, to intend Christ the Word; when he speaks of the disciples as eye-witnesses, and ministers, or servants of the Word; who, in much greater propriety of speech, may be said to be eyewitnesses of Christ, according to 2 *Peter* 1:16. and servants or followers of him, than of the gospel, or written word. And it seems very agreeable, that Luke, intending to write a history of the life and actions of Christ, should, in his preface to *Theophilus*, make mention of him under some name, or another, some title, or character; which he does not, if he is not intended by the Word.

The apostle *Paul* uses the phrase in this sense, *Acts* 20:32. where, taking his farewell of the elders of the church at Ephesus, he commends them to God, and to the Word of his grace: Where, by the Word of his grace, I understand not the gospel, or written word, but Jesus Christ, who is full of grace and truth. My reasons for it are these:

1. Because the saints never commend themselves, or others, either in life or in death, to any but a divine Person. The word here used, signifies a committing a person, or thing, to the care, charge, and protection of another. Now none but a divine person is capable of taking the care and charge of the saints, and of making the same good: Neither wilt the saints trust any other, nor do they. In life they commit their souls to God as to a faithful Creator; and rest entirely satisfied herein, as the apostle *Paul* did; who could say: "I know whom I have believed;" whom I have trusted with my immortal soul; into whose hands I have committed the salvation of it: "And I am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him, against that day." Now certainly to whom he committed himself, he also committed others; having had experience of Christ's care, faithfulness, and ability, he could, and undoubtedly did, commend the saints unto him, with the utmost pleasure and satisfaction. And as in life, so likewise in death they commend themselves to none but a divine person, in imitation of Christ; who, in his last moments said: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

2. To put the written word upon a level with the divine Being, does not appear very agreeable. A commendation of the saints equally to the written word, as to God himself, seems to me to be a lessening of the glory of the

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divine Being, and an ascribing too much to the written word; but suits well with Christ, the essential Word: “Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God.” To commend the saints equally to Christ, as to God the Father, is no diminution of the Father’s glory; nor is it giving Christ more than his due, or than what he is able to perform; but a commendation of them to the gospel seems to be so.

3. The saints are never said to be committed or commended to the gospel; but that to them. The written word is committed to the care and keeping of the saints; but not the saints to the care and keeping of that. They are in the hands, and are made the care and charge of Christ. We frequently read of God’s committing the written word unto the saints, and especially to the ministers of it; and of their committing it unto others; as in *Corinthians* 5:19. 1 *Timothy* 1:11-18. and 6:20. and 2 *Timothy* 1:14. and 2:2. but never of the saints being committed to the written word.

4. What is here ascribed unto the Word, is more applicable to Christ than to the written word. Though the gospel is an instrument in the hands of the Spirit, in building up saints in their most holy faith; yet Christ is the great master builder; it is he that builds the temple, and must bear the glory. Though the gospel may be as a map, which shows us where our inheritance lies, and which is the way unto it; yet it is Christ who gives it us, and puts us into the possession of it: It is in, by, or through him, that we obtain the inheritance. For these reasons, I apprehend, that not the gospel or written word, but Christ, the essential Word, is intended: Nor am I alone in the sense of this text⁶⁶.

Again, The apostle Paul is thought to use the phrase in this sense, *Hebrews* 4:12. “For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints, and of the thoughts and in-marrow; and is a discerners tents of the heart.” This is not so applicable to the written word as to Christ, who is ζων ὁ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, the living Word of God, or the Word of God, which liveth, as the words may be rendered. He is that Word that was made flesh, suffered, and died; but is now alive and lives for evermore; and may truly be said to be powerful efficacious. For so he is in His sufferings

66 Vid. Arrowsmith in *John* 1:1. and Gomarus in id. and in *Luke* 1:2. and in *Hebrews* 4:12.

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and death, being mighty to save; as also in his mediation and intercession at the father's right hand and will e'er long appear to be sharper than any two-edged sword, at his coming to judge the world at the last day. Then he'll pierce, to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints, and marrow, and will show himself to be a critical discerner of the thought and intents of the heart for he'll then "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart ;" and will let" all the churches," yea, all the world, angels and men, know that he it is "which searcheth the reins and hearts ;" all which cannot be so well applied to the written word. Besides, the following verse makes the sense still more plain, which is closely connected with this, by the copulative *κτ* "And there is not any creature which is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do " Where the apostle manifestly speaks of a person, and not of a thing; and of such an one as is omniscient; and to whom we must give an account at the day of judgment. The words *προγοῦν* , in the last clause, may be rendered, "To whom we must give an account." Now to whom must we give an account? not to the written word, but to a divine person, as the apostle says (*Romans* 14:12): "So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." Ministers are accountable for preaching the word, and people for hearing it; but the account will be given, not to the written word, but to Christ, the living Word. Moreover, in ver. 14. this Word is said to be an high priest, who is passed into the heavens for us; which can be no other than Christ, who having assumed our nature, and offered himself a sacrifice for us, as an high-priest, is passed into the heavens; where he ever lives to make intercession for us: Which the apostle uses as an argument with believers, to hold fast their profession, and to come with boldness to the throne of grace. I cannot but observe, that many things which the apostle here says of the Word, are said of the Logos, by *Philo* the Jew; who, as he makes the cherubim in *Genesis* 3:24. symbols of God's two powers, his goodness and power ; so likewise the flaming sword a symbol of his Logos, or Word; which he makes to be very swift and fervent. Elsewhere he says , That God, by his Logos, cuts and divides all things, even all things sensible; yea, atoms, and things indivisible. He represents him as very quick-sighted⁶⁷ , and as capable of seeing all things that are worthy to be seen. And he sometimes speaks of

67 Οὕτω κτ οἱ θεοὶ ὡς Λόγος οφῆλυσε σατοῦ εφσιν ὡθω παντα εφφορα
 ε+ιναι ιθκανοαα α]ξια κατο ψονται - τι γαου Λογου . Ibid. Leg Allegor.
 50:2. p. 92

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him as the Mediator between God and men; as one that makes atonement, and is an advocate with God. He says that he is the true High Priest⁶⁸, who is free from all sin voluntary and involuntary; which is just such an high priest as the apostle Paul says Jesus Christ is, *Hebrews 7:26*. But to go on.

The apostle Paul uses this phrase just in the same sense, and ascribes the creation of the world to him, as the evangelist John does, when in *Hebrews 11:3*. He says: “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God”, And also the apostle *Peter*, in *Peter 3. 5*. where he observes, that the scoffers were “willingly ignorant; that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water”. And adds, in ver. 7. That “by the same Word, the heavens and the earth, which are now, are kept in form reserved unto fire”. And in *1 Peter 1:23*. the saints are sad to be “born, not of corruptible feed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; which Word is distinguished from the gospel in ver. 25. From all these passages it may be concluded, that this phrase was not peculiar to the evangelist *John* but was used, though not with so much frequency, by the other apostles. I proceed,

Thirdly. To enquire the reason, or reasons why the second Person is called the Word. He may be so called, because As the mental word, or the conception of the mind, which is Λογῶ ἐφνδία θετῶ⁶⁹, is the birth of the mind, begotten of it intellectually, and immaterially, without portion or motion; and is the very image and representation of the mind, and of the same nature with it, yet something distinct from it: So Christ is the begotten of the Father, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person; of the same

68 Τῷ δε ἀφρχαγγε λῶ κι πρεσβυτατῶ Λογῶ δωρεαρετον εδωκεν οθ τα ωα γεννη σατ πατηριῶ σανη του πεποιηκοτῶ Ο δ αφυτοτητῶ μεν εφσι του θνητου κεραι νον τῶ αει προνωτ προκοον . *Ibid.* Quis return divin Haeres. p. 509.

69 Λογῶ ουφ ρηητοδητῶ ουφ γαρθου φωνημα αφλλ εφνεργει ατ θει κῆ-τ ουφσι α γεννητη. *Ignat. Major Epist. ad Magnes.* Εξ αφρχη-τ γαδιοτ ω]ν ειχεν αφυτοατ λογικο Εχων ουν οθ Θεογον εφνδιαθετον εφν τοι-τ ιφδιοιτ σπλαγχνοιτ εφγεννησεν αφυτοατ εφξερυξα>μενωτ προ τῶ-ν ο.:λων . *Theophilus Antioch ad Autolyc.* 50:2. p. 88. Ed. Paris. *Alhqeia dihgei-tai togon toqeton ejn kardia Qeou~* . *Idem*, p. 100. Αυτογῶ ο.:τ η+ν εφν αφυτῶ υθπε σησε θεληματι δε τητῶ αφπλο τητῶ ωφυτου~ προπηδα λογῶτ . *Tatian. Contr. Gentes*, p. 145. Ed. Paris.

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Being, and incommunicable to any creature: For “Most High over all the earth”, is he “whose name alone is Jehovah”. (*Psalm* 83:18) If therefore I prove that Jesus Christ is called Jehovah, or that this name is given to him, I prove him to be the Most High God. Which will be best done by comparing some texts of scripture in the Old with others in the New Testament. And to begin:

With *Exodus* 17:7. “And he called the name of the place *Massah*, and *Meribah*, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, or Jehovah, saying, Is the Lord, or Jehovah, among us or not”? From hence it plainly appears, that he, whom the Israelites tempted in the wilderness, was *Jehovah*. And yet nothing is more manifest, than that this was the Lord Jesus Christ; as is evident from 1 *Corinthians* 10: 9. “Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents”. And if so, then Christ is *Jehovah*, and consequently the Most High God. Again, in *Isaiah* 6:1: It is said: “That in the Year that king *Uzziah* died”, *Isaiah*” saw the Lord, *Adonai*, sitting upon a throne”; whom the *seraphim*, in ver. 3. call *Jehovah Sebaot* ; as does *Isaiah*, in ver. 5. which same glorious divine Person, in ver. 8. 9. sent him with a message to the Jews, saying, “Hear ye indeed, etc.” Now these words our Lord Jesus Christ applies to himself, in *John* 12: 39, 40, 41. and observes, that “there things said *Esaias*, when he saw his glory, and spake of him”. Moreover, in *Isaiah* 40:3. It is said, “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, or *Jehovah*; make strait in the desert, a high-way for our God.” Which words are, by the evangelist *Matthew*, *Matthew* 3:1,2,3. applied to *John* the Baptist. Now the Lord, or Jehovah, whose way he was to prepare, could be no other than Jesus Christ, whose harbinger and forerunner *John* was; and whose way he did prepare, and whose paths he did make strait, by preaching the doctrine of repentance, administering the ordinance of baptism, and declaring that the kingdom of heaven, or of the Messiah, was at hand. Besides, the Messiah is expressly called, in *Jeremiah* 23:6. the Lord, or Jehovah, our righteousness, it being his work and business to bring in everlasting righteousness, and well suits with Jesus Christ, who is “the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Once more, in *Zechariah* 12:10. it is promised by Jehovah, that he would “pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications:” and adds, “They shall look upon me, that is. Jehovah, whom they have pierced.” Which words the evangelist *John*

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says, were fulfilled, when one office soldiers, with a spear, pierced the side of Christ; and forthwith there came out blood and water, *John* 19:34, 37. The same passage is also referred to in *Revelation* 1:7. and applied to Jesus Christ. Now in there, and many other places, Jesus Christ is intended by *Jehovah*; and if he is *Jehovah*, then he must be truly and properly God; since this name is incommunicable to any other.

It is objected, that this name, *Jehovah*, is sometimes given to created beings; as to angels, *Genesis* 18:13. *Exodus* 3:2. and 23:20. to the ark . *Numbers* 10:35. and 32:20. *Deuteronomy* 12:7. *Joshua* 24:1. 2 *Samuel* 6:2. *Psalms* 24:8. to *Jerusalem*, *Jeremiah* 33:16. *Ezekiel* 48:35. to altars, *Exodus* 17:15. *Judges* 6:24. to the mountain where Isaac was to be sacrificed, *Genesis* 22:14. and to judges and priests, *Deuteronomy* 19:17. To which I answer, That as to the proof of angels being called *Jehovah*, I have shown already, that in all the passages cited, not a created angel, but an uncreated one, even a divine Person is intended; who is no other than Jesus Christ, the angel of the covenant; and ere so many proofs of his being *Jehovah*, and consequently of his proper divinity. Nor is the ark any where called *Jehovah*. *Numbers* 10:35,36. is a prayer of Moses to the true *Jehovah*, and not to the ark, to which it could not be made without idolatry. The sense of the words is best understood by comparing them with *Psalms* 132:8. In many of the places produced, the ark is not mentioned, nor intended; not in *Numbers* 32:20. nor in *Deuteronomy* 12:7. nor in *Joshua* 24:1. nor is the word *Jehovah*, there used, but *Elohim*. And as for 2 *Samuel* 6:2. not the ark, but God, whose the ark was, is called by the name of the Lord of Hosts: Nor is the ark intended in *Psalms* 24:8. nor could it be called the King of Glory, or the Lord mighty in battle, without manifest impiety. Nor is the name *Jehovah* given to *Jerusalem*, in *Jeremiah* 33:16. but to the Messiah, as is manifest from *Jeremiah* 23:6. for the words may be rendered thus: "This is the name wherewith he shall be called by her, the Lord our righteousness." Nor is this name given to her in *Ezekiel* 48:35. absolutely, but in composition, or with an addition; and is only symbolical of *Jehovah*'s presence being with her. Just as the Lord calls her *Hephzibah*, and *Beulah*; because he delighted in her, and was married to her, *Isaiah* 62: 4. The same may be said of mount *Moriah*, and the altars, referred to in the objection, which were called *Jehovah Jireh*, *Nissi*, *Shalom*; which names do not express the nature or essence of God, but are only symbolical, and designed to call to remembrance the divine help, gracious assistance, and wonderful appearance of *Jehovah* , for his people.

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Nor are priests and judges called Jehovah, in Deuteronomy 19: 17. for Jehovah is not to be explained by them; he is distinguished from them. And though he is joined with them, yet this only designs his presence in judiciary affairs; “who stands in the congregation of the mighty, and judges among the gods.” Upon the whole, the argument in proof of Christ’s divinity, from the incommunicable name, Jehovah, being given to him, stands firm and unshaken. I go on, 2. To show that he is called God absolutely, and that both in the Old and in the New Testament. In Psalm 45:6. it is said, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever:” Where by God is meant the Son; since he is, in ver. 7. distinguished from God the Father, who is called his God; and is moreover laid to be anointed by him with the oil of glad-hers. But this is put beyond all dispute, by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, Hebrews 1:8. “But unto the Son he faith, Thy throne, O God, etc.” Again, in Isaiah 45:22,23. a divine Person is introduced speaking thus: “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else: I have sworn by myself, etc.”

Which words are, by the apostle Paul, in *Romans* 14:10,11,12. applied to Christ. Many more passages of the like nature might be produced out of the Old Testament. I’ll but just mention one in the New Testament, and that is in John 1:1. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

We cannot be at a loss who is meant by the Word; since he is distinguished from God the Father, with whom he was, and is said, in ver. 14. to be made flesh, and dwell among us. Nor is it any wonder that he should be called God absolutely, and in the highest and most proper sense of the word; seeing he is in the form of God; and has thought it no robbery to be equal with him. But I proceed to observe, 3. That Christ is called God, with some additional epithets; such as our God, your God, their God, and my God. He is called our God, in Isaiah 25:9. and 40:3. The scope and circumstances of the texts manifestly show that the Messiah is intended, whom the Jews were waiting for, and whose forerunner and harbinger *John the Baptist* was to be. He is called your God, in Isaiah 35:4, 5. “Behold, your God will come. — Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped:” All which were fulfilled in the times of the Messiah, and by him appealed to as proofs of his Messiahship and Deity. He is called

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the Lord their God, in Luke 1:16. which words “are⁷² , in strictness of construction, immediately connected with the following word, him; which must necessarily be understood of Christ.” Thomas calls him, in John 20:28. “My Lord and my God ;” which words are not an apostrophe to the Father, but a full and ample confession of the Deity of Christ, and his interest in him. Now though angels, magistrates, and judges, are called gods, in an improper and metaphorical sense, yet are they never called our gods, your gods, etc. This way of speaking is peculiar to him who is truly and properly God. Again, one of the names of the Messiah is Immanuel, Isaiah 7:14. “which being interpreted, is God with us,” Matthew 1:23. that is, God in our nature; clothed with our flesh, and dwelling among us. Or, in other words, he is “God manifest in the flesh,” 1 *Timothy* 3:16. on which text, Dr. Clarke himself observes⁷³. “That it has been a great controversy among learned men whether Qeov , or $\text{o}:\omega$, or $\text{o}:$, be the true reading in this place. But it is not in reality of great importance. For the sense is evident, that that Person was manifest in the flesh, whom St. John, in the beginning of his gospel, stiles $\text{\Theta}\epsilon\omega$, God.” He is moreover called the Mighty God, in Isaiah 9:6. which prophecy, though the Jews would wrest to Hezekiah, yet their attempts have been vain and fruitless. It stands a glorious prophecy of the Messiah, and is expressive of his proper divinity, real humanity, and excellent offices; which offices he has took upon him for the good of his people, and is capable of performing them, because he is the Mighty God. Likewise, he is said to be “over all, God blessed for ever,” *Romans* 9:5. It is trifling to observe, that when Christ is said to be over all, that the Father must⁷⁴ needs be excepted. For no one pleads for a superiority of the Son to the Father, but an equality with him: Nor is the stress of the proof for Christ’s divinity, from this text, said upon his being over all; but upon his being God, blessed for ever. Again, Christ is called, the Great God, in Titus 2:13. whose glorious appearing, and nor the Father’s, the saints were looking for; and of whom the following words, “And our Saviour Jesus Christ,” are plainly exegetical. It is objected , that this phrase, “The Great God, being, in the Old Testament, the character of the Father, is in the New Testament never used of Christ, but of the Father only, *Revelation* 19:17.” Which text in the Revelations, besides this in *Titus*, is the only one where this phrase is used in the New Testament; and manifestly belongs to him who is called the Word

72 Dr Clarke’s scripture-doctrine of the Trinity, No. 539

73 Dr Clarke’s scripture-doctrine of the Trinity, No. 539

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of God, ver. 13. who is said to have on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords, ver. 16. and who is represented to John, as a mighty warrior, and triumphant conqueror, taking vengeance on the great men of the earth. And therefore, an angel calls to the fowls of the heaven, to come and gather themselves to the supper of this Great God; who appears to be no other than he who is before called the Word of God; which is a character that peculiarly belongs to Jesus Christ. Once more, he is called the true God, 1 John 5:20. “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life,” i.e. Jesus Christ is the true God; for he is the immediate antecedent to the relative this; and is expressly, in this epistle, Chap. 1:2. said to be eternal life. Since then Christ is so frequently called God, with there additional epithets, which are peculiar to the one only God, it follows, that he must be truly and properly God.

Secondly, The proper divinity of Christ may be strongly concluded from the divine perfections which he is possessed of: “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” (Colossians 2:9) There is no perfection essential to Deity, but is in him; nor is there any that the Father has, but he has likewise; for he says: (John 16:15) “All things that the Father hath, are mine.” Independence and necessary existence, are essential to Deity. He that is God, necessarily exists; does not receive his Being from another; nor is he dependant on another; such is the Lord Jesus Christ: For though he is not *αφυτουιο*, Son of himself: Though he, as man and Mediator, has a life communicated to him from the Father, and lives by the Father; yet, as God, he owes his Being to none; it is not derived from another: He is “over all, God blessed for ever.” Eternity is peculiar to the Godhead. He that is God, is from everlasting to everlasting. Jesus Christ was not only before Abraham, but before Adam; yea, before any creature existed. For if he is the *αφρχι*, the beginning, the first cause of the creation of God (*Revelations* 3:14. *Colossians* 1:15.) ; if he is *πρωτοστο κοτω πα σηω κτι σεωω*, the first parent, bringer forth, or producer of every creature; if he was in the beginning of the creation of all things with God; and by him were all things made; then he must be before all things. As Mediator he was set up from everlasting, and had a glory with his Father before the world was. His goings forth, or acting in the covenant of grace, on the behalf of his people, were of old, from ever-lifting. The elect of God were chosen in him, before

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the foundation of the world; and had grace given them in him, before the world began. In fine, (Revelation 1:8) he is the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending; which is, and which was, and which is to come; and therefore a very proper antitype of Melchizedeck; “having neither beginning of days nor end of life”. Again, omnipresence, and immensity, belong to God. He that is God is every where; is not confined to any place, but fills heaven and earth with his presence. Jesus Christ was, as he was the Son of God, in heaven, whilst, as the son of man, he was here on earth, John 3:13. which he could not be if he was not the omnipresent God; any more than he could make good those promises he makes, *Matthew* 18:20. and 28:20. that he’ll be with his people when they meet in his name, and with his ministers, unto the end of the world. Nor could he walk in the midst of his golden candlesticks, *Revelation* 2:1. or be present in all his churches, as he certainly is, and fill all things, *Ephesians* 4:10. as he certainly does.

Omniscience is another perfection of Deity, which is easy to be observed in Jesus Christ (*John* 2:25. *Matthew* 9:4. *John* 4:29. and 6:64).

He knew what was in man, even the secret thoughts and reasoning’s of the mind. He could tell the woman of Samaria all that ever she did. He knew from the beginning who would believe in him, and who should betray him. *Peter* (*John* 21:17) appealed to him as the searcher of hearts, and said:” Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest I love thee.” He is indeed that divine Λογος , or Word (*Hebrews* 4:12), that is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; who, in a first time will let all (*Revelation* 2:23) the churches know, that he it is who “searcheth the hearts and reins”. And though he is said (*Mark* 13:32) not to know the day and hour of judgment; yet, that is to be understood of him, not as God, but as man. Omnipotence is another perfection essential to God, and may be truly predicated of Jesus Christ, who is (*Revelation* 1:8) the Almighty. His works of creation, providence, and sustentation; as also those of the redemption, and preservation of his own people, and the resurrection of them from the dead; which he has performed, and does, and will perform, “according to his mighty power, which is able to subdue all things to himself”, loudly proclaim his omnipotence. Once more, he that is God is unchangeable, is without any variableness or shadow of turning.

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And of Jesus Christ, it is said (*Hebrews* 1:12), That he is “the same, and his years fail not: Yea, that he is “the same to (*Hebrews* 13:8) day, yesterday, and forever”. In fine, whatever perfection is in God, is in Christ; and therefore he must be truly, properly, and essentially God.

Thirdly, The true and proper Deity of Christ, may be fully proved from the divine works which he has performed. Indeed, he “can do nothing of himself (*John* 5:29), but what he seeth the Father do”; i.e. he can do nothing but what the Father is concerned in with him: Or, he can do nothing that is opposite to his will, or that is not in his power: For “my Father worketh hitherto, and I work”. They work together as coefficient causes: though they work in distinction, yet not in contradiction to each other: “For what things forever he (the Father) doth, there also, οὐμοιωτῶ , in like manner doth the Son”. The works which prove his Deity, are there: The creation of all things out of nothing; upholding all things by the word of his power; performance of miracles; the redemption of his people; the resurrection of the dead; and the last judgment. That all things, visible and invisible, were created by the image of the invisible God, is strongly asserted by the apostle (*Colossians* 1:15,16) Paul: And that all things were made by the Logos, or Word, and that “without him was not any thing made that was made”, is as fully attested by the evangelist (*John* 1:1,2,3) John. Indeed, God is said to create all things by Jesus Christ (*Ephesians* 3:9. *Hebrews* 1. 2.), and by his Son to make the world: But then Christ is not to be considered as the Father’s instrument, which he used in making them; for he made use of none; but as a coefficient cause, equally working with him. The preposition δια , does not always intend the instrumental cause; it is sometimes (*Romans* 2:30, 1 *Corinthians* 1:9. *Hebrews* 2:10.) used of God the Father. If now the creation, which is purely a divine work, is ascribed to Christ, and he is properly the Creator of all things, then he himself cannot be a creature; and if not a creature, he must be God; for between God and a creature there is no medium. Moreover, as he has made all things, so by him all things consist; they have their dependence on him. As he has laid the foundations of the earth, so he bears up the pillars thereof; yea, he upholds all things by the Word of his power, or they would fall into their first nothing; which he could not do, if he was not truly God. The miracles which he wrought in his own Person here on earth, and which were wrought by his apostles through his divine power, are not only proofs that he is οὗ εφρρχο μενωτῶ , the Messiah that was to come; but also, that the Father is in him, and he in the Father; or, in other words, that he is the

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Son of God, and equal with him. The redemption of God's people, obtained by Christ at the expense of his blood and life, is a full demonstration of his Deity. Had he not been God, he would not have been equal to the work; nor would the Father have entrusted him with it; nor would he have undertaken it. The reason why he is mighty to save, is because he is the mighty God. It is his true and real Deity which has put a proper virtue and efficacy in all his actions, as Mediator. The reason why his sacrifice is expiatory of sin, and acceptable to God, is because it is the sacrifice of himself, who is God. The reason why his righteousness is sufficient to justify all the elect, is because it is the righteousness of God. And the reason why his blood cleanseth from all sin, is because it is the blood of him who is the Son of God: No other blood could be a sufficient price to purchase the church, and procure all blessings of grace for her. Hence God is said (*Acts 20:18*) to "purchase the church with his own blood". As Christ hath raised himself from the dead by his own power, and thereby has declared himself to be the Son of God, who had power to lay down his life, and to take it up again; which no mere creature has: So he will quicken and raise the dead at the last day; for it will be owing to his powerful voice that (*John 5:28,29*) "they that are in their graves shall come forth; some to the resurrection of life, and some to the resurrection of damnation". And as the dead will be raised by him, so by him will, both quick and dead, be judged: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men might honour the Son, even as they honour the Father". (*John 5:22*) Now if he was not truly and properly God, he would not be equal to, nor able to go through this work. Was he not God, he could not gather all nations together before him, nor separate the sheep from the goats, and set the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. Nor would he be able to make manifest the counsels of all hearts; or give to every man according to his works; or execute the decisive sentence, which his lips had pronounced.

Fourthly, That Christ is truly God, may be concluded from the divine worship which is due unto him, and is given him. All the angels of God are called upon to worship him, as they according have, both before and after his incarnation; yea, all men are required to honor the Son, and to give the same homage and worship to him as they do to the Father. Now this would not be admitted if he was not the one God with him. For he has said, "My glory will I not give to another (*Isaiah 42:8*); nor my praise to graven images". He is the object of the saints love, hope, faith, trust, and dependence; which he would not be, if he was a creature: For, "cursed be

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the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm and whole heart departeth from the Lord” (Jeremiah 17:5), His name is invoked in prayer, and solemn addresses are made to him; which if he was not God would be idolatry. Yea, the ordinance of baptism, which is a solemn act of religious worship, is ordered to be administered in his name, as well as in the name of the Father, and of the Spirit. In fine, nothing more strongly proves the divinity of Christ than his being the object of religious worship, of which God is always jealous; nor would he ever admit him a partner in it, was he not, in nature and substance, equal to him. From the whole, we need not scruple to assert the Deity of Christ in the fullest and strongest terms, which is an article of the utmost moment and importance, and furnishes out the most solid argument and foundation for faith, peace, joy, and comfort.

CHAPTER 7

Concerning The Sonship Of Christ.

Having in the preceding chapter proved that Christ is truly and properly God; I shall now

III. Consider him as the Son of God, which I shall do in the following method:

First, I shall give some proofs and testimonies of his Sonship.

Secondly, Enquire in what sense he is the Son of God. And,

Thirdly, Observe some things respecting Christ’s Sonship; which may serve to help and assist us in our thoughts and enquiries about it.

First, I shall give some proofs and testimonies of Christ’s Sonship.

Nothing is more strongly attested than this truth, That Christ is the Son of God. The Father, Word, and Spirit, have bore record of it; an angel from heaven has declared it; saints have made confessions of it, and devils have acknowledged it.

1. God the Father bore testimony to the truth of Christ’s Sonship at the time of his baptism, by a voice from heaven, laying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”. (*Matthew 3:17*) As he also did in much the same words, and in the same way, at his transfiguration (*Matthew 17:5*) upon the

mount.

2. The Word bore witness of himself, as the Son of God. Perhaps this may be the reason why the apostle *John* makes use of the phrase, the Word, and not the Son, when he speaks of the three that bear record in heaven; because the thing they bore record of, was the Sonship of Christ. The charge which the Jews brought, and for which they demanded judgment against: Christ (*John* 19:7), was, “because he made himself the Son of God”. He not only asserted that he was, but proved himself to be the Son of God, by unquestionable works and miracles: he asserted himself to be so, when he said: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work”; and, “I and my Father are one (*John* 5:17. and 10:30.)”. The Jews understood him, in these passages, to assert himself to be the Son of God; and that in such a sense, as to make himself equal with him; which had it been a mistake, he would have rectified; but instead of that, he says all the things that were proper to strengthen his Sonship. And when he was charged with blasphemy for asserting it, he appeals to his works for the vindication of it; nor does he ever call in his words. Yea, when the high priest asked him, upon his trial, saying (*Mark* 14:61,62.), “Art thou the Christ, the Son of the blessed? Jesus said, I am”. If the validity of Christ’s testimony should be objected to, and called in question, because it is concerning himself; he has furnished us with an answer which he gave to the Pharisees, when they (*John* 8:13,14,16,17,18.) said, “Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true”. To which he replied; “Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: — For I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of my self, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me”. Hence Christ’s testimony concerning himself, is good and valid; because it is not alone, but is in conjunction with the testimony of the Father, and also of the Holy Ghost; who,

3. Bore witness to the same truth, by his descent upon him as a dove, at the time of his baptism; when the Sonship of Christ was so fully expressed.

And also, by his plenteous effusion of his gifts and grace upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost; whereby they were sufficiently qualified to assert, demonstrate and maintain this great truth, that Jesus was the Son of God; which they every where did;” God working with them (*Hebrews* 2:4.), and bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and divers miracles,

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and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to his will”.

4. The angel which brought the news of the stupendous incarnation of Christ to the virgin, declared, (*Luke* 1:32,35) that he should “be great, and be called the Son of the Highest”: Yea, says he, “That holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God”.

5. Many of the saints have made full and ample confessions of it. John the Baptist, when he law the Spirit of God descending and remaining on him at his baptism (*John* 1:34), bore record that he was the Son of God. *Nathanael*, upon the first sight of him, said unto him , “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, the King of Israel”. When Christ put this question to his disciples, “Whom say ye that I am” (*Matthew* 16:15,16)? *Simon Peter* answered and said, “Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God”. As he also at another time, in the name of the rest of the disciples (*John* 6:67), declared, “We believe, and are sure, that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”. *Martha*, when she was called upon to make a confession of her faith in Christ (*John* 11:27), expressed it in there words: “I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the World”: As did the eunuch also in much the same words, in order to his admission to baptism: “I believe says he, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God”. (*Acts* 8:37), And indeed, this is the faith of every true believer (*1 John* 5:5): For, “who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God”.

6. The devils themselves have been obliged to acknowledge it. Though Satan twice put an if upon Christ’s Sonship, when he tempted him in the wilderness; yet he, at the same time, knew that he was the Son of God; and at other times was forced to confess it; crying (*Matthew* 8:28,29) out and saying, “What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time”? And in another place (*Mark* 3:11): “And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God”. Yea, It is said (*Luke* 4:41) elsewhere, “And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God”.

This then is a truth confessed on all hands, is without controversy, and beyond all contradiction; but in what sense he is the Son of God, is not so easily agreed on; and is what I shall

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Secondly, Enquire into. The *Socinians* deny, that Christ is the eternal Son of God. They own that he is the Son of God, but not before he was the Son of Mary ; yet, where to fix his Sonship, and to what cause to ascribe it, they are at a great loss. *Calovius* ⁷⁵, an *Anti-Socinian* writer, has collected our or their writings, no less; than thirteen causes, or reasons of Christ's Sonship; and more might be added, which shows the wretched uncertainty they are at. Now twelve of these causes must be false ones; for there can be but one true cause of Christ's proper Sonship. It would be tedious, and to little purpose, to consider all that are mentioned by them. Sometimes they tell us, that he is called the Son of God⁷⁶; because of the exceeding great love which God bears towards him: And that to be the only begotten Son, and to be the beloved Son, are terms synonymous. That Christ is the Son of God's love, and that he, who is the begotten Son, is also the beloved Son of God, is certain; but God's love to him is not the foundation or cause of this relation. The reason why he is the Son of God, is not because God loves him; but the reason why he loves him, is because he is his Son. It is not love among men that is the cause of such a relation; there may be love where there is no such relation; and there may be such a relation where there is not love. Sometimes they tell us⁷⁷, that he is called the Son of God, because of the likeness which is between them. That Christ is like unto the Father is certain; for he is "the image of the invisible God, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person": But then this likeness is not the cause or foundation of his Sonship. The reason why he is the Son of God, is not because he is like him; but the reason why he is like him, is because he is his Son, of the same nature and essence with him. At other times they say⁷⁸, That he is the Son of God by adoption; but the scriptures say nothing of that. Moreover, if he was his adopted Son, then he could not be his own Son, or the Son of himself, which he certainly is; and if his own Son, then not his adopted one: An own son is never an adopted one. Nor would he be his begotten Son; for to be begotten, and yet adopted, is not consistent. Besides, he could not be called his only begotten Son in this sense, because there are many adopted sons, even all the elect of God, who are predestinated unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ; which blessing comes to them

75 Socinismus profligatus, Artic 2. Controv. 6. p. 201.

76 Enjedín. Explic. Lc Vet. & Nov. Tsft. p. 178, 179. Catechif. Racov. de persona Christi. c. 1. p. 105.

77 Socinus, Smalciou & alii.

78 Socinus, Smaldus & alii. -- Socinus, Smalcius. Vid . Smiglecium de Christo vero, etc. c. 5. & 9. Et Calov. Socinism. pros- ligat. Attic. 2. Controv. 5. de 6.

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through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and which is witnessed to them by the Spirit of Christ, who is therefore called the Spirit of Adoption. But passing these, with many others, I shall fix upon three of the reasons or causes of Christ's Sonship assigned by them, and consider them, which seem to have the most countenance from scripture; which are there,

1st . That Christ is called the Son of God, on the account of his miraculous conception and birth.

2dly , That he is so called on account of his resurrection from the dead.

And,

3dly, That he is so called on the account of his office as Mediator, Prophet, Priest, and King, and his performance of the same.

1st . It is said, that he is called the Son of God on the account of his miraculous conception and birth⁷⁹. The only scripture on which this is formed, is Luke 1:35. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: Therefore also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God". It will be necessary, before I give my reasons against the notion, built upon this text, to consider the text it fell, on which it is built; and show that it has no foundation in it: In order to which, let it be observed,

1. That this scripture does not say, that therefore the holy thing born of the virgin, should be, but that it should be called the Son of God. It is true indeed, that such an Hebraism is sometimes used; and when persons or things are said to be called, the meaning is, that they are. Thus when the saints are said to be called the Sons of God, the meaning is, that they are the Sons of God. So when it is prophesied of Christ, that his name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, etc. the meaning is, not that he should be usually called by those names, but that he should appear to be all that which was answerable to those names. But this phrase, the Son of God, being a name by which Christ has been, and is usually called, such an Hebraism seems not to be intended here. The angel is not giving a reason of Christ's being the Son of God, or of his constitution as such; for he was the Son

⁷⁹ Cateches. Racov. de per- sona Christi, c. 1. p. 105. -- Socinus, Smaldus & alii. -- Socinus, Smalcus. Vid . Smiglecium de Christo vero, etc. c. 5. & 9. Et Calov.

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of God long before his incarnation; but is speaking of his declaration and manifestation as such in the human nature. Betides.

2. The angel does not predict that he should, for this reason, be called the Son; for either he must call himself so, or others must call him so on this account; or else, the angel's prediction must be false. Now, though he called himself so, and has been often called so by others in the New Testament; yet we never read that he was called so for this reason; consequently this cannot be the angel's meaning; or else, what he said was false, which must by no means be admitted. Again,

3. The particle therefore, is not causal, but consequential. The angel is not giving a reason, why Christ should be the Son of God, but why he should be owned, acknowledged, embraced, and received as such by his people; who would infer and conclude from his wonderful conception and birth, that he must be the Immanuel, God with us, Isaiah prophesied of, Chap. 7:14. That he must be the child that was to be born, and the Son that was given, whose name should be called wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God, etc. of whom the same prophet speaks, Chap. 9:6. Once more,

4. The particle $\kappa\iota$, rendered also, ought not to be overlooked: "Therefore also, the holy thing, etc." The meaning is, that the divine $\Lambda\omicron\gamma\omega\omega$, or Word, being the Son of God, the holy thing which was to be born of the virgin, or the human nature, when united to him, should also be called the Son of God. So that it is not the wonderful conception and birth of the human nature, but the union of it to the divine nature, which was then made, which is the reason why the human nature is called the Son of God; which is what divines call a communication of idioms, or properties; whereby names and things proper to one nature, are predicated of the person of Christ, in the other; of which we have many instances in scripture: See John 3:13. 1 *Corinthians* 2:8. *Acts* 20:28. Having now given the sense of this text, which is the only one pretended to, to build the hypothesis upon; I shall proceed to give my reasons against it. And,

(1.) If the miraculous conception and birth of Christ is the ground and foundation of his being the Son of God, then the Holy Ghost must be the Father of Christ; since he had a special and peculiar concern in that stupendous work. This the *Socinians* have been often pressed with by many

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excellent men who have written against them⁸⁰; but none I ever met with, have ventured to own the consequence. Yet a late writer has been so hardy as to assert in express terms, that the Holy Spirit is the Father of Christ; his words are these: “The sure word declares the Son was conceived by the Holy Spirit; therefore he was the Father of Christ in the nature which was conceived, and was made of a woman; as it must be true, that he, by whom the child was conceived, is the Father”.

He argues both from scripture and reason; but his arguments from both are exceeding bad. He says, “The sure word declares the Son was conceived by the “Holy Ghost”; and therefore was the Father of Christ: Whereas, the sure word declares (*Isaiah 7:12*) that “a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, etc.” And the angel (*Luke 1:31*) declared to Mary, when he brought her the news of the incarnation, that she should” conceive in her womb, and bring forth a Son”. It is indeed (*Matthew 1:20*) said, that “that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost”; but it is never said, that it was conceived by him. It was the virgin that conceived under the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost. He adds, from reason, as he thinks, “It must be true, that he, by whom the child was conceived, is the Father⁸¹”. But I am persuaded, that all mankind, both male and female, except this author, and he too with a very little reflection, will conclude, that the child is conceived, not by the Father, but by the mother of it. That the Holy Ghost is the Father of Christ, is not a hasty thought of this author’s, or a sudden flip of the pen, but a settled and established notion of his; and what he published in a pamphlet above eleven years ago⁸². Against which I object as follows: If the Holy Spirit is the Father of Christ, then there must be two fathers in the Trinity; and so a wretched confusion be introduced there. Whereas, we read but of one Father, and he distinct from the Word and Spirit. We are baptized in the name of one Father, one Son, and one Holy Spirit. Besides, the Father of Christ, is, in many places⁸³, distinguished from the Spirit; and therefore cannot be the same. Yea, the Spirit is

(*Galatians 4:6*) called the Spirit of the Son; which he would not be, if he was the Father of him. Add to this, that Christ, as man, had no Father. *Mary* called *Joseph* his Father, because he was reputed to be so, as he was

80 Smiglecius de Christo vero naturali Dei filio, c. 1. p. 24, 28. Calov.

Socinism. Profligat. Art. 2 Controv. 7. P. 207, 208. Stegmanni Photinianis- mus, Disp. 16. p. 180. Maresii Hy-dea Socinianismi, Tom. 2. p. 6.

81 The great concern of Jew and Gentile, etc. p. 42.

82 The truth as it is in Jesus, etc. §. 10. p. 21. p. 47. P. 45.

83 John 14:16,17,26 and 15:26 Ephesians 1:17 and iii. 14,16.

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supposed to be the Son of *Joseph*; but in reality he had no father as man. As he was $\alpha\varphi\eta\ \tau\omega\rho$, without mother, with respect: to his divine nature, so he was $\alpha\varphi\alpha\ \tau\omega\rho$, without Father, with respect to his human nature; on which account *Melchizedek* was a proper type of him. He is never said to be begotten by the Holy Ghost; nor is he ever said to be begotten as man. He is said to be conceived in the womb of the virgin, to be made flesh, and to be made of a woman, but never to be begotten as man. All those scriptures which speak of him as the only begotten Son, are to be understood in another sense, as I shall show hereafter.

(2.) If the Incarnation of Christ is the ground and foundation of his being the Son of God, then there was no God, the Father of Christ, under the Old Testament, nor much more than seventeen hundred years ago. The *Marcionites* of old asserted this; which put the ancient writers upon proving that it was the Father of Christ who made the world⁸⁴, gave the law, spoke by the prophets, and was the author of the Old Testament; which the apostle (*Hebrews* 1:1,2) strongly confirms, when he says: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the Fathers by the prophets, hath in there last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds”. Nor is it difficult to prove, that he existed as the Father of Christ, before the foundation of the world: For, as “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, he hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world”(*Ephesians* 1:3,4).

(3.) If Christ is the Son of God according to the human nature only, then that distinctive phrase, according to the flesh, which the apostle Paul sometimes makes use of, when speaking of the person of Christ, is useless and impertinent. If he was a Son only as man, it would be needless to add, according to the flesh. We never say of any one, that he is the Son of such an one, according to the flesh; but only, that he is his Son. Christ is the Son of David, according to the flesh, or the human nature; but he is the Son of God, according to the divine nature; which is the true reason of the apostle’s use of the phrase⁸⁵, in *Romans* 1:4. where he says, “Concerning his Son

84 See Dr. Owen on the Trinity, p. 27.

85 Sic & Apostolus de utraque ejus substantia docet: Qui factus est, inquit, ex femine David, hic erit homo & filius hominis; qui desinitus est filius Dei secundum spiritum, hic crit Deus & sermo, Dei filius:

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Jesus Christ, who was made of the feed of David, according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness. See also *Romans* 9:5.

(4.) The incarnation of Christ cannot be the reason and foundation of his divine Sonship; because he was not thereby made the Son of God, but only manifested to be so. “For this purpose, says the apostle (*John* 3:8), the Son of God was manifested”; i.e. in human nature, it being a phrase equivalent to “God manifest in the flesh.” Now as he was God, before he was manifest in the flesh; so he must be the Son of God, before he was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. When God is said to send forth his Son, made of a woman, or in the likeness of sinful flesh; it is certain, that he was a Son before he was lent, before he was made of a woman, or appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh. He did not send forth his Son to become a Son; but he sent him forth to become man. That Christ existed as the Son of God, before his incarnation, may easily be collected out of the writings of the Old Testament. The Jews, in Christ’s time, seem well acquainted with the phrase, the Son of God; and by it understood a divine Person; as is easy to observe in many places (*Matthew* 14:33. and 26:63. and 27:40, 54. *John* 5:17,18. and 10:30, 33-36.): Now this they must learn from the books of the Old Testament. Their ancient writers speak of the Λογος, or Word of God, as his Son. The Jerusalem Targum, on *Genesis* 3:22. Calls the Word of the Lord the only begotten in the highest heavens. *Philo* the Jew speaks of God as unbegotten⁸⁶; and of the divine Word as begotten. He calls him the first begotten Word, and sometimes the first begotten Son⁸⁷. He says the world is God’s younger Son, and that he has one older than that; who, because of his

Videmus duplicem statum, non consurum sed conjunctum in una persona, Deum & hominem, Jesum. Tertullian. adv. Praxeam, c. 27.

Πληναι κατα σατητα. Κοινου γαπου διδασκων συγγενειαν, ουφ λε>γω του δεινωσ οφ δεινα κατα σαρκα υιοΤηεοδορετ. Διαλογ. 1. π. 46. Ed. Strigel.

86. Kai Mwshv mentoi thsav tou ajgennhtou, fhsimati ajut ou ojmh, oujci ajutwl Ikanogwl Qeow. Philo Leg. Alleg. 1. 2. p. 99.

87 Σποιδαζε κοσμειθαι κατα τογονον αφυτου Λογον Ιδ. δε χονσυσ. λιγγ. p. 341.

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seniority, abides with him⁸⁸. Yea, he calls him his most ancient Son⁸⁹, and a Son of complete virtue, who acts the part of an advocate⁹⁰. And as to his generation, he says , that he is not unbegotten as God, nor yet begotten as men⁹¹. *Ben Sira*, a famous Jew, who lived many Years before Christ's time, and was the author of the apocryphal book of *Ecclesiasticus*, speaks of the Lord God as a Father, and as having a Son, when he says: "I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord, not to forsake me in the day of tribulation. "Now there hints they took out of the books of the Old Testament; where are many proofs of a divine Person existing under the character of the Son of God. And to begin with *Daniel* 3:25. where Nebuchadnezzar says, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." How *Nebuchadnezzar*, an Heathen prince, came by this knowledge, that there was a divine Person, who was called the Son of God, I shall not determine; very probably he had it from the Jews, who were in great numbers in his dominions, and some of them in his palace; from whom having heard of such a glorious Person, and seeing such an one in the furnace, he concludes he must be like unto him. All that I bring this passage for, is this, that there was a belief, which obtained in those times, that a glorious divine Person did exist under the character of the Son of God; or Nebuchadnezzar could not have mentioned him as such, nor have likened the Person he saw in the furnace to him. Agur also knew that there was a divine Person who existed in this character, when he said (Proverbs 30:4): "What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?"

Which words plainly show that the Almighty and incomprehensible God, whom he describes, had a Son, who existed with him, was of the same divine, ineffable, and incomprehensible nature, and a distinct Person from him. Earlier than him, *David* takes notice of a divine Person, as the Son of God; and calls upon the kings and judges of the earth to pay homage and

88 Ο μεσμοτεροσ υιθότερον τουτου ουφδενα ειπε νοητων δε αφξιω>σαω παρα εθαιτω καταμε νειν διενοηθη Ιδ.

Θυοδ Δευσ φιτ ιμμουταβ. ρ. 298.

89 Τουτον μετατον υιθον οθ των ο]ντων αφνετειλε πατηρωθι πρωτογονον ωφνομασε. Ιδ. δε χονσουσ, λιγγ. π. 329.

90 Αναγκαιον γασμου πατρι παρακλητω χρησθαι τελειοταωτην αφρετην νητω ωθω οθ Θεοω ω]ν ου]τε γεννητομεν κυριον πατερα κυριου μου~ μη εφγκαταλιπευ με εφν ηθμερα θλιψεω. Id. de.vita Mosis, I 3. ρ. 673.

91 Ο δ αφυτοτηω μεν εφσι του θνητου κεραινον~ τοω αι προνωσ προκοον . Ιβιδ. Θυισ ρετυρν διπιιν Ηαερεσ. π. 509.

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worship to him (*Psalm* 2:12), saying, “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” Not to take notice of another passage in the same place; “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:” Which I shall consider hereafter. To conclude this argument, Christ existed as the Son of God, at the creation of all things. For God, by him his Son, made the worlds, Hebrews 1:2. Yea, before any creature was made; before the sun was, he was the Son of God: See *Psalm* 72:17. where the words $\omega\mu\ \omega\nu\psi\ \mu\ \psi\nu\pi\lambda$ may be rendered, *before the sun was, his name was Yinnon* ; which the Jews say⁹² , is one of the names of the Messiah, and comes from \imath , which signifies a Son; and is explained by *Aben Ezra*⁹³ , $\imath\ \imath\ \imath\ \imath$, *shall be called a Son*: But on this I lay no great stress. From the whole it is manifest, that Christ bore the character of the Son of God under the Old Testament-dispensation, and before his incarnation; and therefore his incarnation cannot be the true cause and reason of his being the Son of God. Moreover,

(5.) If the incarnation of Christ was the cause of his divine Sonship, or of his being the Son of God, then he would be but in the same class of Sonship as creatures, angels, and men are. *Adam* is called the Son of God, being wonderfully made and created by him, out of the dust of the earth; and all his posterity are the offspring of God. Angels are also the Sons of God by creation: But “to which of the angels said he, i.e. God at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:” (Hebrews 1:5) , And much less did he ever say so to any of the sons of men. The filiation of Christ is of an higher rank than that of creatures, and therefore must be placed to another account. I go on,

2dly. To consider another cause or reason assigned, why Christ is called the Son of God⁹⁴ , and that is, his resurrection from the dead; which must be rejected for the following reasons:

1. He was the Son of God before his resurrection; and therefore it can never be the foundation of this relation. The *Socinians* themselves say, that he is called the Son of God, on the account of his incarnation; and therefore before his resurrection. As his own Son, God sent him forth in the likeness of sinful flesh (*Romans* 8:3,32); and as such he spared him not, but delivered him up to death; both which acts were previous to his resurrection. Yea, God, by a

92 Talmud Sanhed. fol. 98. col. 2

93 In Buxtorf. Lex. Rad. \imath

94 Vid. Calov. Socinism. Proflig. Art. 2. Controv. 9 p. 211.

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voice. from heaven, declared him to be his Son (*Matthew* 3:17. and 17:5), both at his baptism and transfiguration. And his disciples, even before his death, knew, and were sure (*John* 6:66) that he was the Son of the living God. The same was confessed by others, whilst he was alive; and by the Centurion, (*Matthew* 27:54) when he hung upon the cross. All which fully evince, that he was the Son of God before his resurrection.

2. If his resurrection from the dead was the cause of his divine filiation, then he must beget himself, or be the author of his own Sonship, which is absurd; for he was himself concerned in his resurrection from the dead. As he had power to lay down his life, which no mere creature has; so he had power to take it up again, which none but God could do: According to his own prophecy, when the temple of his body was destroyed, he raised it up again in three days.

3. If his resurrection from the dead is the ground of his Sonship, then his Sonship must be metaphorical, and not proper: Whereas, he is called God's own or proper Son⁹⁵, and the Son of himself; and God is called his own or proper Father⁹⁶.

4. He could not be called on this account, God's only begotten Son, which is the character he sometimes bears; because there are others that have been, and millions that will be raised from the dead, betides him. He may indeed, on the account of his resurrection, be called, as he is, the first born from the dead, *Colossians* 1:18. and the first begotten of the dead, *Revelation* 1:5. because he is the first fruits of them that sleep, *Corinthians* 15:20. but he cannot be called the only begotten. Besides, if this was a true cause of divine Sonship, not only saints, but wicked men, would be the sons of God: For there will be "a resurrection both of the just and unjust" (*Acts* 24:15). Some of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt, as others to everlasting life: (*Daniel* 12:2. *John* 5:28,39.) And some of them that are in their graves, shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation, as others to the resurrection of life: Yet there are no where called, nor will they ever bear the character of the sons of God. Indeed, the saints are said to be "the of God, being the children of the resurrection." (*Luke* 20:36) Not that their resurrection from the dead

95 *Ov ge tou ijdjou uiJou oujk eifeisato* *Romans* 8:32

96 *ToΡουανσ* 8:3

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will be the cause of their relation to God as children; for they were such before: but being raised from the dead by virtue of their union to Christ, and being by him put into the possession of the heavenly inheritance, they will be manifested and declared to be children, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. For this reason, I apprehend, the words in *Psalm 2:7*. “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,” are by the apostle, in *Acts 13:33*. applied to the resurrection of Christ. Not that he was then begotten as God’s own Son, for he was so before, as has been proved; but he was then manifested to be the eternally begotten Son of God. Things are, in an improper sense, said to be, when they are only manifested: So Christ is said to be that day begotten, because he was (*Romans 1:4*) “declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead.” Now this is the only passage on which this notion is Built; and what little foundation there is for it, is easy to be observed. I proceed,

3dly . To consider another reason given of Christ’s Sonship; and that is, his office as Mediator. The *Socinians* say that he is called the Son of God because he was sanctified, or set apart to this work and office⁹⁷; and was sent into the world to do it; and because he has executed the offices of Prophet, Priest and King, and is now exalted in glory. It is no wonder to hear them say, that Christ is the Son of God by office; when it is a darling notion of theirs, that he is only God by office; for the sake of which, they endeavour to support this. And since (*Isaiah 9:5*) smells so rank of *Socinianisin*, or rather, is a part and branch of it, it should have the less countenance from, and be the less regarded by such who have a true value for the proper divinity of Christ. That he who is the Mediator is the Son of God, is certain; but that his being the Mediator is the reason of his being called the Son of God, is the thing in question. That many, or most of the scriptures which speak of him as the Son of God, do at the same time hint some things which relate to him as Mediator, is not denied; for the scriptures do mostly speak of God considered in and through the Mediator; and of the Son of God as such: But that his Mediatorship is the foundation of his Sonship, is a question that ought to be proved, and not begged. There are few scriptures that speak of Christ as God, but also speak of him as man, or as he is considered in his office as Mediator. Thus when he is called the Mighty God, he is in the same verse said to be born as a child; and when he is represented as “over all, God blessed for ever;” (*Romans 9:5*) he is said, at the same time, to be

97 *Vide Socinism. proflig. Art. 2. Controv. 6, & 8. p. 201, 209*

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of the Fathers as concerning the flesh. If this way of interpreting scripture be allowed of, a subtle *Socinian* knows how to make his advantage of it, to the destruction of Christ's proper Deity, as well as Sonship. The text which the *Socinians* chiefly build this notion on, is John 10:36. "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God." That he who was sanctified, and sent into the world, was the Son of God, may very well be collected from there words, and from his sanctification and mission; because no other was promised to be sent; and no other was expected to come, but he who was the Son of God: But that his sanctification and mission are the reason why he is called the Son of God, cannot be from hence concluded; because he was the Son of God before he was sent. In the preceding verses Christ had asserted his equality with the Father: Upon which, the Jews charge him with blasphemy, because he made himself God. To vindicate himself from this charge, he first argues from his inferior character, as being in office; that if magistrates, without blasphemy, might be called gods, much more might he, who was sanctified and sent into the world by the Father. But he does not let the stress of his Deity and Sonship rest here; but proceeds to prove that he was truly and properly God, and the Son of God, by doing the same works his Father did. From the whole, I see no reason to conclude from this text, that Christ being in office as Mediator, is the cause of his being called the Son of God. Against which, I have further to object, as follows:

1. If Christ is the Son of God by office, and not nature, then he must be so only in an improper, allusive, and metaphorical sense; just as magistrates are called gods (Psalm 82:6), and the children of the Most High. Whereas, as has been before observed, he is called his own Son, his only begotten Son, and the Son of himself.

2. The Mediatorship of Christ is not the foundation of his Sonship, but his Sonship is the foundation of his Mediatorship. He is not the Son of God because he is Mediator; but he is Mediator because he is the Son of God. He must be considered, at least, in order of nature, as existing under some character or another, antecedent to his investiture with the office of a Mediator. If I prove that he existed as a Son, previous to his being a Mediator, the conclusion is easy, that his Mediatorship cannot be the cause, reason, or foundation of his Sonship. And, I think, this may be done by considering distinctly, and apart, his several offices of King, Priest, and Prophet, and his

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investiture into them. As to his kingly office, and his installment into that (Hebrews 1:8) , it is said: “But unto the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.” Which words are directed to Christ, under the character of the Son; and contain the Father’s solemn inauguration of him into his kingly office; his being set up and declared to be King over God’s holy hill of Zion, and the perpetuity and righteousness of his kingdom. Concerning his priestly office, we read (*Hebrews 7:27*), That “the law maketh men high priests, which have infirmity; but the Word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore;” i.e. the Word of the oath, or God’s eternal counsel and covenant, which. has been made more clear and manifest since the law was given, maketh the Son; What? not a Son; but maketh the Son a priest. It follows then, that he was a Son before he was a priest; before he was constituted as such, or invested with the priestly office. Again, he was the Son of God, previous to his investiture with, entrance upon, or discharge of his prophetic office. And indeed, his being the only begotten Son, was what qualified him for it: For “no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” (*John 1:18*) Being the only begotten of the Father, and lying in his bosom, and to privy to all his thoughts, purposes and counsels, he was the only Person proper to be sent into the world, as the great prophet of the Lord, to declare his mind and will to the sons of men.

3. Some scriptures do manifestly distinguish him as a Son, from the consideration of him in the mediatorial office; as in the eunuch’s confession of faith (*Acts 8:37*); when he said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” If this phrase, *Son of God*, is only expressive of his office as Mediator, it coincides with the other phrase, Jesus Christ; and then the sense is, I believe that Christ is the Christ, or the Mediator is the Mediator; which sense carries in it no distinct ideas. The plain meaning of the confession is; I believe that Jesus Christ, the true Messiah and Savior of sinners, who was sent into the world for that purpose, is no less a Person than the Son of God; who is of the same nature with God, and equal to him. Likewise, when Saul, upon his conversion, is said (*Acts 9:20*) to “preach Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” If the term, Son of God, is a term of office, the meaning must be, that he preached that Christ was the Christ, or the Mediator is the Mediator: Whereas, the sense is, that he preached that the Messiah, who had lately appeared in the world, with all the true characters

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of the promised one, was a divine Person, no less than the Son of God; who had the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in him. The same may be observed in other passages. (*John* 4:14,15 and 5:5) In fine, if Christ is the Son of God only as he is Mediator, then he is so as a servant; for Christ, as Mediator, is God's righteous servant; and so those ideas of Son and Servant, which are otherwise clear and distinct, are blended together and confounded; and that beautiful antithesis between Moses and Christ is spoiled; where (*Hebrews* 3:5,6) is said to be "faithful in all his house, as a servant; but Christ as a Son over his own house." For if he is the Son of God by virtue of his office, as Mediator, he is a servant as such, as Moses was; only he is a servant of an higher rank, and in a greater office. I believe no instance can be produced among men, of any one being called the son of another, because he is his servant. A son and a servant are always reckoned distinct; not but that he who is a son may also be a servant; but then he is not a son because he is so. This distinction our Lord keeps up (*John* 8:35), when he says; "The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever."

4. Some scriptures speak of Christ as the Son of God, as adding a luster to his office, and as putting a virtue into his actions as Mediator; yea, as that it was somewhat surprising, that he, being the Son of God, should act the part of a Mediator. Sometimes the scripture speaks of him under this character, as adding a luster to his office as Mediator; as when the apostle says (*Hebrews* 4:14) "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." What is it that makes this high priest, Jesus, so great an high priest, and furnishes out so strong an argument to hold fast our profession of him? It is his being the Son of God by nature, and not by office. If this was only a term of office, there would be no emphasis in it; nor would there be such strength in the argument formed upon it. Again, the scripture sometimes speaks of him under this character, as the Son of God, as putting a virtue and efficacy into his actions as Mediator. Thus the apostle John ascribes the virtue of his blood, in cleansing from all sin, to his being the Son of God, when he says: (*1 John* 1:7) "And the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, (here lies the emphasis of the words,) cleanseth us from all sin". Once more, the scripture speaks of it as something wonderful, that he who is the Son of God, should act the part of a Mediator. Hence we are told (*Hebrews* 5:8), That "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience, by the things which he suffered": But where's the wonder, or what surprising thing is it, that he

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being a Mediator, should act the part of a Mediator? No, the wonder lies here; that he being the Son of God, in the form of God, and equal with him, should be obedient to death, even the death of the cross. In fine, all those (John 3:16. Romans 8:3,32. 1 John 4:9,10) scriptures which are designed to express the greatness of God's love in the gift and mission of his Son, and in his delivering him up for the sins of all his people, do better and more fully express it, when this phrase, the Son of God, is understood to intend one who is a divine person, and of the same nature with God, than when it is understood to intend only one who is a servant under him.

There are some who assert the proper Deity of the Son, and his distinct personality from the Father; who are neither in the *Socinian* nor *Sabellian* scheme; and yet think that the terms, "Messiah, King of *Israel*, and Son of God, are synonymous"⁹⁸. And that "the second person is called the Son of God; not merely on the account of the divine nature, but as the human nature is in union with it"⁹⁹: Or, as he is God-man and Mediator. And that "his eternal generation intends nothing else than an eternal communion of the same nature and co-existence with the first person"¹⁰⁰. And also, that the "those names, Father and Son, chiefly signify a communion of the same nature, yet so as to respect and have a singular regard to the manner in which the sacred Trinity would manifest it, by the wonderful economy of persons, especially in the work of man's redemption"¹⁰¹. To which it has been replied: That "the

98 Videmus enim nomina illa, Messias, rex Israelis, filius Dei in illis locis (nempe Matthew 16:16. John 1:49 & 11:27. Matthew 26:63. John 20:31.) quodam, modo ijsadunamou~nta , i.e. tan- dem significandi vim lubere, ut qui unum novit, alia quoque noverit. Tali enim modo secunda persona in ordine & skesei ad primam, Deitatem suam per opera oeconomica de-monstravit, quo filius potest in ordine ad patrem suum. Roell. De generatione filii, Dissirt. 1. p. 42. p. 43. gid.

Etiam Dissert. 2. p. 105. p. 133.

99 Ratio erga car secunda persona Deita- tis voetur filius Dei, meo iudicio, petenda est, non ex divina ejus natura simpliciter, sed quatenus humanam sibi conjunxit, & in ea divinae gloriam demonstrare voluit, operibus iis, quae secundum oeconomiam peragere debebat ut Mediator generis humani, Id.

Dissert. 2. 105. p. 133

100 Probatur aeternitate secundae personae proculdubio nihil aliud aeterna ejus gener- atio significare potest quam aeternam na-turae ejusdem communionem & cum prima coexistentiam. Id. Dissert. 1. §. 32. p. 34.

101 *Quod nomina ilia* (nempe, pater & filius) significant praecipue & in emphasi *communionem ejusdem naturae*, verum ira, ut *moduae* quoque, quo

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reason why the phrase, the Son of God, is sometimes used in the writings of the New Testament, under the same signification with the Word, Messiah, or Christ, as John 1:49. Matthew 16:16. is, because the Jews observing that he, who in Psalm 2:2. is called the Messiah, is afterwards called the Son of God, often used the phrase, the Son of God, for the Messiah. But from hence it ought not to be argued, that the reason why the second person is called the Son of God, is to be taken from his mediatorial office. This only can be concluded from it. That the Messiah ought to be the Son of God, and to be demonstrated as such. Not that therefore he was to be called the Son of God, because he was the Messiah, or Redeemer of mankind¹⁰²". And, That if the generation of the Son, only intends a communion of the same nature, and a co-existence with the Father, then, "to beget in the Father, intends "the same as to be begotten in the Son. That the word Father, in the first person, signifies the same as the word Son, in the second. That the same who is now called the Father, might have been called the Son; and which is now called the Son, might have been called the Father: Yea, that the second person might be called a Father to the first, as the first be called a Father to the second¹⁰³". Which produced this ingenuous confession; That "it might have so been, if it had been the will of God, that the person, which

eam manifestare voluit sacrosancta Trinitas per admirandam illam personarum, in operibus imprimis re-demptionis humani generis, oteonomian respiciant & ad eum singularem σκεσιν habeant. Id. §. 40. p. 40.

102 Quod vero vocabulum *filii* Dei aliquando in scriptis novi Testamenti idem valeat significatione, quod vocabulum *Messias* sive *Christus*, John 1:50. Matthew 16:16. Id inde ortum est, quod Judaei considerarent, cum qui Psal. 2:2. *Messias* vocatur, deinceps vocari *filium Dei*. Inde est, inquam, quod phra-tin silli Dei saepe acceperint pro *Messia*. Sed inde minime argui potest, ex *Mediato-rio Christi* officio, petendam esse rationem, cur secunda persona vocatur *filii Dei*. Id tantum inde colligi potest, quod *Messias* debuerit esse & demonstrari *Dei filii*. Non vero illud, quod ideo Dei filius vocandus erat, quod sit *Messias* sive *Redemptor* generis humani. Vitringat Epilog. Disput. de generatione filii contr. *Roell*. §. 28. p. 45.

103 "Quarum refutationi subjunxeram absurda, quibus gravantur. I. *Generare* in patre idem esse & notare secundum intentionem spiritus sancti, quod *generari* in filio. 2. Vocem *patris* in persona *prima* idem notate, quod eam filii notat in *secunda*. 3. Eam personam, quae nunc dicitur pater, potuisse dictam esse *filium*, & quae nunc dicitur *filii*, potuisse esse dictam *patrem*. 4. Addo nunc *personam secundam* aequae posse dici *patrem primae*, ac prima dicitur *pater secundae*. Id. p. 3, 4.

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is now called the Father, might have been called the Son¹⁰⁴". It has been also further observed, "That the first person appears to be the Father, the second person to be the Son of the Father, and the third person to be the Spirit of the Father and the Son, in the redemption of mankind. Yet this appearance and manifestation is not the reason why the first person is called the Father, the second the Son, and the third the Spirit; for unless they had been Father, Son, and Spirit, before this manifestation of their economy, these three persons could not be manifested and discovered as such. If therefore they were Father, Son, and Spirit, before this manifestation, it evidently follows, that the reason of those names, cannot, nor ought to be taken from this manifestation, but from the nature of the perfections of those three persons: For the three persons would have been Father, Son, and Spirit, if they had never been discovered and manifested as such among men¹⁰⁵". To which I would only add, That if these names are given to these three divine persons on the account of their distinct concern in the economy of man's salvation, some reason from thence ought to be given, why the first person is called the Father, the second the Son, and the third the Spirit. But I shall now proceed to show that Christ is the Son of God, as he is a distinct divine person in the Godhead; or, that he is the true and natural Son of God; begotten in the divine essence by the Father, in a way and manner not to be comprehended or conceived of by us. And.

(1.) That Christ is the true and natural Son of God, and not so in an improper, 104 Ut ingenue loquar, non video, quid in eo difficultatis tandem esse possit, si dicamus, potuisse forte: Nescio, enim hoc, & non nili de perceptis & notis judicare licet: Potuisse, inquam, forte, si visum isa Deo suiffet, fieri, ut quae perform nunc *pater* vocatur, *filius*, vocata *fuisset*. *Rodl.* De generatione filii, Dis-sert. 2. §. 39. p. 40.

105 *Prima persona* est demonstrata esse *Pater*; *secunda persona* est demonstrata & manifestata esse *filius patris*; *tertia persona* est demonstrata & manifestata esse spiritus patris & filii in redemptione generis humani; sed haec *demonstratio* & *manifestatio* non est caussa, cur prima persona *pater*, secunda *filius*, & *tertia spiritus* vocata est; nisi enim jam ante illam *manifestationem* suae oeconomiae suiffent *pater*, *filius* & *spiritus* f. non potuissent tres illae personae, ut tales *manifestari* & *demonstrari*: si vero jam ante illam *manifestationem* fuerunt *pater*, *filius*, & *spiritus*, sequitur evidenter, quod ratio horum nominum non possit vel de-beat peti ab illa *manifestatione*, sed ex ipfa natura perfectionum trium harum personarum; *tres enim personae* suiffent *pater*, *fillus*, & *spiritus*, etiamsi ut tales nunquam suiffent demonstratae & manifestatae inter hom-ines. *Vitringas* Epilog. Disp. p. 42.

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mediatorial works and actions, but from such works which he performed as God. When Satan disputed his Sonship, he put him upon proof of it, by doing that which none but God could do (Matthew 4:3,6); which was, to command stones to be made bread: As also, by doing that which he knew, if he was a mere man, and not the Son of God, must end in his death; which was, to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. Much in the same manner the Jews insulted him on the cross, and said (Matthew 27:40) to him, “Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thy self. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross”. It was an instance of Christ’s omniscience which obliged Nathanael to make that ingenuous confession of him, (John 1:49) saying: “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God”. It was an act of Christ’s omnipotence in stilling the boisterous wind, which caused the men in the ship, where the disciples were, to come and worship him; “saying, of a truth, Thou art the Son of God”. (Matthew 14:33) When Christ was suffering on the cross, it was not the satisfaction he then made to law and justice for the sins of his people, or the remission of their fins, which he then procured by his blood, or any such theandric or mediatorial work then perform but the darkness of the heavens, the quaking of the earth, rending of the rocks, and such like divine and surprising works, which made the Centurion, and those that were with him, say, “ Truly this was the Son of God”.

(5.) The form of baptism (Matthew 27:54) runs, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”. Baptism is a solemn act of divine worship, and is not to be administered in the name of any but a divine person. If the term Son does not express the dignity of his divine nature, which is the original foundation and support of such divine worship, and what gives him a claim to it, but only his office as Mediator; then we are baptized in the name of two divine persons, considered in their highest titles and characters; and in the name of the other, in his lower and inferior title and character.

(6) As the phrase the Son of man, intends one that is truly man; so the phrase, the Son of God, must intend one that is truly God. If the Messiah is called the Son of man, from the nature in which he is man, he must be called the Son of God from the nature in which he is God. From the whole, I think, we may strongly conclude, that Christ is the true and natural Son of God, begotten by God the Father, in the divine nature or essence; though

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the modus of generation may be inexplicable by us. I go on, Thirdly, To take notice of some things which may be of some service in the consideration of this momentous article of faith.

1. I observe, that several scriptures which have been formerly insisted on as proofs of Christ's eternal Sonship, have been of late dropped; such as *Psalm 2:7. Proverbs 8:22-30. Micah 5:2.* and by those who have asserted the proper Deity, and natural Sonship of Christ¹⁰⁶. As for *Psalm 2:7.* I am unwilling to part with it, as a proof of Christ's eternal filiation: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee". As for the phrase this day, it may well be thought to express eternity; which is with God an eternal now. A thousand years with him, is as one day; and so is eternity, and is called a day, in *Isaiah 43:13.* Likewise we read of the days of eternity in *Micah 5:2.* And the divine Being is called the Ancient of days, *Daniel 7:9.* Christ indeed, in this psalm, is spoken of as Mediator, as King, upon God's holy hill of Zion; against whom the Heathen raged, and the kings of the earth conspired; and to set forth the dignity of his person, the greatness of their crime, the fruitlessness of their attempts, It is here declared, that he is no other than God's own begotten Son. In the same way, to show the glory of his nature, the excellency of his person, and his pre-eminence to angels, are the words cited in *Hebrews 1:5.* They are also cited in *Hebrews 5:5.* where all that can be made of them is this, That he, who made Christ an high priest, had said unto him, "Thou art my son, etc." Not that his saying so to him, was the constitution of him as an high priest, it being only descriptive of him who made him so. The words are once more cited in *Acts 13:33.* and referred to Christ's resurrection; which, as has been already observed, was only a declaration of the relation it self. And indeed, these words may very properly be applied to every case and time, wherein Christ was manifested and declared to be the Son of God¹⁰⁷. As for *Proverbs 8:1* it is a glorious proof of Christ's eternal existence, though not so clear an one of his eternal Sonship. The phrases of setting up, possessing, bringing forth, and bringing up, seem rather to refer to his mediatorial office. Though had he not eternally existed, he could not have been set up as Mediator from everlasting; or been brought forth before the mountains were formed, or the hills were made. *Micah 5:2.* is also a strong and clear proof of Christ's eternity, but

106 See. Huffey's Glory of Christ unveiled, etc. p. 91, 92, 93, etc

107 Atque hinc est quod illud, *tu es filius meus*, *Psal. 2:7.* applicetur in scriptis N. Test. omni casui; in quo Christus demonstratus est esse *Dei filius.* *Vistringae Epilog. Disp de generatione filii contra Roell.* p. 28. p. 44.

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not of his Sonship. The phrase, his goings forth were of old, is in the plural number, and denotes more acts than one; and betides, cannot intend the Father's begetting the Son, but the goings forth, methods and steps of Christ in the everlasting council and covenant of peace, to secure the salvation of his people: Though had he not eternally existed, he could not have gone forth in such ways and methods from everlasting. To these might be added, Isaiah 53:8. "Who shall declare his generation", which most of the ancients understood of the eternal generation of Christ; though the Hebrew word, דור , will by no means admit of such a sense; but the text either intends the numerous offspring and seed of the Messiah, or the cruelty, barbarity, and wickedness of the age, or men of that generation in which he should live. I have not therefore produced there passages as proofs of Christ's divine Sonship: The truth is supportable without them.

2. I observe, that the divine nature of the Son is no more begotten than the divine nature of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost; the reason is, because it is the same divine nature, which is common to, and is possessed by all three. Hence it would follow, that if the divine nature of the Son was begotten, so would the divine nature of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost likewise. The divine essence neither begets nor is begotten¹⁰⁸. It is a divine person in the essence that begets, and a divine person in that essence that is begotten. Essence does not beget essence, but person begets person, otherwise there would be more than one essence: Whereas, though there are more persons than one, yet there is no more than one essence. A late writer has therefore very wrongly represented us as holding that the divinity of Christ is begotten.

3. I choose rather to express my self with those divines, who say that the Son is begotten in, and not out of the divine essence¹⁰⁹. Christ, as God's only begotten Son, is in the bosom of the Father. The Father is in him, and he is in the Father. The Father's essence or substance is not the matter out of which he is begotten. The act of begetting is internal and immanent in God. The Father begets a divine person not out of, but in his nature and essence. All those scriptures which (*John* 8:42. and 13:3. and . 16:27, 28.) speak of Christ as proceeding and coming forth from God, I understand of his mission into the world as Mediator.

108 *Vide* Wendelin. Christian. Theolog. 1. t. c. 2. Thes. ii. P. 94. Essen. System. Theolog. par. 1. Disp. 17. p. 149.

109 Altling. Problem. Theolog. par. 1. Probl. 11. p. 52, Synops. pur. Theolog. Disp. 8. Thes, 12 p. 85.

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4. We must remove every thing that carries in it imperfection from the divine generation and Sonship of Christ; such as divisibility, or multiplication of essence, priority and posteriority, dependence and the like. We are not to make natural or carnal generation the rule and measure of divine generation, which is hyper physical, or above nature; nor to run the parallel between these two in every respect; It is enough that there is some kind of analogy and agreement between them, which occasions the use of the terms, generation, sonship, etc. for instance, as in human generation, person begets person, and like begets like; so it is in divine generation. But,

5. The modus or manner of it, is not to be conceived of, or explained by us. Nor need we wonder that so it should be: We cannot account for our own generation, much less for Christ's. We "know not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child." (Ecclesiastes 11:3) The regeneration of the saints is a riddle to the natural man. He says, with *Nicodemus*, (John 3:9) " How can there things be ?" And it need not be surprising, that the divine generation of Christ should be so, even to a spiritual man. If the incarnation of Christ, and the union of two natures in one person, are, without controversy, a great mystery of godliness; we should also be content to have Christ's eternal filiation so accounted.

CHAPTER 8

Concerning The Personality Of The Son.

Having considered the character of the Word, which the second person bears; proved his Deity, and inquired into his Sonship, I proceed,

IV. To establish his divine and distinct personality.

The definition of a person agrees with him. He is an individual that subsists of himself, lives, wills, and understands. He has life in himself, and is the author of life in others. He has a will distinct from his Father's, though not opposite to it; and knows his Father as perfectly as his Father knows him. To go about to prove Christ to be a person, and a distinct person from the Father, and the Holy Ghost, is just such another undertaking, as to prove that there is such a glorious and luminous body as the sun, when it shines at noon day, and we are encompassed with its dazzling beams and light. To give the whole proof of this truth in its utmost compass would be to transcribe great part of the New Testament, where it is to be met with in almost every verse

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and line. I'll just give some few hints:

1. All those (*John* 1:14,18. and 3:16. *Romans* 8:3,32. with many others.) scriptures which speak of Christ as the Son of God, as his own Son, and his only begotten Son, show him to be a person, and a distinct one. Was he not a person, he could not properly be said to be begotten; and if he is a Son, he must be distinct from him whose Son he is, and by whom he is begotten. As it is the distinctive personal character of the Father to beget, so it is the distinctive personal character of the Son to be begotten. As the Son and Spirit are never said to beget, so it is never said of the Father, or of the Holy Ghost, that they are begotten.

2. All those (*Proverbs* 8:30. *John* 1:1. 1 *John* 1:2.) scriptures which declare that Christ was with God the Father, and was as one brought up with him, and the like, plainly bespeak his distinct Personality; for he must be a person to be with another; and he must be distinct from him with whom he is. He cannot properly be said to be with himself; nor is there any reason to conclude, that this is the sense of those scriptures.

3. All those (*Proverbs* 8:22,23. *John* 6:37 and 10:28. *Ephesians* 1:3. 2 *Timothy* 1:9. *Isaiah* 48:16.) scriptures which assert that he was set up from everlasting, as the covenant-head, and Mediator; and that all the persons of the elect, with all blessings and grace for them, were put into his hands as such, confirm this truth. He must be a person, and not a mere name or character, or he could not be said to be set up, and to have all the elect of God, with all spiritual blessings for them, given unto him; and he must be a distinct person from him who set him up, and entrusted him with all those persons and things.

4. All those (*Galatians* 4:4. 1 *John* 4:9,10,14) scriptures which assure us that he was sent in the fullness of time, to be the Saviour of sinners, are so many proofs of his distinct Personality. Was he not a person, he could not be sent; and he must be distinct from him, or them, by whom he is sent. He that sends, and he that is sent, cannot be the same person; or else it must be said, that he sent himself.

5. All those scriptures (*Ephesians* 5:2. *Hebrews* 9:14. *Revelation* 5:9. *Romans* 5:10) which speak of his satisfaction and sacrifice; as when he is

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said to offer up himself to God, to redeem us to God by his blood, and to reconcile us to him by his death, show his distinct Personality. Was he not a person, he could not be said to do all this. And he must be distinct from him, to whom he offered himself, and to whom he redeemed and reconciled his people. Surely it will not be proper to say, that he offered up himself to himself; or made satisfaction for the sins of his people to himself.

6. All those scriptures (*John 20:17. Hebrews 1:3.*) which speak of his ascension to heaven, and his session at God's right hand, are full and clear testimonies of this truth. He must be a Person distinct from his God, and our God, from his Father, and our Father, to whom he ascended; and cannot be the same person with him, at whose right hand he sits.

7. All those scriptures (*Hebrews 9:24. and 7:25. 1 John 2:1.*), which speak of his advocacy, intercession, and mediation, confirm the same. For surely he cannot be said to be an advocate with himself, to make intercession with himself, or to mediate with himself on the behalf of his people.

Once more, his judging the world at the last day, with all the circumstances attending it, prove him to be a person, a divine person, and a distinct person from the Father and the Holy Ghost. For as that work is never ascribed to the Holy Ghost in scripture, so of the Father it is said, (*John 5:22*) That he "judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." In fine, he will, as a distinct person from the Father and the Holy Ghost, be the object of the saints praise, admiration, and worship, throughout the endless ages of eternity.

CHAPTER 9

Proving The Personality And Deity Of The Holy Ghost

Have considered the respective characters, proper Deity, and distinct Personality of the Father and the Son; and I am now to treat of the Holy Ghost. I shall in my entrance on this work just observe, that the words Ghost and Spirit, are of the same signification; one and the same word in the Greek language is translated by them both. This I observe, for the fake of some poor, weak, ignorant persons, who take them to be different; and foolishly talk of an eternal created Spirit, which is a contradiction in terms, as diviner from the Holy Ghost. The Word Spirit, is variously used; sometimes it

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signifies the wind, as in *John* 3:8. where the Holy Spirit is compared to it, because of their agreement in name; and because of some analogy between that and the divine operations of the Spirit. Sometimes by it is meant the breath, as in *James* 1:26. And it is easy to observe, that the Holy Spirit is called the breath of the Lord (*Psalm* 33:6. *Job* 33:3.), and the breath of the Almighty. Now, as generation expresses the Son's distinct mode of subsisting in the divine essence, so spiration may also express the Spirit's distinct mode of subsisting therein; and perhaps, is the true reason of his bearing this name¹¹⁰. The soul of man is a spirit: "There is a spirit in man"; and that is his soul, which the Lord has formed in him; and therefore he is called the Father of Spirits. But the soul of man, even when renewed and sanctified, is never called the Holy Spirit, as some have vainly imagined, who are no friends to the proper Deity of the blessed Spirit¹¹¹. Angels are called by the same name; God makes his angels spirits, and by him they are sent forth as ministering spirits: But of this kind of spirits is not the Holy Ghost. The phrase is never used for the whole company and multitude of holy angels, as some have insinuated¹¹². A single instance of this use of it cannot be produced; no one proof of it can be given. God, as essentially considered, is said to be a Spirit, i.e. a spiritual Substance; which may be said of all the three Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; but the third person is only called the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, in distinction from the Father and Son, whom I shall endeavour to prove to be a person, a distinct Person, and a divine person.

First, I shall endeavour to prove him to be a Person, which will be easily done, by observing,

1. That personal subsistence is ascribed to him. As the Father hath life in himself, and the Son hath life in himself, so has the Holy Ghost life in himself He is the author of natural life: "The breath or Spirit of the Almighty, says Elihu, hath given me life." (*Job* 33:4) And he is the author of all spiritual life: It is he who implants the principle of life, and maintains and preserves

¹¹⁰ Vocabulam ריח quando *tertia personae* applicatur, notat *halitum*.

Quod inde constat, quia alias vocatur spiritus oris sive halitus Dei, eo vero emblemate significatur modus subsistendi Spiritus. Qui eit per *processionem naturalem*. Vitrinae Epilog. Disp. de generatione filii, §. 29. p.

46.

¹¹¹ Vid. *Wittichii* causa Spiritus Sancti, p. 8, 9.

¹¹² Vid. Idem, p. 118, 119, etc. & causa Spiritus Sancti victrix, p. 156, 157, etc.

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it unto eternal life. All which he could not be, and do, unless he had life in himself. And if he has life in himself, he must be a person that subsists of himself.

2. Personal characters and actions are ascribed unto him. He is represented as a person, when he is laid to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; to comfort the hearts of God's people; witness their adoption to them; teach them all things; guide them into all truth; assist them in, their prayers; make intercession for them, according to the will of God; and seal them up unto the day of redemption. And also, when he is said to furnish men with gifts for the work of the ministry, and calls and appoints them thereunto. Now all these things worketh one and the self-same Spirit: All which he could not do; nor would he be called, as he is, the Spirit of faith, holiness, adoption, wisdom and revelation; the anointing which teacheth all things; with many other names and characters of the fame import, was he not a person.

3. Personal properties, such as understanding and will, are ascribed to him.

He is an intelligent agent; he knows the things of God, even the deep things of God, which do not lie within the reach of the understanding of creatures, without a divine revelation. "For the Spirit searcheth all things yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, fare the Spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." And as he is an intelligent, so he is a willing agent: As he knows all things, so he does all things according to his will and pleasure: "All these worketh one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally he will". (2 Corinthians 2:10,11.)

4. Personal affections are ascribed to him; such As the Father loves the elect, as love, grief, etc. and has shown it in the choice of them to salvation; and the Son loves them, and has shown it in the redemption of them from sin and misery: So the Spirit loves them, and shows it in the sanctification of them, and in the application of all grace unto them. Hence we read of the love of the Spirit, *Romans* 15:30. The Spirit may be grieved by the sins and unbecoming conversation of the saints, *Ephesians* 4:30. Yea, he may be rebelled against, and vexed, as he was by the Israelites, *Isaiah* 63:10. All which could not be said of him, was he not a Person. Yea, he is said to be

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lied unto, *Acts 5:3*. to be blasphemed, and have sin, and that unpardonable, committed against him, *Matthew 12:32, 33*. which could never be, was he not a person, and a divine person too. But, Secondly, I am to prove him to be a distinct Person, both from the Father and the Son; and this may be collected, 1. From his procession from them both. That he proceeds from the Father is certain, and therefore must be distinct from him: "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you, from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me", says Christ (*John 15:25*). It was once a warm controversy between the Greek and Latin churches, whether the Spirit proceedeth from the Son as well as from the Father: It seems he should, since he is called "the Spirit of the Son", (*Galatians 4:6*.) as well as of the Father; and therefore must be distinct from him whole Spirit he is. 2. This may be concluded from his mission from them both. The Father is said to send him; "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, says Christ (*John 14:26*), he shall teach you all things:" And of himself he says, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Now as he must be a person, and not a mere power, attribute, or quality, or he could not be sent; so he must be a distinct person from the Father and the Son, by whom he is sent. 3. He is said to be another Comforter. "I will pray the Father says Christ, and he shall give you another Comforter;" (*John 14:16*.), i.e. another distinct from my Father and me. The Father of Christ is one Comforter; he is" the God of comfort (*2 Corinthians 1:3,4*.), who comforteth us in all our tribulation:" And Jesus Christ is also a Comforter; *Menachem*, a Comforter , was one of the names of the Messiah and well known among the Jews. Hence old Simeon (*Luke 2:25*) is said to wait for the consolation of Israel, i.e. the Messiah; whom the Jews expected as a Comforter. Now the Holy Ghost is another Comforter, distinct from them both; from the Son who prays, and from the Father, who is prayed unto. 4. The distinct personality of the Spirit, may be argued from his distinct appearances; as at the baptism of Christ, when he descended as a dove, and lighted upon him; and is manifestly distinguished from the Father, who spake by a voice from heaven; and from the Son, who was baptized in Jordan: And also on the day of Pentecost (*Acts 2:3,4*), when "there appeared unto them, i.e. the apostles, cloven tongues, like as of fire; and it, i.e. the Holy Ghost, in this form, sat on each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Now this was neither the Father nor the Son, but the Holy Ghost, as distinct from them both; for Christ "being by the

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right hand of God, exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, shed forth this,” which was then seen and heard.

5. He is represented as a distinct person in the form of baptism; which is performed “in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (*John 5:7*) Now was he a mere power, quality, or attribute, and not a distinct divine person, he. would never be put upon an equal foot with the Father and the Son. He is mentioned as distinct from the Father and the Word, in the record which the Three are said to bear in heaven (*Matthew 28:19*); if he is not a distinct person from them, there cannot be three that bear record, τρει π οθι μαρτυρου ντεω , three Testifiers, as they are laid to be. But I proceed,

Thirdly, To prove the Holy Ghost to be a divine Person; or in other words, to be truly and properly God. The Deity of the Holy Ghost was denied by the *Macedonians* of old¹¹³, and by the *Socinians* of late¹¹⁴; and generally by all such who oppose the proper divinity of the Son. That the Holy Ghost is truly and properly God may be concluded,

1. From the divine names which are given unto him. He is called *Jehovah*, which is incommunicable to any creature, and peculiar to the Most High. He whom the Israelites tempted in the wilderness, vexed and rebelled against (*Exodus 17:7*) was Jehovah; and yet: it is certain (*Isaiah 63:10*. Hebrews 3:7,8,9,10.), that this was the Holy Ghost; and therefore he must be *Jehovah*; and if so, then he must be the Most High God. It was Jehovah Luke 1:68,70 , the Lord God of Israel, that spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began. Now it is evident that it was the Holy Ghost, which spake not only by the mouth (*Acts 1:16*) of David, but by the mouth of all the prophets (*Peter 1:21*) : For “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost:” It follows then, that he must be Jehovah, the Lord God of Israel. The Lord, the *Adonai*, who said (*Isaiah 6:8,9*, 2 *Thessalonians 3:5*) to Isaiah: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us ?” And he who bid him say, “Go and tell this people, etc.” is by the apostle Paul (*Acts 28:25,26*), said to be the Holy Ghost. The Greek word Κυριω , which answers to Jehovah and *Adonai*, is used of

113 *Vid.* Aug. de Haeres. c. 52. & Danaeum in ib. They are called Πνευμα-τομαχοι , opposers of, or fighters against the Spirit, by Epiphanius, Haer- es. 74.

114 *Controv.* 1, & 2. p. 219, 222. Sregman. Photinianism. Disp. 6. p. 6; 66.

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the Holy Ghost in the New Testament: He is that Spirit which is the Lord: He is called the Lord the Spirit: And is that Lord (*2 Thessalonians* 3:5) who is desired to direct the hearts of the saints into the love of God and patient waiting for Christ; where he is manifestly distinguished from God the Father, into whose love, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, into a patient waiting for whom, he is entreated to direct the saints. Yea, he is called God in scripture; when Ananias is said to lie to the Holy Ghost, (*Acts* 5:3,4) he is said to lie not unto men, but unto God. If lying to the Holy Ghost is lying to God it follows, that the Holy Ghost must be God¹¹⁵. The saints are called the temple of God; the reason is, because the Spirit of God dwells in them (*1 Corinthians* 3:16. and 6:19, 20); and because their bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, they are exhorted to glorify God in their bodies. Now if the Holy Ghost is not God, nor designed as such in those passages, there is no force nor strength in the apostle's reasoning, Moreover, when the apostle (*1 Corinthians* 12:4,5, 6,) (*John* 7:39. *Acts* 19:2.) is speaking of the diversities of gifts, administrations and operations, he says, it is the same Spirit, the same Lord, the same God, which worketh all in all: Where it is plain he is only speaking of the Holy Ghost, to whom he gives those divine names, of Spirit, Lord, and God.

2. The proper Deity of the Spirit may be collected from the divine perfections which he is possessed of; such as eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence. Eternity is ascribed to him; he is called the Eternal Spirit¹¹⁶. He was concerned in the creation of all things, and therefore must be before any creature existed, before the world began, and so from eternity. As God never was without his Son, so he never was without his Spirit. As for those scriptures (*John* 7:39, *Acts* 19:2) which say the Holy Ghost was not yet, and that there were some who had not heard that there was any Holy Ghost; these are to be understood of the wonderful effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost, which was to be after Christ's glorification; and of which dispensation the disciples at *Ephesus* had not yet heard. Immensity is attributed to him: Whither shall I go from thy Spirit (*Psalms* 139:7)? says the Psalmist, and whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Was he not every where, he might be shunned and avoided;

115 Si enim qui domino mentitur, mentitur Spiritui Sancto & qui Spiritui Sancto mentitur, mentitur Deo: Nulli dubium est, consortium Spiritus Sancti esse cum Deo. *Didyus* de Spiritu Sancto, 50:1. inter Hieronymi opera, Tom. 9. p. 178. col. 4.

116 Hebrews 9:14. Some copies read it, the Holy Spirit. Vid. Grotium in loc.

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and if he is every where, he must be God. The saints are his temples in which he dwells; and he dwells in them all, in all times and places, which he could not do, was he not immense and omnipresent. Omniscience is a divine perfection which belongs to him: He knows all things, even the deep things of God; his thoughts, purposes, and counsels; which he could not, was he not omniscient. Nor could he teach the saints all things, or guide them into all truth; nor make intercession for them, according to the will of God; much less foretell things to come, as he did under the Old Testament: For the Spirit of Christ, in the prophets, “terrified before hand (1 Peter 1:11) the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.” Christ promised the Spirit to his disciples (John 16:12), as he who should show them things to come, which he accordingly did. He witnessed to the apostle *Paul* (*Acts* 20:23), that bonds and afflictions should abide him in every city; and foretold by *Agabus* (*Acts* 11:28), that there would be a great dearth throughout the world; which came to pass in the days of *Claudius Caesar*. Omnipotence is another divine perfection which properly belongs to him. He is the power of the Highest, and the finger of God. He worketh all things according to his will. His concern in creation; the formation of Christ’s human nature in the womb of the virgin; the many signs, wonders and gifts of the Holy Ghost, loudly proclaim him to be the omnipotent God. Now if those perfections are attributed to him, which are peculiar to Deity, it follows, that he must be God. But, 3. This may be further proved from the divine works which he has performed, or which he is or has been concerned in. Creation is a work of divine power, in which the Spirit, with the Father and Son, was jointly concerned; as “by (*Psalms* 33:6) the word of the Lord the heavens were made,” so “by the breath or Spirit of his mouth, all the host of them.” The Lord, “by his Spirit garnished the heavens.” (*Job* 33:4) It was (*Genesis* 1:2) the Spirit of the Lord that moved upon the face of the waters, and brought the rude indigested chaos into a beautiful form and order. And says *Elihu*, “The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.” (*Job* 33:4) The scripture which “is given by inspiration of God,” (2 *Timothy* 3:16) and is a work purely divine, is wholly of the Spirit’s inditing: “Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (2 *Peter* 1:21) It was the Spirit of God who formed the human nature of Christ in the womb of the virgin; a thing marvellous and surprising; and filled it with a plenitude of gifts and graces. All the miracles which Christ wrought, he wrought by the Holy Ghost (*Matthew* 12:28 *Romans* 15:19.) ; and all the mighty signs and wonders which were done by the

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apostles, were by the power of the Spirit of God. The work of regeneration and conversion, a work wherein the exceeding greatness of God's power is displayed, is ascribed to him; and therefore (*1 Peter* 1:2. *Titus* 3:5.) called the sanctification of the Spirit, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. It is he who qualifies men for the work of the ministry (*1 Corinthians* 12:4-11. *Acts* 13:2. and 8:29. and 16:6, 7. and 20:28.), calls them to it, directs their labours, and appoints them pastors and overseers in the several churches. He not only dwells in the souls, but in the mortal bodies (*Romans* 8:11.) of the saints; and by him will they be quickened and railed at the last day: All which sufficiently prove him to be truly and properly God. 4. This truth will receive more weight, if we consider the divine worship which is due to him, and as such, is given him. He is not only the Spirit of grace and supplication to the saints, who helps them under their infirmities, and makes intercession for them, according to the will of God; but he is also prayed unto (*2 Thessalonians* 3:5. *Revelation* 1:4.). Grace and peace are wished for from him as from the other two persons. Swearing (*Romans* 9:1), which is a solemn act of religious worship, is by him; and baptism is administered in his name; which would not be, was he not a divine person, truly and properly God. To conclude, I hope I have proved what I undertook, That there is but one God; that there is a plurality in the Godhead; that there are three divine Persons in it; that the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God; that there are distinct in Personality, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. I shall close all with the following doxology:

DOXOLOGY

To the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, three Persons, but one God, be all honour, glory, and praise, now and for evermore. Amen.

A Dissertation Concerning The Eternal Generation Of The Son

APPENDIX

A DISSERTATION CONCERNING THE ETERNAL SONSHIP OF CHRIST

By John Gill

Shewing

By Whom It Has Been Denied And Opposed,

And

By Whom Asserted And Defended In All Ages Of Christianity.

1768

Publishers Preface To The Dissertation

Historically speaking there has always been disputes and divisions as to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ; who is He? Is He the eternal only begotten Son of God?. Such a division took place in the 18 and 19 century between certain Strict and Particular Baptists, in the U.K. It was then that J.C. Philpot, the editor of the Gospel Standard magazine, in 1861, published his book declaring *The Eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ*, which issued in further divisions not only among Strict and Particular Baptists but also Evangelicals and Presbyterians.

Gospel Standard baptists holding to the Eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ, maintained that the gospel was to be preached to all people, declaring the complete and finished personal work of Christ, knowing that the atonement was definite and made for those chosen in Christ before the world and not for all men. Those who believed would be saved. These denied the gospel was an offer of salvation. Whilst other Strict Baptists, Presbyterian and Evangelicals would offer salvation and the grace of God , to men upon the condition they believe, making little mention of the extent of atonement, leaving men to conclude the atonement was sufficient for the whole world, if the whole world would believe.

It is believed, by the publisher, that these differences occur due to certain misunderstandings, or a denying of certain scriptural truths, and so it is important clearly to set forth what is believed and why.

The foundation of all truth is the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, He is the

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foundation, and it is believed this matter of the Eternal Sonship of The Lord Jesus Christ is essential for a right understanding of gospel truth.

With the rise of Islam through Europe and its rejection of the person of Christ and His eternal sonship along with the neglect and rejection of Christian beliefs and values in England, and the West, it is important that the truth concerning the person and Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ is preserved, declared and taught, for benefit of us all and the coming generation. This is the reason for the publication these works. Dr. John Gill lays the foundation for all evangelical truths.

Introduction

The eternal Sonship of Christ, or that he is the Son of God by eternal generation, or that he was the Son of God before he was the son of Mary, even from all eternity, which is denied by the Socinians, and others akin, to them, was known by the saints under the Old Testament; by David (Ps. 2:7, 12); by Solomon (Prov. 8:22, 30), by the prophet Micah, chapter 2, verse 2. His Sonship was known by Daniel, from whom it is probable Nebuchadnezzar had it (Dan. 3:25), from which it appears he was, and was known to be, the Son of God before he was born of the virgin, or before his incarnation, and therefore not called so on that account. This truth is written as with a sun-beam in the New Testament; but my design in what I am about is, not to give the proof of this doctrine from the sacred scriptures, but to shew who first set themselves against it, and who have continued the opposition to it, more or less, to this time; and on the other hand, to shew that sound and orthodox Christians, from the earliest times of Christianity to the present, have asserted and defended it. I shall begin with,

First Century

I. The first century, in which the Evangelists and Apostles lived; what their sentiments were concerning this doctrine, is abundantly manifest from their writings. The persons in this age who opposed the divine and eternal Sonship of Christ were,

Simon Magus

1st, Simon Magus, father of heresies, as he is justly called; he first vented the notion afterwards imbibed by Sabellius, of one person in the Godhead; to which he added this blasphemy, that he was that person that so is. Before he professed himself a Christian he gave out that he was some great one; he afterwards said, he was the one God himself under different names, the Father in Samaria, the Son in Judea, and the holy Spirit in the rest of the

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nations of the world;[¹¹⁷] or as Austin[¹¹⁸] expresses it, he said that he in mount Sinai gave the law to Moses for the Jews, in the person of the father; and in the time of Tiberius, he seemingly appeared in the person of the Son, and afterwards as the holy Ghost, came upon the apostles in tongues of fire. And according to Jerom[¹¹⁹] he not only said, but wrote it; for it seems, according to him, he wrote some volumes, in which he said, “I am the Word of God, that is, the Son of God.” Menander his disciple took the same characters and titles to himself his master did.[¹²⁰]

Cerinthus

2dly, Cerinthus is the next, who was contemporary with the apostle John, of whom that well known story is told,[¹²¹] that the apostle being about to go into a bath at Ephesus, and seeing Cerinthus in it, said to those with him, “Let us flee from hence, lest the bath fall upon us in which Cerinthus, the enemy of truth is:” he asserted that Christ was, only a man, denying his deity,[¹²²] and in course his divine and eternal Sonship; he denied that Jesus was born of a virgin, which seemed to him impossible; and that he was the son of Joseph and Mary, as other men are[¹²³] of their parents. Jerom says,[¹²⁴] at the request of the bishops of Asia, John the apostle wrote his gospel against Cerinthus and other heretics, and especially the tenets of the Ebionites, then rising up, who asserted that Christ was not before Mary hence he was obliged plainly to declare his divine generation; and it may be observed, that he is the only sacred writer who in his gospel and epistles speaks of Christ as the begotten and only begotten Son of God, at least speaks mostly of him as such.

Ebion

3dly, Ebion. What his sentiment was concerning Christ, may be learned from what has been just observed, about the apostle John’s writing his gospel to refute it; and may be confirmed by what Eusebius[¹²⁵] says of him, that he held that Christ was a mere man, and born as other men are:

117 Irenaeus adv. Haeres l. 1. C. 20.

118 De Haeres. C. 1.

119 Comment. in Matt. xxix. 5. tom. 9. fol. 33. A.

120 Tertullian de praescript. haeret c. 46.

121 Irenaeus adv. Haeres. l. 3. c. 3.

122 Tertullian ut supra, c. 48.

123 Irenaeus ib. l. 1. c. 25.

124 Catalog. Scrip. eccles. c. 19. sic Irenaeus l. 3. c. 11.

125 Eccles. Hist. l. 3. c. 27. vid. Tertullian de carne Christ. c. 18.

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and though he makes mention of another sort of them, who did not deny that Christ was born of a virgin, and of the Holy Ghost, nevertheless did not own that he existed before, being God the Word and Wisdom. Hence Hilary calls^[126] Photinus, Ebion, because of the sameness of their principles, and Jerom^[127] says. Photinus endeavoured to restore the heresy of Ebion; now it is notorious that the notion of the Photinians was the same with the Socinians now, who say, that Christ was not before Mary; and so Alexander bishop of Alexandria^[128] observes of Arius and his followers, who denied the natural sonship and eternal generation of Christ, that what they propagated were the heresy of Ebion and Artemas.

Besides the inspired writers, particularly the apostle John, who wrote his gospel, as now observed, to confute the heresies of Ebion and Cerinthus, and in vindication of the deity of Christ, and his divine and eternal generation, there are very few writings if any in this century extant. There is an epistle ascribed to Barnabas, contemporary with the apostle Paul, in which are these words,^[129] having made mention of the brazen serpent as a figure of Jesus, he adds, “what said Aliases again to Jesus the son of Nave, putting this name upon him, being a prophet, that only all the people might hear that the Father hath made manifest all things concerning his Son Jesus in the son of Nave, and he put this name upon him, when he sent him to spy the land--because the Son of God in the last days will cut up by the roots the house of Amalek: behold again Jesus, not the son of man, but the Son of God, manifested in the flesh by a type.--Likewise David said the Lord said to my Lord.--See how David calls him Lord, and the Son of God:” by which it appears that he believed that Christ was the Son of God before he was manifested in the flesh or became incarnate; and that he was the Son of God according to the divine nature, as well as the Son of David according to the human nature, which he also expresses in the same paragraph. And elsewhere he says,^[130] “For this end the Son of God came in the flesh, that the full sum might be made of the sins of those who persecuted the prophets,” so that according to him Christ was the Son of God before he came in the flesh or was incarnate.

126 De Trinitate l. 7. p. 81,82.

127 Catalog. scrip. eccl. c. 117.

128 Apud Theodoret.hist. eccles. 1. 1. c. 4.

129 Barnabae epist. c. 9.

130 Barnabae epist. c. 4.

*A Dissertation Concerning The Eternal Generation Of The Son***Clemens Romanus**

Clemens Romanus was bishop of Rome in this century, and though the book of Recognitions, ascribed to him, are judged spurious, yet there is an epistle of his to the Corinthians^[131] thought to be genuine: in which, after speaking of Christ our Saviour, and the high priest of our oblations, and the brightness of the magnificence of God, and of his having a more excellent name than the angels, observes, that the Lord thus says of his own Son, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee; thereby declaring his belief, that Christ is the proper Son of God, and begotten by him. Ignatius was bishop of Antioch in this century, after the first bishop of that place Evodius, and was early in it, if any truth in these reports that he was the child Christ took in his arms, when he rebuked his disciples; and that he saw Christ after his resurrection; but though these are things not to be depended on, yet it is certain that he lived in the latter end of the first century, and suffered martyrdom in the beginning of the second. Several epistles of his are extant, in which, as well as by words, he exhorted the saints to beware of heresies then springing up among them, and abounding, as Eusebius observes;^[132] meaning the heresies of Ebion and Cerinthus about the person of Christ: and says many things which shew his belief, and what was their error. In one of his epistles^[133] he exhorts to decline from some persons, as beasts, as ravenous dogs, biting secretly, and difficult of cure; and adds, “there is one physician, carnal and spiritual, begotten and unbegotten. God made flesh, in a true and immortal life, who is both of Mary and of God.” In a larger epistle to the same,^[134] thought by some to be interpolated, though it expresses the same sentiment; “our physician is alone the true God, the unbegotten and invisible Lord of all, the Father and begetter of the only begotten one; we have also a physician, or Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son before the world, and the word, and at last man of the virgin Mary;” and afterwards in the same^[135] epistle still more expressly, “the Son of God, who was begotten before the world was, and constitutes all things according to the will of the Father, he was bore in the womb by Mary, according to the dispensation of God, of the seed of David by the Holy Ghost.” And a little farther,^[136] “be

131 Clemens. epist. ad Coriuth. P. 84. ed. Oxon. 1669.

132 Eccles. Hist. 1. 3. c. 36.

133 Epist. ad Ephes. p.21. Ed. Voss

134 Ibid. p. 125.

135 Ibid. p. 136.

136 Ibid. p. 138.

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ye all in grace by name, gathered together in one common faith of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, and the first-born of every creature: according to the flesh indeed of the family of David: ye being guided by the Comforter.” A plain account, as of the divine Sonship and Humanity of Christ, so of the doctrine of the Trinity. In another epistle^[137] of his, he speaks of Jesus Christ, “who was with the Father before the world was, and in the end appeared,” that is, in human nature in the end of the world; and exhorts all to “run to one temple of God, as to one altar, as to one Jesus Christ, who came forth from one Father, and being in him and returning to him.” And a little lower he adds, “there is one God, who hath manifested himself by Jesus Christ his Son, who is his eternal word.” And father on he says, “study to be established in the doctrines of the Lord, and of the apostles, that whatsoever ye do may prosper, in flesh and spirit, in faith and love, in the Son, and in the Father, and in the Spirit.” A full confession of the Trinity, one of the principal doctrines he would have them be established in. All which is more fully expressed in the larger epistle^[138] to the same persons: speaking of Christ, he says, “who was begotten by the Father before the world was; God the Word, the only begotten Son, and who remains to the end of the world, for of his kingdom there is no end.” Again, “there is one God omnipotent, who hath manifested himself by Jesus Christ his Son, who is his Word; not spoken, but essential, not the voice of an articulate speech, but of a divine operation, begotten substance, who in all things pleased him that sent him.” And father on, “but ye have a plerophory in Christ, who was begotten by the Father before all worlds, afterwards made of the virgin Mary without the conversation of men.” And in the larger epistle^[139] of his to other persons, he thus speaks of some heretics of his time; “they profess an unknown God, they think Christ is unbegotten, nor will they own that there is an holy Spirit: some of them say the Son is a mere man, and that the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit, are the same:--beware of such, lest your souls be ensnared.” And in an epistle to another people^[140] he says, “there is one unbegotten God the Father, and one only begotten Son, God the Word and man, and one comforter the Spirit of truth.” And in an epistle^[141] ascribed unto him he has these words, “there is one God and Father--there is also one Son, God the Word--and there is one comforter,

137 Epist. as Magnes. p. 33, 34, 37.

138 Page 145, 147, 151.

139 AD. Trallianos, p. 160.

140 Ad. Philadelph. p. 176.

141 Ad Phillipans, p. 100.

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the Spirit;--not three Fathers, nor three Sons, nor three Comforters, but one Father, and one Son, and one Comforter; therefore the Lord, when he sent his apostles to teach all nations, commanded them to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; not in one of three names, nor into three that are incarnate, but into three of equal honor and glory." Lucian, that scoffing, blasphemous heathen, lived in the times of Trajan, and before, as Suidas says, wrote a dialogue^[142] in derision of the Christian religion, particularly of the doctrine of the Trinity: which dialogue, though it is a scoff at that doctrine, is a testimony of it, as held by the Christians of that age; and among other things, he represents them as saying that Christ is the eternal Son of the Father. I go on,

The Second Century

To the second century, in which the same heresies of Ebion and Cerinthus were held and propagated by Carpocrates, the father of the Gnostics,^[143] by Valentinus and Theodotus the currier, whose disciples were another Theodotus a silversmith, and Asclepiodotus and Artemon also, according to Eusebius.^[144]

Carpocrates

1st. Carpocrates was of Alexandria in Egypt, and lived in the beginning of the second century: he and his followers held that Christ was only a man, born of Joseph and Mary, of two parents, as other men,^[145] only he had a soul superior to others; which, having a strong memory, could remember, and so could relate, what he had seen and had knowledge of, when in the circumference (as they express it) and in conversation with his unknown and unbegotten Father; and which was endowed with such powers, that he escaped the angels, the makers of the world; and was so pure and holy, that he despised the Jews, among whom he was brought up; and afterwards returned to his unknown Father; his soul only, not his body.^[146] There seems to be something similar in this notion of the human soul of Christ, to what is imbibed by some in our day.

Valentinus

2dly, Valentinus. He came to Rome when Hyginus was bishop of that

142 Entitled, Philopatris.

143 Euseb. hist. eccles. 1. 4. c. 7.

144 Ibid. 1. 5. c. 28.

145 Irenaeus adv. haeres. 1. 1. c. 24. Tertull. de praescript. haeret. c. 48.

146 Irenaeus ib. Epiphani. contra haeret. haer. 27. Theodoret. haeret. fol. 1. 1. c. 7. Aug. de haeret. c. 7.

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place, flourished under Pius, and lived till the time of Anicetus.^[147] He and his followers held, that God the creator sent forth his own Son, but that he was animal, and that his body descended from heaven, and passed through the virgin Mary, as water through a pipe; and therefore, as Tertullian, observes,^[148] Valentinus used to say, that Christ was born by a virgin, but not of a virgin. This is what divines call the heretical elapse; which yet those disavow, who in our day are for the antiquity of the human nature of Christ before the world was; though how he could be really and actually man from eternity, and yet take flesh of the virgin in time, is not easy to reconcile.

Artemon or Artemas

3dly, Artemon or Artemas who lived in the time of Victor bishop of Rome. He held that Christ was a mere man^[149] and pretended that the apostles and all Christians from their times to the times of Victor, held the same;^[150] than which nothing could be more notoriously false, as the writings as Justin, Irenaeus, &c shew: and' it is said that by him, or by his followers, the celebrated text in 1 John 5:7, was erased and left out in some copies.^[151]

Theodotus

4thly, Theodotus the currier held the same notion he did, that Christ was a mere man; for which he was excommunicated by Victor bishop of Rome: which shews the falsity of what Artemon said; for if Victor had been of the same opinion, he would never have excommunicated Theodotus. Eusebius says, this man was the father and broacher of this notion,^[152] before Artemon, that Christ was a mere man; and denied him to be God. Yea, that he was not only a mere man, but born of the seed of man.^[153] Though Tertullian says, that he held that Christ was only a man, but equally conceived and born of the holy Ghost and the virgin Mary, yet inferior to Melchizedec.^[154]

The contrary to these notions was asserted and maintained by those apostolical men, not only Ignatius, who lived in the latter end of the preceding century, and the beginning of this, as has been observed, but by

147 Irenaeus 1. 3. c. 4.

148 Ibid. 1. c. 1. Tertull. de praescript. c. 49. Epiphan. haeres. 31

149 Adv. Valentin. c. 27: & de carne Christ. c. 20.

150 Euseb. Eccles. Hist. 1. 5. c. 25. Theodoret. haecret. fol: 1. 2. c. 5.

151 Wittichii Theolog. pacific. c. 17. s. 25.

152 Euseb.eccles. hist. 1. 5. c. 28.

153 Epiphan. Haeres. 54.

154 De praescript. Haer. c. 53

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Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and others.

Polycarp

1. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna a disciple and hearer of the apostle John, used to stop his ears when he heard the impious speeches of the heretics of his time. This venerable martyr, who had served his master Christ eighty six years, when at the stake, and the fire just about to be kindled upon him, witnessed a good confession of the blessed Trinity in his last moments, putting up the following prayer; “O Father of thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of thee; God of angels and of powers, and every creature--I praise thee for all things; I bless thee, I glorify thee, by the eternal high priest Jesus Christ thy beloved Son, through whom, to thee with him in the holy spirit, be glory, now and for ever, Amen.”^[155]

Justin

2. Justin, the philosopher and martyr, in his first apology^[156] for the Christians, has these words; “The Father of all, being unbegotten, has no name--the Son of him, who only is properly called a Son, the Word, begotten and existing before the creatures (for at the beginning by him he created and beautified all things) is called Christ.” And in his second apology he says, “We profess to be atheists with respect to such who are thought to be Gods, but not to the true God and Father of righteousness, etc.; him, and his Son who comes from him, and has taught us these things, and the prophetic Spirit, we adore and worship.” Afterwards he speaks of the logos, or word, the first birth of God:” which, says he, we say is begotten without mixture.” And again “We speak that which is true, Jesus Christ alone is properly the Son begotten by God, being his Word, and first-born, and power, and by his will became man; these things he hath taught us.” And in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, who is represented as objecting to him, “What thou sayest that this Christ existed God before the world, and then was born, and became man, does not only seem to be a paradox to me, but quite foolish.” To which Justin replies, “I know this seems a paradox, especially to those of your nation, -- but if I cannot demonstrate, that this is the Christ of God, and that he pre-existed God, the Son of the maker of all things, and became man by a virgin, in this only it would be just to say, that I am mistaken, but not to deny that this is the Christ of God, though he may seem to be begotten a man of men, and by choice made Christ, as asserted by some: for there

155 Euseb. 1. 4. c. 15.

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are some of our religion who profess him to be Christ, but affirm that he is begotten a man of men; to whom I do not assent, nor many who are in the same mind with me.” In which he plainly refers to the heretics before mentioned, who thought that Christ was born of Joseph and Mary. And in another place, in the same dialogue, he says, “I will prove from scripture that God first begat of himself before all creatures, a certain rational power, which is called by the holy Spirit, the Glory of the Lord, sometimes the Son, sometimes Wisdom, sometimes the Angel, sometimes God, sometimes the Lord and the Word.” And then, after observing there is something similar in the Word begetting a Word without any rejection or diminution, and fire kindling fire without lessening it, and abiding the same; he proceeds to give his proof from the words of Solomon, Proverbs 8 where “the word of wisdom testifies, that he is the God who is begotten by the Father of all, who is the word and wisdom and the power and the glory of him that generates.” And then observes, that “this is the birth produced by the Father, which co-existed with the Father before all creatures, and with whom the Father familiarly conversed, as the word by Solomon makes it manifest, that he the beginning before all creatures is the birth begotten by God, which by Solomon is called Wisdom.” And in another place, in the same dialogue, on mention of the same words in Proverbs he says, “Ye must understand, ye hearers, if ye do but attend, the Word declares that “this birth was begotten by the Father before all creatures, and that which is begotten is numerically another from him that begets.” What can be more express for the eternal generation of the Son of God, and that as a distinct person from his Father!

Irenaeus

3. Irenaeus, a martyr, and bishop of Lyons in France, and a disciple of Polycarp. He wrote five books against the heresies of Valentinus and the Gnostics, which are still extant; out of which many testimonies might be produced confirming the doctrine of the Trinity, and the deity of Christ. I shall only transcribe two or three passages relating to the divine Sonship and generation of Christ. In one place he says,^[157] “Thou art not increated and man, nor didst thou always co-exist with God, as his own word did, but through his eminent goodness, hast now had a beginning of beings; thou sensibly learnest from the word the dispositions of God who made thee; therefore observe the order of thy knowledge, and lest, as ignorant of good things, thou shouldest, transcend God himself” And again,^[158] “should any one say to us, how is the Son brought forth by the Father? we reply to

157 Adv. Haeres. 1, 2, c. 43.

158 Adv. Hieres, 2. c. 48.

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him, This bringing forth or generation, etc. or by whatsoever name it is called; no man knows his existing unspeakable generation; not Valentinus, not Marcion, not, Saturninus, nor Basilides, nor angels, nor archangels, nor principalities, nor powers, only the Father who hath generated, and the Son that is generated; therefore seeing his generation is ineffable, whoever attempts to declare such productions and generations (as the above heretics did) are not in their right minds, promising to declare those things which cannot be declared.” And elsewhere, he says,^[159] “The Son, the Word and Wisdom, was always present with him (God), and also the Spirit, by whom, and in whom, he made all things freely and willingly; to whom he spake, saying, Let us make man, etc.” And a little after, “that the Word, that is, the Son, was always with the Father, we have abundant proof;” and then mentions Proverbs 3:19 and Proverbs 8:22, etc.

Athenagoras

4. Athenagoras, who flourished at Athens, in the times of Antoninus and Commodus, to which emperors he wrote an apology for the Christians, in which he has these words,^[160] “Let not any think it ridiculous in me that I speak of God as having a Son, for not as the poets fable, who make their Gods nothing better than men, do we think either of God and the Father, or of the Son; but the Son of God is the Word of the Father, in idea and efficacy for of him, and him are all things made, seeing the Father and the Son are one; so that the Son is in the Father, and the Father is in the Son, by the union and power of the Spirit; the mind, and word of the Father is the Son of God; now if any through the sublimity of your understanding would look further and inquire what the Son means, I will tell him in a few words, that he is the first birth of the Father; not as made, for from the beginning, God being the eternal mind, he had the word in himself (the logov, or reason) being eternally rational, (that is, “never without his word and wisdom) but as coming forth is the idea and energy of all things.” For which he produces as a proof Proverbs 8:22 and then proceeds, “Who therefore cannot wonder, to hear us called atheists, who speak of God the Father, and of God the Son, and the holy Spirit, shewing their power in unity and their distinction in order?” A little farther,^[161] he strongly expresses the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity; “We assert God and the Son his Word, and the holy Ghost, united indeed according to power, the Father, the Son, the Spirit, for the Mind, Word and Wisdom, is the Son of the Father, and the Spirit an emanation, or

159 “Ibid. lib. 4. c. 37

160 Legatio pro Christian, p, 10, 11,

161 Legratio pro Christian, p 27.

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influence, as light from fire.”

Theophilus

5. Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, flourished under the emperor Antoninus Verus: in a treatise of his^[162] he has these words concerning the Word and Son of God, “God having his logon endiaqeton, internal word within himself, begat him, when he brought him forth with his wisdom before all things; this word he used in working those things that were made by him, and he made all things by him. -- The prophets were not when the world was made; but the wisdom of God, which is in him, and the holy word of God, was always present with him;” in proof of which he produces Proverbs 8:27, And in another place,^[163] speaking of the voice Adam heard, says, “What else is the voice, but the word of God who is his Son? not as the poets and writers of fables, who say, the sons of the gods are born of copulation; but as the truth declares, the internal Word being always in the heart of God, before any thing was made, him he had as his counselor, being his mind and prudence, when God would do what he counseled, he begat the Word, and having begotten the Word, the first-born of every creature, he always conversed with his Word,” for which he quotes John 1:1-3.

Clemens Of Alexandria

6. Clemens of Alexandria, flourished under the emperors Severus and Caracalla, towards the latter end of the second century, he bears a plain testimony to the doctrine of the Trinity, concluding one of his treatises thus,^[164] “Let us give thanks, praising the only Father and the Son, both teachers, with the holy Spirit, in which are all things, in whom are all things, and by whom all are one, -- to whom “be glory now and for ever, Amen” He speaks^[165] of Christ the perfect word, as born of the perfect Father; and says^[166] of the Son of God, “that he never goes out of his watchtower, who is not divided nor dissected, nor passes from place to place, but is always every where, is contained no where, all mind, all paternal light, all eye; who sees all things, hears all things knows all things by his power, searches powers, and to whom the whole militia of angels and gods (magistrates) is subject. -- This is the Son of God, the Savior and Lord whom we speak of, and the divine prophecies shew.” A little after he speaks of him as,

162 Ad. Antolog. c. 1. q. p, 88.

163 Ibid. p. 100.

164 Paedagog. I. 3. p. 266.

165 Paedagog. I. 3. p. 266.

166 Ibid. I. I. c. p. 92.

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“begotten without beginning, that is, eternally begotten, and who, before the foundation of the world, was the Father’s counselor, that wisdom in whom the almighty God delighted; for Son is the power of God; who before all things were made, was the most ancient word of the Father. -- Every operation of the Lord has a reference to the almighty; and the Son is, as I may say, a certain energy of the Father.” This ancient writer frequently attacks and refutes the Carpocratians, Valentinians, and Gnostics, and other heretics of this and the preceding age. I proceed,

Third Century

To the third century, The heresies which sprung up in this age respecting the Person, Sonship, and Deity of Christ, were those of Berullus, who revived that of Artemon, and of the Noetians or Sabellians, sometimes called Patripassians, and of the Samosatensians.

Beryllus

1st, Beryllus, bishop of Bostra in Arctia, who for some time behaved well in his office, as Jerom says,^[167] but at length fell into this notion, that Christ was not before his incarnation; or as Eusebius^[168] expresses it, that our Lord and Savior did not subsist in his own substance before he sojourned among men, and had no deity of his own residing in him, but his Father’s; but through disputations he had with several bishops and particularly with Origen, he was recovered from his error and restored to the truth.

The Noetians

2. The Noetians, so called from Noctus, and afterwards Sabellians, from Sabellius, a disciple of the former; those held that Father, Son, and Spirit, are one person under these different names. The foundation of their heresy was laid by Simon Magus, as before observed. They were sometimes called Praxeans and Hermogeniaus, from Praxeus and Hermogenes, the first authors of it, who embraced the same notions in this period, and sometimes Patripassians, because, in consequence of this principle, they held that the Father might be said to suffer as the Son.^[169]

The Samosatensians

3. The Samosatensians, so called from Paul of Samosate, bishop of Antioch, who revived the heresy of Artemo, that Christ was a mere man. He held that Christ was no other than a common man; he refused to own that he was the Son of God, come from heaven; he denied that the only begotten Son

167 Catalog. Script. Ecclesiastes c. 70.

168 Hist. Ecclesiastes 1. 6, c. 3

169 Epiphan. Haeres 42. Aug. de haeres, c. 36, 41.

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and Word was God of God: he agreed with the Noetians and Sabellians, that there was lint one person in the Godhead;[¹⁷⁰] of these notions he was convicted, and for them condemned by the synod at Antioch.[¹⁷¹]

The writers of this age are but few, whose writings have been continued and transmitted to us; but those we have, strongly opposed the errors now mentioned; the chief are Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian, besides in some fragments of others.

Tertullian

1. Tertullian, He wrote against Praxeus, who held the same notion that Noctus and Sabellius did, in which work he not only expresses his firm belief of the Trinity in Unity, saying;[¹⁷²] “nevertheless the economy is preserved, which disposes Unity into Trinity, three, not in state or nature, essence) but in degree (or person) not in substance but in form, not in power but in species, of one substance, of one state, and of one power, because but one God, from whom these degrees, forms and species are deputed, under the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” And that he means three distinct persons, is clear from what he afterwards says: “whatsoever therefore was the substance of the Word, that I call a person, and to him I give the name of Son; and whilst I acknowledge a Son, I defend a second from the Father.” The distinction of the Father and Son from each other, and the eternal generation of the one from the other, are fully expressed by him “this rule as professed by me, is every where held; by which I testify, the Father, Son, and Spirit are inseparable from each other; --for Lo, I say, another is the Father, and another is the Son, and another is the holy Spirit; --not that the Son is another from the Father, by diversity, but by distribution; not another by division, but by distinction: --another is he that generates, and another he that is generated: --a “Father must needs have Son that he may be a Father, and the Son a Father that he may be a Son.” And again, he explains the words in Proverbs 8:22. (The Lord possessed me) of the generation of the Son; and on the clause, when he prepared the heavens, I was with him, he remarks, “thereby making himself equal to him, by proceeding from whom he became the Son and first born, as being begotten before all things; and the only begotten, as being alone begotten of God.” On these words,

170 Euseb. Ecclesiastes Hist. I. 7. c. 07, 30. Epiphani, Haeret. 65. Aug. de Haeres. c. 44.

171 Euseb. lb. c. 29

172 Adv, Praxcam. c. 2.

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Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, he observes^[173] to Praxeas, “If you would have me believe that he is both Father and Son, shew me such a passage elsewhere, The Lord said unto himself, I am my Son, this day have I begotten my self.” And in another work^[174] of his, he has these words, speaking of the Word, “this we learn is brought forth from God, and by being brought forth generated, and therefore called the Son of God, and God, from the unity of substance; --so that what comes from God, is God, and the Son of God, and both one:” that is, one God.

Origen

2. Origen. Notwithstanding his many errors, he is very express for the doctrine of the Trinity, and the distinction of the Father and Son in it, and of the eternal generation of the Son: he observes^[175] of the Seraphim, in Isaiah 6:3 that by saying, “Holy, holy, holy, they preserve the mystery of the Trinity; that it was not enough for them to cry holy once nor twice, but they take up the perfect number of the Trinity, that they might manifest the multitude of the holiness of God, which is the repeated community of the trine holiness, the holiness of the Father, the holiness of the only begotten Son, and of the holy Spirit.” And elsewhere,^[176] allegorizing the show-bread, and the two tenth deals in one cake, he asks, how two tenths become one lump? because, says he, “we do not separate the Son from the Father, nor the Father from the Son (John 10:30, therefore each loaf is of two tenths, and set in two positions, that is in two rows, for if there was one position, it would be confused, and the Word would be mixed of the Father and the Son, but now indeed it is but one bread for them is one will and one substance; but there are two positions; that is, two proprieties of persons (or proper persons for we call him, the Father who is not the Son: and him the Son who is not the Father:” Of the generation of the Son of God he thus speaks¹⁷⁷, “Jesus Christ himself, who is come, was begotten of the Father before every creature was.” And again¹⁷⁸, “it is abominable and unlawful to equal God the Father in the generation of his only begotten Son, and in his substance, to any one, men or other kind of animals: but there must needs be some exception, and something worthy of God, to which there can be,

173 Adv. Praxeam. c. 11.

174 Apolegel c. 21.

175 In Esaiam Homil. 1. sol. 100. 4.& Homil. 4, fill. 103. 3.

176 In Leviticus Homil. 13. fol. 88.1.

177 peri Arcwn proem fol. 111.4.

178 Ibid 211. c. 2. fol. 114.4., vial. Pan, phiL Atmlog. pro Origen. inter opere Hieronom. tom. 4. fol. 74. M. & fol 77. A.

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no comparison, not in things only, but indeed not in thought: nor can it be found by sense, nor can the human thought apprehend, how the unbegotten God is the Father of the only begotten Son: for generation is eternal, as brightness is generated from light, for he is not a Son by adoption of the Spirit extrinsically, but he is a Son by nature.”

3. Cyprian. Little is to be met with in his writings on this subject. The following is the most remarkable and particular¹⁷⁹; “the voice of the Father was heard from heaven, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased hear ye him; -- that this voice came from thy paternity, there is none that doubts; there is none who dares to arrogate this word to himself; there is none among the heavenly troops who dare call the Lord Jesus his Son. Certainly to thee only the Trinity is known, the Father only knows the Son, and the Son knows the Father, neither is he known by any unless he reveals him; in, the school of “divine teaching, the Father is he that teaches and, instructs, “the Son who reveals and opens the secrets of God unto us, and the holy Spirit who fits and furnishes us; from the Father we receive power, from the Son wisdom, and from the holy Spirit innocence. The Father chooses, the Son loves, the Holy Spirit joins and unites; from the Father is given us eternity, from the Son conformity to him his image, and from the holy spirit integrity and liberty; in the Father we are, in the Son we live, in the holy Spirit we are moved, and become proficient; eternal deity and temporal humanity meet together, and by the tenor of both natures is made an unity, that it is impossible that what is joined should be separated from one another.” As for the Exposition of the Creed, which stands among Cyprian’s works, and is sometimes attributed to him, it was done by Ruffinus, and the testimonies from thence will be produced in the proper place.

4. Gregory of Neocaesarea, sometimes called Thaumaturgus, the wonder-worker, lived in this century, to whom is ascribed the following confession of faith; “One God, the Father of the living Word, of subsisting wisdom and power, and of the eternal character, perfect begetter of the perfect One, Father of the only begotten Son: and God the Son, who is through all. The perfect Trinity, which in glory eternity and kingdom, cannot be divided . nor alienated. Not therefore anything created or servile is in the Trinity, nor any thing super-induced, nor first and last; nor did the Son ever want a Father, nor the Son a Spirit: but the Trinity is always the same, immutable and invariable.” And among his twelve articles of faith, with an anathema

179 Cyprian de baptisnio inter Opera, ejus p. 455.

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annexed to them, this is one: "If any one says, another is the Son who was before the world, and another who was an the last times, and does not confess, that he who was before the world, and he who was in the last times, is the same, as it is written, let him be anathema." The interpolation follows; how can it be said, another is the Son of God before the world was, and another in the last days, when the Lord says, before Abraham was, I am; and because I came forth from the Father, and am come; and again, I go to my Father?"

5. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, was a disciple of Origen: he wrote against the Sabellians¹⁸⁰, but none, of his writings are extant, only some fragments preserved in other authors. And whereas Arius made use of some passages of his, and improved them in favor of his own notions, Athanasius from him shows the contrary, as where in one of his volumes he expressly says¹⁸¹, that "there never was a time in which God was not a Father; and in the following acknowledges, that Christ the Word, Wisdom and Power, always was; that he is the eternal Son of the eternal Father; for if there is a Father, there must be a Son; and if there was no Son, how could he be the Father of any? but there are both, and always were. The Son alone always co-existed with the Father. God the Father always was; and the Father being eternal, the Son also is eternal, and co-existed with him as brightness with light." And in answer to another objection, made against him, that when he mentioned the Father, he said nothing of the Son; and when he named the Son, said nothing of, the Father; it is observed¹⁸², that in another volume of his; he says, that each of these names spoken of by me; are inseparable and indivisible from one another; when I speak of the Father, and before I introduce the Son, I signify him in the Father; when I introduce the Son; though I have not before spoken of the Father, he is always to be understood in the Son."

6. The errors of Paulus Samosate were condemned by the synod at Antioch, towards the latter end of this century, by whom¹⁸³ a formula or confession of faith was agreed to, in which are these words. "We profess that our Lord Jesus Christ was begotten of the Father before ages, according to the Spirit,

180 Epist. ad Xystum spud Euseb. 1:7. c. O. & ad Ammonium & Igaphraur. spud Athanasium de Sent

181 Elench. & Apolog; vol. 1. spud Athanas; lb. p. 436, 437.

182 Ibid. vol. 2. apud Athaus. ibid. p. 437.

183 Apud. Forbes. Instruct. Hist. Theolog. 1. l. c. 4. p. 10.

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and in the last days, born of a virgin, according to the flesh.” The word *omousiov*, consubstantial, is used in their creed. Towards the close of this century, and at the beginning of the next, lived Lactantius, (for he lived under Dioclesian, and to the times of Constantine) who asserts¹⁸⁴, that God, the maker of all things, begat “a Spirit holy, incorruptible, and irreprehensible, whom he called the Son.” He asks¹⁸⁵, “how hath he procreated? The divine works can neither be known nor declared by any; nevertheless the scriptures teach, that the Son of God is the Word of God.” Nothing more is to be observed in this century. I pass on,

The Fourth Century

To the fourth century, in which rose up the: Arians and Photinians, and others, 1st, The Arians, so called from Arius, a presbyter of the church at Alexandria, in the beginning of this century, who took occasion from some words dropped in disputation by Alexander his bishop, to oppose him, and start the heresy that goes under his name; and though the eternal Sonship of Christ was virtually denied by preceding heretics, who affirmed that Christ did not exist before Mary; in opposition to whom the orthodox affirmed, that he was begotten, of the Father before all worlds; yet Arius was, the first, who pretended to acknowledge the Trinity, that actually and in express words set. himself to oppose the eternal Sonship of Christ by generation; and argued much in the same manner as those do, who oppose it now: for being a man who had a good share of knowledge of the art of logic, as the historian observes¹⁸⁶, he reasoned thus: “If the Father begat the Son, he that is begotten, must have a beginning of his existence, from whence it is manifest, that there was a time when the Son was not; and therefore it necessarily follows, that he had his subsistence from things that are not;” or was brought out of a state of non existence into a state of existence. He understood generated in no other sense than of being created or made; and asserted, that he was created by God before time, and was the first creature, and by which he made all others; in proof of which he urged Proverbs 8:22 taking the advantage of the Greek version, which, instead of possessed me, reads created me the beginning of his ways. His sentiments will more fully appear from his own words in his epistles to Eusebius of Nicomedia, and to his own bishop, Alexander of Alexandria; in his letter to the former, he says¹⁸⁷,

184 De verb. Sap. 1. 4. c. 6.

185 Ibid, c. 8.

186 Socrat. Hist. Eccl. 1. 1. c. 5.

187 Apud Theodoret. Eccl. Hist. I. 1. c. 5

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“Our sentiments and doctrines are, that the Son is not unbegotten, nor a part of the unbegotten in any manner, nor out of any subject matter, but that by will and counsel he subsisted before times and ages, perfect God, the only begotten, immutable; and that before he was begotten or created, or decreed or established, he was not, for He was not unbegotten; we are persecuted because we say, the Son had a beginning, but God is without beginning: for this we are persecuted, and because we say, that he is of things that did not exist (that is, out of nothing;) so we say, that he is not a part of God, nor out of any subject-matter; and for this we are persecuted.” And in his letter to his bishop, he thus expresses himself¹⁸⁸, “We acknowledge one God, the only unbegotten; -- that this God begat the only begotten Son before time, by whom he made the world, and the rest of things; that he begot him not in appearance, but in reality; and that by his will he subsisted, immutable and unalterable, a perfect creature, but as one of the creatures, a birth, but as one of the births -- We say, that he was created before times and ages, by the will of God, and received his life and being from the Father; so that the Father together appointed glories for him; -- The Son without time was begotten by the Father, and was created and established before the world was; he was not before he was begotten, but without time was begotten before all things, and subsisted alone from the alone Father; neither is eternal nor co-eternal, nor co-unbegotten with the Father, nor had he a being together with the Father.” What he held is also manifest from his creed¹⁸⁹, which he delivered in the following words, “I believe in one eternal God, and in his Son whom he created before the world, and as God he made the Son, and all the Son has, he has not (of himself,) he receives from God, and therefore the Son is not equal to, and of the same dignity with the Father, but comes short of the glory of God, as a workmanship; and in less than the power of God. I believe in the holy Ghost, who is made by the Son.”

The Arians were sometimes called Aetians, from Aetius, a warm defender of the doctrine of Arius, and who stumbled at the same thing that Arius did; for he could not understand, the historian says¹⁹⁰, how that which is begotten could be co-eternal with him that begets; but when Arius dissembled and signed that form of doctrine in the Nicene Synod, Aetius took the opportunity of breaking off from the Arians, and of setting up a distinct sect, and himself

188 Apud Epiphan. Haeres. 69.

189 Apud Athanas. in Nie. concil, contr. Arium disput, p. 81, 82.

190 Socrat. Eccl. Hist, 1. 2. c. 36.

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at the head of them. These were after called Eunomians, from Eunomius, a disciple of Aetius; he is said¹⁹¹ to add to and to exceed the blasphemy of Arias; he with great boldness renewed the heresy of Aetius, who not only after Arius asserted that the Son was created out of nothing, but that he was unlike to the Father¹⁹². Hence the followers of these men were called Anomcoeans. There was another sect called Nativitarians, who were a sucker or branch that sprung from the Eunomians, and refined upon them; these held that the Son had his nativity of the Father, and the beginning of it from time; yet being willing to own: that he was co-eternal with the Father, thought that he was with him before he was begotten of him, that is, that he always was, but not always a Son, but that he began to be a Son from the time he was begotten There is a near approach to the sentiments of these in some of our days.

The Arians were also called Macedonians, from Macedonius a violent persecutor of the orthodox, called Homoousians,¹⁹³ who believed that the Son is of the same substance with the Father; but this man afterwards becoming bishop of Constantinople, refused to call him a creature, whom the holy scripture calls the Son; and therefore the Arians rejected him, and he became the author and patron of his own sect; he denied the Son was consubstantial with the Father, but taught, that in all things he was like to him that begat him, and in express words called the Spirit a creature¹⁹⁴, and the denial of the deity of the holy Spirit is the distinguishing tenet of his followers.

2dly, The Photinians rose up much about the same time the Arians did, for they are made mention of in the council of Nice, but their opinions differ from the Arians. These were sometimes called Marcellians, from Marcellius of Ancyra, whose disciple Photinus was, and from him named Photinians. He was bishop of Syrmium; his notions were the same with Ebion, and Paul of Samosate, that Christ was a mere man, and was only of Mary; he would not admit of the generation and existence of Christ before the world was¹⁹⁵. His followers were much the same with our modern Socinians, and who are

191 Theodoret. Eccl. Hist. 1. 2. c. 29,

192 Sosomen. Eccl. Hist. 1. 6. c. 26.

193 Soerxt. Eccl. Hist. 1. 2. c. 38,

194 Soerxt. Eccl. Hist. 1. 2. c. 38,

195 Theodoret, Eccl. Hist. 1. 2. c. 6.

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sometimes called by the same name. According to Thomas Aquinas¹⁹⁶, the Photinians, and so the Cerinthians, Ebionites, and Samosatzenians before them, as they held that Christ was a mere man, and took his beginning from Mary, so that he only obtained the honor of deity above others by, the merit of his blessed life; that he was, like other men, the Son of God by the Spirit of adoption, and by grace born of him, and by some likeness to God is in Scripture called God, not by nature, but by some participation of divine goodness.

These heresies were condemned by the several councils and synods held on account of them, and were refuted by various sound and valuable writers who lived in this century: to produce all their testimonies would be endless: I shall only take notice of a few, and particularly such as respect the Sonship of Christ.

1. The tenets of Arius were condemned by the council held at Nice in Bythnia, consisting of three hundred and eighteen bishops, by whom was composed the following creed or agreement of faith, as the historian calls it¹⁹⁷: “We believe in one God the Father Almighty, the maker of all things, visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten, begotten of the Father, that is, out of the substance of the Father, God of God, light of light, true God of true God; begotten not made, consubstantial (or of the same essence) with the Father, by whom all things are made which are in heaven and in earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, descended and became incarnate, and was made man and suffered, and rose again the third day; ascended up into heaven, and will come to judge the quick and the dead. And we believe in the holy Spirit. As for those that say, there was a time when the Son of God was not, and before he was begotten was not, and that he was made of what does not exist (out of nothing), and say, he was from another substance, or essence, or created, or turned, or changed; the holy catholic and apostolic church anathematises.”

2. Athanasius was a famous champion for the doctrines of the Trinity, the proper Sonship of Christ, and his eternal generation; to produce all the testimonies from him that might be produced in proof of those doctrines,

196 Theodoret. *ibid*, 1. 5. c. 11. Socrat. 1.7. c. 32. Sozoraon. I. 4. c. 6.

197 *Contr. Gentiles*, 1.4. e. 4. p. 610.

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would be to transcribe a great part of his writings; it may be sufficient to give his creed; not that which is commonly called the Athanasian creed, which, whether penned by him is a doubt, but that which stands in his works, and was delivered by him in a personal disputation with Arius, and is as follows; which he calls an epitome of his faith.¹⁹⁸ [“I believe in one God the Father, the almighty, being always God the Father; and I believe in God the Word, the only begotten Son of God, that he co-existed with his own Father; that he is the equal Son of the Father, and that he is the Son of God; of the same dignity; that he is always with his Father by his deity, and that he contains all things in his essence; but the Son of God is not contained by any, even as God his Father: and I believe in the Holy Ghost, that he is of the essence of the Father, and that the Holy Spirit is co-eternal with the Father and with the Son. The Word, I say, was made flesh.” After this I would only just observe, that Athanasius having said that the Son was without beginning and eternally begotten of the Father, farther says¹⁹⁹, that he was begotten ineffably and inconceivably; and elsewhere he says²⁰⁰, “it is superfluous or rather full of madness to call in question, and in an heretical manner to ask, how can the Son be eternal? or, how can he be of the substance (or essence) of the Father, and not be a part of him?” And a little farther, “it is unbecoming to inquire how the Word is of God, or how he is the brightness of God, or how God begets, and what is the mode of the generation of God: he must be a madman that will attempt such things, since the thing is ineffable, and proper to the nature of God only, this is only known to himself and his Son.”

3. Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, whom Arius opposed, and should have been mentioned first, in an epistle of his to Alexander, bishop of Constantinople²⁰¹, acquaints him with the opinion of Arius, that there was a time when the Son of God wits not, and he that was not before, afterwards existed, and such was he made, when he was made as every man is; and that the Son of God is out of things that are not, or out of nothing; he observes to him, that what was his faith and the faith of others, was the faith of the apostolic church: “We believe in one unbegotten Father, -- and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God; not begotten out of that which is not, but from the Father; that exists, not in a corporal manner by incision,

198 Contr. Arian. dislmt, inter opera ojus. vol. 1. p. 83.

199 Exposit fidei, vol. I. p. 394.

200 Contr. Arian, Orat, 3. p. 211, 214.

201 Aired Theodoret. Hist. I. 1. c. 4,

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or defluptions of divisions, as seemed to Sabeilius and Valentinus, but in a manner ineffable and inexplicable.”

4. Epiphanius wrote a volume against all heresies, and attempts a confutation of them: and with respect to the Arian heresy, he thus writes²⁰²; “God existing incomprehensible, has begat him that is incomprehensible, before all ages and times, and there is no space between the Son and the Father, but as soon as you understand a Father, you understand a Son, and as soon as you name a Father you shew a Son; the Son is understood by the Father, and the Father is known by the Son; whence a Son, if he has not a Father? and whence a Father, if he has not begat an only begotten Son? For when is it the Father cannot be called a Father, or the Son, a Son? Though some think of a Father without a Son, who afterwards comes to a proficiency and begets a Son, and so after the birth is called the Father of that Son: the Father who is perfect, and never wants perfection, making a progress or proficiency in the deity.”

5. Hilary, bishop of Poitiers in France, wrote against the Arians, and says many things in opposition to their tenets, concerning the Sonship of Christ, and his eternal generation; among others, he says²⁰³ “the unbegotten begot a Son of himself before all time, not from any subjacent matter, for all things are by the Son, nor out of nothing, for the Son is from him himself. -- He begot the only begotten in an incomprehensible and unspeakable manner, before all time and ages, of that which is unbegotten, and so of the unbegotten, perfect and eternal Father, is the only begotten, perfect and eternal Son.”

6. Faustinus the presbyter, wrote a treatise against the Arians; who observes, that they sometimes use the same words and phrases the orthodox do, but not in the same sense; they speak of God the Father and of God the Son, but when they speak of the Father, it is not of one who truly begets, and when they speak of the Son, it is of him as a Son by adoption, not by nature; and when they speak of him as a Son begotten before the world was, they attribute a beginning to him, and that there was a time when he was not; and so they assert him to be of things not existent, that is, of nothing. He asks, “How is he truly a Father, who, according to them, does not beget (truly)? and how is Christ truly a Son, whom they deny to be generated of him?” And again, “How is he the only begotten of the Father, since he cannot be

202 Contr. Haeres, 1.2. tom, 2 haeres. 69.

203 De Trinitate, 1. 3. p. 23, 24. rid. ibid. de Unitate fiti & patris, p. 650.

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the only begotten, other Sons existing by adoption? but if he is truly the only begotten by the Father, therefore because he only is truly generated of the Father.” And elsewhere²⁰⁴, “They say God made himself a Son; if he made him out of nothing, then is he a creature, and not a Son. What is he that you call a Son, whom you confirm to be a creature, since you say he is made out of nothing? therefore you cannot call him both a Son and a creature; for a Son is from birth, a creature from being made.” And again²⁰⁵, “In this alone the Father differs from the Son, that the one is a Father, the other a Son; that is the one begets and the other is begotten; yet not because he is begotten has he any thing less than what is in God the Father” (Heb.1:3). Once more²⁰⁶ “God alone is properly a true Father, who is a Father without beginning and end, for he did not sometime begin: he is a Father, but he was always a Father, having always a Son begotten of him, as he is always the true God, continuing without beginning and end.”

7. Gregory, bishop of Nazianzum, gives many testimonies to the doctrines of the Trinity and of the Sonship and generation of Christ, against the Arians and Eunomians: among which are the following: “We ought, says he²⁰⁷, to acknowledge one God the Father, without beginning and unbegotten; and one Son, begotten of the Father; and one Spirit, having subsistence from God, yielding to the Father, because he is unbegotten, and to the Son, because he is begotten; otherwise of the same nature, dignity, honor and glory.” And elsewhere he says²⁰⁸, “If you ask me, I will answer you again, When was the Son begotten? When the Father was not begotten. When did the Spirit proceed? When the Son did not proceed, but was begotten before time, and beyond expression. -- How can it be proved, that they (the Son and Spirit) are, co-eternal with the Father? From hence, because they are of him, and not after him, for what is without beginning is eternal.” And then he goes on to answer the several objections made to the generation of the Son by the Eunomians. Again he says²⁰⁹, “Believe the Son of God, the word that was before all ages begotten of the Father before time, and in an incorporeal manner; the same in the last clays made the Son of man for thy sake, coming forth from the virgin Mary in an unspeakable manner.”

204 De Trinitate conh'. Arian c. 1. p. 3c,

205 De Trinitate contr. Arian. c. 3. p. 124.

206 Ibid c. 7. p. 157 Ed Oxon.

207 Orat 26. p. 445.

208 Orat 35. p. 563.

209 Orat 40. p. 674.

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And elsewhere he says,[95] “Do you hear of generation? do not curiously inquire how it is. Do you hear that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father? do not be anxiously solicitous how it is: for if you curiously search into the generation of the Son, and the procession of the Spirit, I shall curiously inquire into the temperament of the soul and body, how thou art dust, and yet the image of God? How the mind remains in thee, and begets a word in another mind?”

8. Basil, called the great archbishop of Caesarea Cappadocia, wrote a treatise against Eunomius, in which he says²¹⁰, “As there is one God the Father always remaining the Father, and who is for ever what he is; so there is one Son, born by an eternal generation, who is the true Son of God, who always is what he is, God the Word and Lord; and one holy Spirit, truly the holy Spirit.” Again²¹¹, “Why therefore, O incredulous man, who dost not believe that God has an own Son, dost thou inquire how God begets? if truly thou askest of God how and where also, as in a place and when as in time; which, if absurd to ask such things concerning God, it will be more abominable not to believe.” And a little after he says²¹², “If God made all out of nothing by his will, without labor, and that is not incredible to us; it will certainly be more credible to all, that it; became God to beget an own Son of himself, in the divine nature, without passion, of equal honor, and of equal glory, a counselor of the same seat, a co-operator consubstantial with God the Father; not of a divers substance, nor alien from his sole deity; for if he is not so, neither is he adorable, for it is written thou shall not worship a strange God.”

9. Gregory, bishop of Nyssa, the brother of Basil, wrote against Eunomius, in which we have this passage²¹³. “He (Eunomius) does say, that he (the Son) was truly begotten before the world. Let him say of whom he was begotten: he must say of the Father entirely, if he is not ashamed of the truth; but from the eternal Father there is no separating the eternity of the Son; the word Father “contains a Son.”

10. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, after having said many things in opposition to Arius, Sabellius, Phontius, and Eunomius, observes, that “when you speak

210 Adv. Eunom. I. 5. c. i 1.

211 Ibid. c. 14.

212 Basil ibid.

213 “Contr. Eunom. Orat. 1. p, 30.

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of a Father, you also design his Son, for no man is a father to himself; and when you name a son, you confess his father, for no man is a son to himself; therefore neither the son can lie without the father, nor the father without the son; therefore always a father and always a son.” He has also these words:²¹⁴ “You ask me, how he can be a son if he has not a prior father? I ask of you also, when or how you think the Son is generated? for to me it is impossible to know the secret of generation; the mind fails, the voice is silent; and not mine only, but that of the angels; it is above angels, above powers, above cherubim, above seraphim, and above all understanding, if the peace of Christ is above all understanding (Phil, 4:7), must not such a generation be above all understanding?” And in another place,²¹⁵ “God the Father begat the Word co-eternal with himself and co-omnipotent, with whom he produced the holy Spirit; hence we believe that the substance of the Son and of the holy Spirit existed before any creature, out of all time; that the Father is the begetter, the Son is begotten, and the holy Spirit the holiness and the Spirit of the begetter and the begotten.”

11. Jerom the presbyter, and a noted writer in this century, speaking of the Arians says²¹⁶, “Let them understand, that they glory in vain of the testimony in which Wisdom speaks of being created in the beginning of the ways of God, and begotten and established; for it, according to them, he was created, he could not be begotten or born: if begotten or born, how could he be established and created?” And a little after he says “God, the “Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is a Father according to substance (or essence,) and the only begotten is not a Son. by adoption, but by nature; whatsoever we say of the Father and the Son, this we know is said of the holy Spirit.” Here the creed of Damasus might be taken notice of, in which he says, “God has begot a Son, not by will nor by necessity, but by nature;” and in the explanation of it, it is said, “Not because we say the Son is begotten of the Father by a divine and ineffable generation, do we ascribe any time to him, for neither the Father nor the Son began to be at any time; nor do we any otherwise confess an eternal Father, but we also confess a co-eternal Son.” Also Ruffinus’s exposition of the apostles creed, which stands among Jerom’s works, “when you hear of a Father, understand the Father of a Son, the image of his substance; but how God begat a Son do not discuss, nor

214 De Fide ad Gratian. C. 5. p. 119, 120.

215 In symbolism apostol. c. 1. p. 87. tom. 4.

216 In Epist. Ad Ephes. Fol. 96. A. tom. 9.

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curiously intrude into the depth of this secret²¹⁷.

12. The errors of the Photinians were not only confuted by the several above writers, but Photinus himself was condemned by the synod at Syrmium, of which place he had been bishop; and in the formula of faith agreed on therein, among others, are the following articles²¹⁸, “We believe in one God the Father almighty, the creator and maker of all things; -- and in his only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, who was begotten of the Father before all ages; -- and in the holy Spirit: -- and as to those that say, that the Son is of things that are not, (or of nothing) or of another substance, and not of God; and that there was a time or age when he was not, the holy and catholic church reckons them as aliens. -- If any one dare to say, that the unbegotten or a part of him was born of Mary, let him be anathema: and if any one say that he is the Son of Mary by prescience, and not begotten of the Father before the world, and was with God by whom all things are made, let him be anathema. -- If any one says, that Christ Jesus was not the Son of God before the world was, and ministered to the Father at the creation of all things, but only from the time he was born of Mary was called Son and Christ, and then received the beginning of deity, let him be anathema, as a Samosatenian.”

13. The formulas, creeds, and confessions of faith, made by different persons, and at different places, besides the Nicene creed, and even some that differed in other things from that and from one another, yet all agreed in inserting the clause respecting their faith in Christ, the only begotten Son, as begotten of the father before all ages, or the world was; as at Antioch, Syrmium, Ariminum, Selucia, and Constantinople²¹⁹.

14. Before the Nicene creed was made, or any of the above creeds, this was an article of faith with the orthodox Christians, that Christ was the eternal begotten Son of God. From the Writings of Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, who lived in the fourth century, may be collected a symbol or creed containing the faith of the church, and in which this article is fully expressed²²⁰; that Christ “is the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, the true God by whom all things are made;” and which article he strongly asserts and defends; and the creed which he explains, is thought

217 Vid. opera Hierom. tom. 4. fol. 42.. 1.. 44. 2.

218 Socrat. eccl. Hist. 1. 2. c. 29, 30.

219 Socrat. eccl. Hist. 1. 2. c. 10, 18, 19, 30, 57, 40, 41. vid. epist. haeres. 73.

220 Cateches. 4, s. 5. 5:xi.1.

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to be the²²¹ same which the first and ancient church always professed, and from the beginning; and perhaps is what Eusebius²²² refers unto, who was bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, when he declared his faith in the council at Nice; our formula, says he, which was read in the presence of our emperor (Constantine) most dear to God, is as we received it from the bishops that were before us; and as when catechized and received the laver (that is, were baptized,) and as we learnt from the divine writings, and is in this manner, “We believe in one God the Father Almighty, -- and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the only begotten Son, the first-born of every creature, begotten of God the Father before all worlds, by whom all things are made, etc.” Nor indeed was the word *omoousiov*, consubstantial, which expresses the Son’s being of the same substance, nature and essence with the Father, a new word²²³, devised in the council of Nice; for it was in use before²²⁴, as Athanasius has proved from the same Eusebius. “The bishops, he says, (that is, those assembled at Nice) did not invent these words of themselves, but having a testimony from the Fathers, so they wrote; for the ancient bishops near a hundred and thirty years before, both in the great city of Rome, and in our city (Alexandria) reproved those that said that the Son was a creature, and not consubstantial with the Father;” and this Eusebius who was bishop of Caesarea, knew, who first gave into the Arian heresy, but afterwards subscribed to the synod at Nice; for being confirmed, he wrote to his own people thus²²⁵, “We find, says he, some sayings of the ancient and famous bishops and writers, who use the word consubstantial in treating of the deity of the Father and of the Son.” And certain it is, that it is used by Gregory of Neocaesarea²²⁶, who lived before the council of Nice, and by the synod at Antioch in their creed,[113] held A. D. 277.

The Fifth Century

In the fifth century Arianism continued and prospered, having many abettors, as well as many who opposed it: other heresies also arose, and some in opposition to the Sonship of Christ.

221 Vid. Bulli iudicium eccl. cathol. p. 123.

222 Apud. Socrat. eccl. hist. 1. 1. c. 8, and Theodoret hist, 1. 1. c. 12.

223 Theodoret, *ibid*, c. 13

224 I Theodoret, *ibid*. c. 8.

225 In *ibid*. c. 12.

226 In *Annuniat. S. Mariae sermo* 2. p. 25. & in *S. Theophan*, p. 36. & *expos. fidci*, p. 101.

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1st. Felicianus, the Arian, argued against it thus, “If Christ was born of a virgin, how can he be said to be co-eternal with God the Father?” To whom Austin replied, “The Son of God entered into the womb of the virgin, that he might be again born, who had been already begotten before, he received the whole man (or whole humanity) who had had already perfect deity from the Father, not unlike was he to the begetter, when being everlasting he was begotten from eternity, nor unlike to men when born of his mother.”

2dly, Faustus, the Manichee, asserted, that according to the evangelists, Christ was not the Son of God, only the Son of David, until he was thirty years of age, and was baptized: to which Austin replied, “The catholic and apostolic faith is, that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is the Son of God according to Deity, and the Son of David, according to the flesh: which we so prove from the evangelic and apostolic writings, as that no man can contradict our proofs, unless he contradicts limit express words.”²²⁷

3dly, The Priscillianists asserted that Christ is called the only begotten Son of God, because he only was born of a virgin; to which Leo Magnus makes answer, “Let them take which they will, their tenets tend to great impiety, whether they mean, that the Lord Christ had his beginning from his mother, or deny him to be the only begotten of God the Father; since he was born of his mother, who was God the Word, and none is begotten of the Father but the Word.”²²⁸

The writers in this century are many, who have plainly and strongly asserted the eternal generation and Sonship of Christ: as Augustine, Chrysostom, Proclus archbishop of Constantinople, Leo Magnus, Theodoret, Cyril of Alexandria²²⁹, Paulinus, Victor, Maximus Taurinensis, etc. it may be abundantly sufficient only to mention the following formulas, or confessions of faith.

1. Of Augustine, bishop of Hippo, or of Sennadius, presbyter of Marseilles in France, to whom it is sometimes ascribed: “We believe there is one God, the Father, Son, and holy Spirit; the Father because he has a Son, the Son because he has a Father; the holy Spirit because he is from the Father and the Son (proceeding and co-eternal with the Father and the Son,) -- the eternal Father, because he has an eternal Son, of whom he is the eternal Father; the

227 Aug. contr. Faustum, l. 23. 100:1-5.

228 Leo Magn. Ep. 93. 100:3.

229 Vid. Magdeburg. centuriat, cent. 5. p. 75, etc.

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eternal Son, because he is co-eternal with the Father and the holy Spirit; the eternal holy Spirit, because he is co-eternal with the Father and the Son.”²³⁰

2. Of Flavianus, bishop of Constantinople, which he delivered in conc. Constantinop. A. D. 448 approved of by the synod at Chalcedon, A. D. 451. “Our Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and body; begotten indeed of the Father, without beginning and before the world, according to deity, but in the end, in the last days, the same was born of the virgin Mary for our salvation, according to humanity; consubstantial with the Father, according to deity, consubstantial with his mother according to “humanity; for of two natures we confess that Christ is after the incarnation in one subsistence, in one person. we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord.”²³¹

3. Of the council at Chalcedon, consisting of six hundred and thirty Fathers; “Following the holy fathers, say they, we all harmoniously teach and confess our Lord Jesus Christ: that he is perfect in deity and perfect in humanity, truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and body; co-essential with the Father according to the deity, and co-essential with us according to the humanity, in all things like unto us, excepting sin, but begotten of the Father before the world, according to the deity: and in the last days, for us and our salvation, was of the virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord, according to the humanity, etc.”²³²

The Sixth Century

In the sixth century were a sort of heretics called Bo-o-nosians, who held that Christ was not the proper but adoptive Son; against whom dustinian bishop of Valae in Spain wrote;²³³ and Arianism spread and prevailed under the Gothic kings in several parts. Fulgentius speaks of the tenets of the Arians in this time, that the Word or Son of God was not of the same substance with the Father²³⁴. This author wrote an answer to ten objections of theirs: to the first, concerning diversity of words and names used, he replies, “When Father and Son are named, in these two names a diversity of words is acknowledged, but neither by those two different words the

230 Ecclesiastes Dogm. c. 1. Appendix. tom. 3. Aug. operum.

231 Apud Forbes. Instruct. Hist. Theolog. 1. 2, e, 10. p, 88.

232 Apud ibid. c. 12. p. 92.

233 Isidor. Orig. 1, 8, c. 6. vid eunrl, do Script. eccl. c. 20. & Chronicum Goth. p. 276

234 Ad hominmn, 1.3. e. 1.

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nature of both is signified, for the diversity of those names does not divide the natures, but shows the truth of the generation, as from one true Father, we know that one true Son exists.” To the second objection, concerning the ineffability of generation, he observes, “because the generation of the Son is unspeakable, it is not unknowable, nor does it follow, because it cannot be declared, that it cannot be known.”²³⁵

Chilpericus, king of the Franks, endeavored to revive the Sabellian heresy, but was opposed by Gregory Furnensis:²³⁶ besides Fulgentius and Gregory, there were others in this age who asserted and defended the eternal generation and Son-ship of Christ, as Fortunatus, Cassiodorus, Gregorius Magnus, and others;²³⁷ and even by a synod consisting of Gothic bishops²³⁸, in number sixty three. In the same century the famous Boetius declares his faith in God the Father, in God the Son, and in God the holy Ghost; that the Father has a Son begotten of his substance, and co-eternal with him, whose generation no human mind call conceive of.²³⁹

The Seventh Century

In the seventh century, towards the beginning of it, rose up that vile impostor Mahomet, as bitter an enemy to the true, proper and eternal Sonship of Christ, as ever was, for which he gave the following brutish and stupid reasons; “because God did not need a Son, because if he had a Son, they might not agree, and so the government of the world be disturbed.”²⁴⁰ Reasons which require no answer, Not to take notice of the several councils at Toletum, held in this century, in which the article of Christ’s eternal Sonship was asserted and maintained, I would observe what is said in a Roman synod, consisting of a hundred and twenty five bishops, in which Agatho the Roman pontiff presided; “We believe, say they, in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; and in his only begotten Son, who was begotten of him before all worlds.”²⁴¹

235 Contr. object. Arian, p, 38, 39. h

236 Vid. Magdeburg. centur, cent, 6. p, 164.

237 Ibid, p. 53, 54, etc.

238 Ibid. p. 313.

239 Confess. Fidei, p, 173.

240 Altreg. Theolog. Hist. loc. 3. p. 236. rid. Forbes. instruat. Hist, Theolog. 1.4. c. 6. p. 189, 190.

241 Apud Forbes. ibid. 1.6. c. 3; p. 227.

*A Dissertation Concerning The Eternal Generation Of The Son***The Eight Century**

In the eighth century, the notion that Christ, though the true, proper, and natural Son of God according to the divine nature, yet according to the human nature was only the Son of God by adoption and grace, an adoptive Son, was propagated by Elipandus and Felix, Spanish bishops; but condemned by the council at Frankfort, called by Charles the Great²⁴²; and the eternal Sonship and generation of Christ was asserted and maintained by Damascene, Bede, Albinus, and others.²⁴³

The Ninth Century

In the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, the controversies were chiefly about Image-worship, Transubstantiation, etc. yet in these and the following centuries, we have testimonies from various writers to the truth of Christ's proper and eternal Sonship by generation; it would be too numerous to produce them all; it will be sufficient to say, it was not opposed by any, but plainly and strongly affirmed by Rabanus, Macerus, and Haymo in century 9 by Theophilact, in century 10 by Anselm, in century 11 by Peter Lombard and Bernard, in century 12 by Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus, in century 13, but in these and the following centuries, till the Reformation, Satan had other work to do than to stir up men to oppose the Trinity, or any of the divine persons in it, having enough to do to support the hierarchy of Rome, and the peculiar tenets of Popery, against the witnesses who rose up at different times to oppose them, and to endeavor to carry the pride and tyranny of the bishop of Rome to the highest pitch possible.

The Tenth Century

When the Reformation began in the sixteenth century, and spread throughout many nations in Europe, great evangelical light broke forth among the Reformers; and Satan fearing his kingdom would greatly suffer hereby, went to his old game again, which he had played with so much success in the first ages of Christianity, namely, to stir up an opposition to the doctrine of the Trinity, and the person of Christ; which was first begun by Servetus in Helvetia, who afterwards came to Geneva and there ended his life²⁴⁴.

242 Ibid. I. 6. c. 1. p. 292, etc.

243 Magdeburg. centur. cent. 8. c. 4. p, 61, 52. etc.

244 Servetus has these blasphemous words concerning eternal generation, "debuissent dicre quod pater" celebrat uxorem quandam spiritualem, vel quod solus ipse masculo-foemineus, out hermaphroditus, simul crat pater & mater, etc. nam ratio vocabuli nou patitur ut "quis dicatur sine matre pater." Servetus do

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Blandrata, infected with his principles, went into Poland, and there artfully spread his poison in the reformed churches, assisted by others, and which at length issued in a division in those churches; when Faustus Socinus, who had imbibed some bad notions from the papers of his uncle Laelius about the Trinity, came into Poland, and joined the Anti-trinitarians there, and strengthened their cause, and where the notions of him and his followers took root and flourished much: and from thence bays been transplanted into other countries, Those men, who were men of keen parts and abilities, saw clearly that could they demolish the article of Christ's Son-ship by eternal generation, it would be all over with the doctrine of the Trinity; and therefore set themselves with all their might against it²⁴⁵. Socinus himself says of it²⁴⁶, not only that it is error and a mere human invention, and which he represents as if it was held to be more animantium; but that it is most absurd, most unworthy of God, and contrary to his absolute perfection and unchangeable eternity²⁴⁷; and asserts, that Christ is not called the only begotten Son of God, because generated of the substance of God; and that there is no other, nor ever existed any other only begotten Son of God, besides that man, Jesus of Nazareth: and expressly says, it clearly appears, that the human nature of Christ is the person of the Son of God; and elsewhere²⁴⁸ makes the same objection to Sonship by generation as Mahomet did, for he says, "Those who accommodate the Word brought forth in Proverbs 8:24 to the Son, are not according to the judgment of the Homoousians, to be reckoned very distant from the blasphemy of the Turks, who when they hear that the Christians say, God has a Son, ask, Who is his wife?" And in this article concerning the Sonship of Christ, and also with respect to the doctrine of the Trinity, the Remonstrants²⁴⁹, in the seventeenth century and onwards, seem to agree with them; but the contrary has been maintained by all sound divines and evangelical churches, from the Reformation to the present time,

Trinit. error Septen. 1. 1. A, D. 1531. And again, "Si Logos filius erat natps ex patre sine matre, dic mihi quomodo peperit cure, per ventrem an per latus." Ibid. 1. 2. p. 52., Apud Hornbeck Socin. consolat, tom. 1. p. 17. Servetus would not own Christ to be the eternal Son of God, only the Son of the eternal God. Socinus spud Hornbeck. Ibid. p. 20.

245 Vid. Racov. Catoch. c. I. qu. 17.-20. Wolzogon de essentia et natura Dei, c. 9. p. 26, etc

246 Christ. Belig. Institut inter opera ejus, vol. 1. p. 655

247 Quod regni Polon. c. 4. s. 2. p. 608, 699.

248 Respons. ad Vujekum, c. 7. p. 607, vol. 2.

249 Vid. Peltii Herman Remonstr & Socin, artic.,4, paragr. 1. 4. p. 15, 19.

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as appears by their writings and harmony of confessions: so that upon the whole it is clear, that the church of God has been in the possession of this doctrine of the eternal generation and Sonship of Christ, from the beginning of Christianity to the present age, almost eighteen hundred years; nor has there been any one man who professed to hold the doctrine of the Trinity, or of the three distinct divine persons in the unity of the divine essence, that ever opposed it, till the latter end of the seventeenth century: if any such person in this course of time can be named, let him be named: none but the followers of Simon Magus, Cerinthus, Ebion, Carpocrates, the Gnosticks, etc. in the two first centuries, and then by the Sabellians, Samosatensians, Arians, Photinians, Mahometans, Socinians, and more lately by the Remonstrants, such as are Antitrinitarians. The only two persons I have met with who have professed to hold the doctrine of the Trinity, as it has been commonly received, that have publicly expressed their doubts or dissatisfaction about the phrase eternal generation, I mean such as are of any note or character, for as for the trifling tribe of ignorant writers and scribblers, who know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm, I make no account of them; I say, I have met with only two of this sort. The one is Roell, a Dutch Professor at Franeker, who lived at the latter end of the last century; this man professed to believe that there are three distinct divine persons, the Father, Son, and Spirit, and that these three are one; that the second person in the Trinity was begotten by the Father from all eternity, and that this is the first and chief reason that he is called a Son; nor did he object to the use of the phrase eternal generation, nor did he disuse it, but explained it to another sense than that in which it was commonly taken, that is, that it only signified the co-existence of the second person with the first, and communion of nature with him. But as the same may be said of the first and third persons, the phrase of generation so understood might be said of them as well as of the second; he therefore was obliged to have recourse to the economy of salvation, and the manifestation of the three persons in it²⁵⁰. On the whole, he was opposed by the very learned Vitringa²⁵¹, and his opinion was proscribed and condemned by almost all the synods of the Dutch churches, and he was forbid by the authority of his supreme magistrate to propagate it; and most of the synods have decreed, that the candidates for the ministry shall be examined about this opinion, before they are admitted into the ministry²⁵². The other person, who has objected to the eternal generation of the Son of God, is Dr. Thomas

250 Vid. Roell. Dis.sort. de generatione filii, &c. p. 4,5, 31, 49.
 251 Disputatio Theolog. & E, pilog. Disputat. de generatione filii.
 252 Maastricht. Theolog. 1. 2. c. 26. s. 17. p. 257.

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Ridgeley, Professor of Divinity in London, towards the beginning of the present century²⁵³: who strongly asserts, and contends for the doctrine of a Trinity of divine distinct persons in the Godhead, and yet strangely adopts the Socinian notion or Sonship by office, and makes the eternal Sonship of Christ to be what he calls his mediatorial Sonship. There is indeed a third person of great name among us, Dr. Isaac Watts, who has expressed his dissatisfaction with the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son of God, but then he is not to be reckoned a Trinitarian, being so manifestly in the Sabellian scheme, as appears by his Dissertations published in 1725. Insomuch that the celebrated Fred. Adolphus Lampe, who published his Theological Disputations concerning the holy Spirit, two or three years after, spares not to reckon him among the gross Sabellians: his words are²⁵⁴, “Nuperius novum systema Socinianum de Trinitate Angtie J. WATS edidit, additis quibusdam dissertationibus eam illustrantibus, quarum quinta ex professo de spiritu S. agit. Existimat quidem sect. o. p. 126. eatenus se a Socino, Schlictingio, Crellio esse distinguatum, quod virtutem in Deo non accidentalem, sed essentialem, seu substantialem pro spiritu S. habeat: hoc tamen ita facit, ut non censeat hanc notionem constanter ubique obtinere: nam saepius “cum crassioribus Sabellianis spiritum S. esse Deum psum, p. 130. s. 49. defendit.”

Upon the whole, setting aside the said persons, the testimonies for and against the eternal generation and Sonship of Christ stand thus:

For Eternal Generation, etc.

Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Clemens of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Gregory of Neocesaria, Dionysius of Alexandria, the three hundred and eighteen Nicene Fathers; Athanasius, Alexander bishop of Alexandria, Epiphanius, Hilary, Faustinus, Gregory of Nazianzum, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, Jerom, Ruffinus, Cyril of Jerusalem, besides the many hundreds of bishops and presbyters assembled at different times and in different places, as, at Syrmium, Antioch, Arminum, Seleucia, and Constantinople, and elsewhere; Augustine, Chrysostom, Leo Magnus, Theodoret, Cyril of Alexandria, Paulinus, Flavianus, Victor, Maximus Tauriensis, six hundred and thirty fathers in the council at Chalcedon; Fulgentius, Gregory Turnasis, Fortunatus, Cassioclorus, Gregorius Magaus, the many bishops in the several councils at Toletum, the Roman synod of a hundred and twenty-five

253 See his body or divinity, p. 121, etc.

254 Lampe. disp. de spiritu s. c, 8. s. 13, c. 11.

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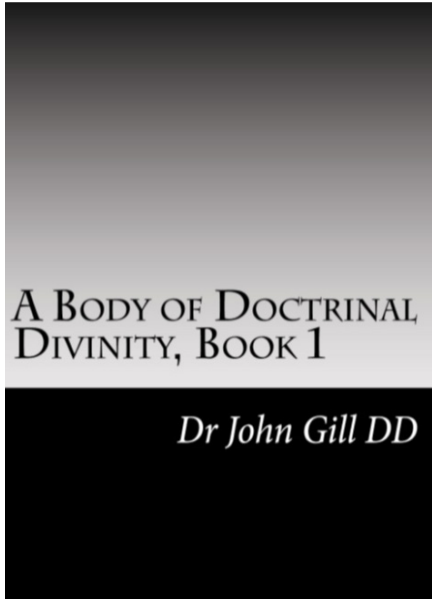
under Agatho, Damascene, Beda, Albinus, and the fathers in the council of Francford, with many others in later times, and all the sound divines and evangelic churches since the reformation.

Against it,

Simon Magus, Cerinthus, and Ebion, and their respective followers; Carpocrates and the Gnostick, Valentinus, Theodotus the currier, Artemon, and others their associates; Beryllus of Bostra, Praxeus, Hermogenes, Noctius and Sabellius, the Samosatenians, Arians, Aetians, Eunomians and Photinians, the Priscillianists and Bonotians; Mahomet and his followers; the Socinians and Remonstrants; and all Anti-trinitarians;

Now since it appears that all the sound and orthodox writers have unanimously declared for the eternal generation and Sonship of Christ in all ages, and that those only of an unsound mind and judgment, and corrupt in other things as well as this, and many of them men of impure lives and vile principles, have declared against it, such must be guilty of great temerity and rashness to join in an opposition with the one against the other; and to oppose a doctrine the Church of God has always held, and especially being what the scriptures abundantly bear testimony unto, and is a matter of such moment and importance, being a fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion, and indeed what distinguishes it from all other religions, from those of Pagans, Jews and Mahometans, who all believe in God, and generally in one God, but none of them believe in the Son of God: that is peculiar to the Christian religion.

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Of God, His Works, Names, Nature, Perfections And Persons. And Contains:

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24 Of The Sufficiency And Perfection Of God.

25 Of The Blessedness Of God.

26 Of The Unity Of God.

27 Of A Plurality In The Godhead, Or, A Trinity Of Persons In The Unity
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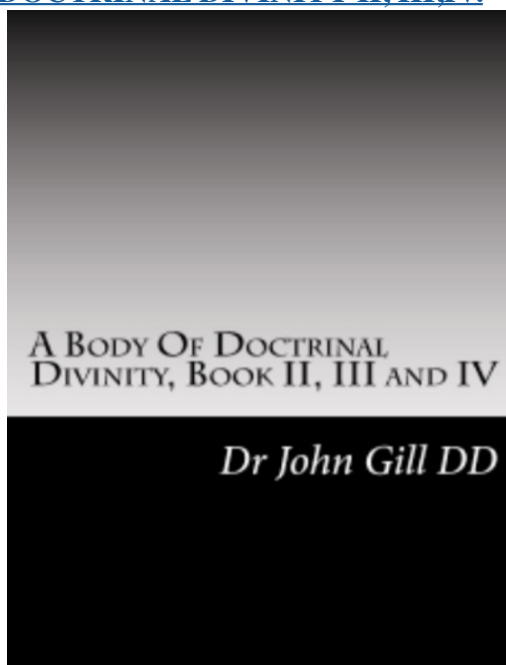
28 Of The Personal Relations; Or, Relative

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29 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Father.

30 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Son.

31 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Holy Spirit.

A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY II, III, IV.**A System Of Practical Truths**

Authored by Dr John Gill DD, Created by David Clarke Cert.Ed

The contents of Book II treats the subject of Of The Acts and Works of God

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Chapter IV Of The Eternal Union Of The Elect Of God Unto Him.

Chapter V Of Other Eternal And Immanent Acts In God, Particularly Adoption And Justification.

Chapter VI Of The Everlasting Council Between The Three Divine Persons, Concerning The Salvation Of Men.

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A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY, V, VI, VII.

A BODY OF DOCTRINAL
DIVINITY, BOOKS V, VI, VII

Dr John Gill DD

A System OF Practical Truths

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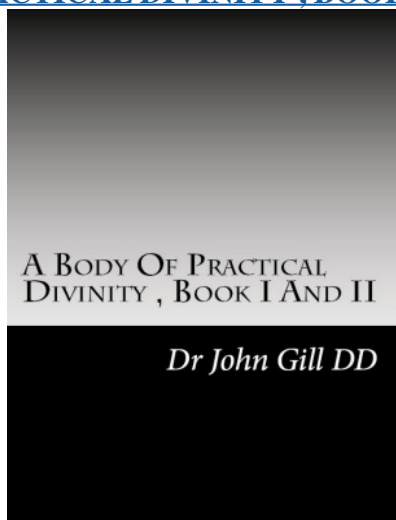
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A BODY OF PRACTICAL DIVINITY , BOOK I, II.**A System of Practical Truths**

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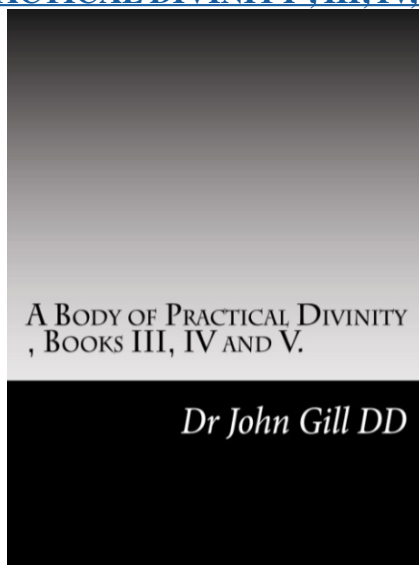
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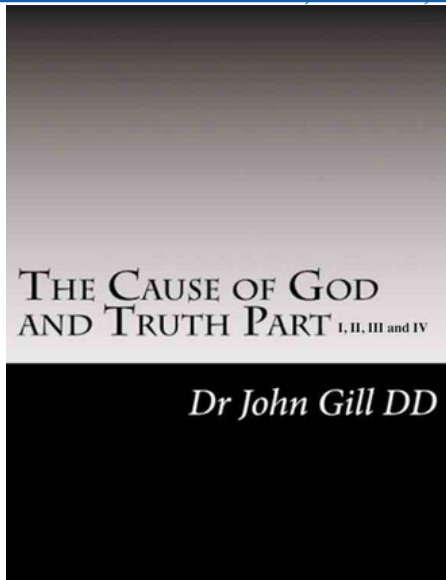
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THE CAUSE OF GOD AND TRUTH, PART I, II, III and IV.



Authored by Dr John Gill DD,

It should be known by the reader, that the following work was undertaken and begun about the year 1733 or 1734, at which time Dr. Whitby's Discourse on the Five Points was reprinting, judged to be a masterpiece on the subject, in the English tongue, and accounted an unanswerable one ; and it was almost in the mouth of every one, as an objection to the Calvinists, Why do not ye answer Dr. Whitby ? Induced hereby, I determined to give it another reading, and found myself inclined to answer it, and thought this was a very

proper and seasonable time to engage in such a work. In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against the Calvinistic Scheme, in which their arguments and objections are answered, and the several passages set in a just and proper light. These, and what are contained in the following Part in favour of the Particular Scheme, are extracted from Sermons delivered in a Wednesday evening's lecture.

The Second Part was published in the year 1736, in which the several passages of Scripture in favour of special and distinguishing grace, and the arguments from them, are vindicated from the exceptions of the Arminian, and particularly from Dr. Whitby, and a reply made to answers and objections to them.

The Third Part was published in 1737, and is a confutation of the arguments from reason used by the Arminians, and particularly by Dr. Whitby, against the above doctrines ; and a vindication of such as proceed on rational accounts in favour of them, in which it appears that they are no more disagreeable to right reason than to divine revelation ; to the latter of which the greatest deference should be paid, though the Rationalists of our age too much neglect it, and have almost quitted it ; but to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them. In this part of the work is considered the agreement of the sentiments of Mr. Hobbes and the Stoic philosophers with those of the Calvinists, in which the difference between them is observed, and the calumny removed ; to which is added, a Defence of the Objections to the Universal Scheme, taken from the prescience and the providence of God, and the case of the Heathens.

The Fourth Part was published in 1738, in which the sense of the ancient writers of the Christian Church, before the times of Austin, is given ; the importance and consequence of which is shown, and that the Arminians have very little reason to triumph on that account.

This work was published at a time when the nation was greatly alarmed with the growth of Popery, and several learned gentlemen were employed in preaching against some particular points of it ; but the author of this work was of opinion, that the increase of Popery was greatly owing to the Pelagianism, Arminianism, and other supposed rational schemes men run into, contrary to divine revelation, This was the sense of our fathers in the last century, and therefore joined these and Popery together in their religious grievances they were desirous of having redressed ; and indeed, instead of lopping off the branches of Popery, the axe should be laid to the root of the tree, Arminianism and Pelagianism, the very life and soul of Popery.

This new edition, with some alterations and improvements, is now published by request.

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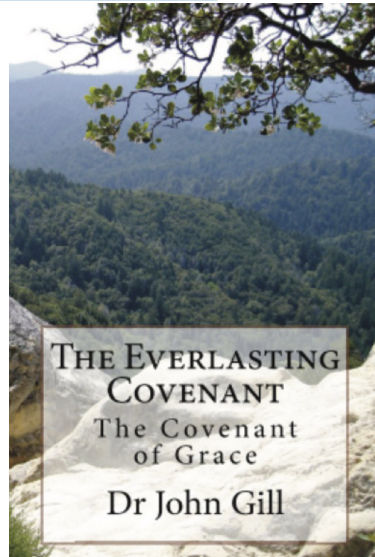
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A Vindication of The Cause of God and Truth

THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

Dr. John Gill

Publisher Preface

The publisher is the only surviving member of the Bierton Particular Baptists and his story of conversion from crime to Christ is told in, ‘Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists,’ advertised at the end of this book. At his conversion the publisher could hardly read. He educated himself by reading the bible and classical Christian literature and this book, ‘The Everlasting Covenant’, by John Gill, extracted from John Gill’s, ‘A Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity’, was one of the writings that enabled him to understand the doctrines of grace and join the Bierton Particular Baptist Church, in 1976. About the Author Dr.. John Gill (23 November 1697 – 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology. Born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life. In his biography of John Gill, Augustus Toplady states: “Perhaps, no man, since the days of St. Augustin, has written so largely, in defence of the system of Grace; and, certainly, no man has treated that momentous subject, in all its branches, more closely, judiciously, and successfully”. What was said of Edward the Black Prince, “That he never fought a battle, which he did not win”; what has been remarked of the great Duke of Marlborough, “That he never undertook a siege, which he did not carry”; may be justly

accommodated to our great Philosopher and Divine: who, so far as the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel are concerned, never besieged an error, which he did not force from its strong holds; nor ever encountered an adversary, whom he did not baffle and subdue.”

DR. JOHN GILL’S SERMONS



Volume 1: Sermons And Tracts

Authored by Dr. John Gill D.D.

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This is volume 1 of 4 volumes of Dr John Gills sermons and are reproduced for the benefit of Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan with a view to promote the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the view of the publisher that Dr. J Gill is the clearest and most faithful in preaching and teaching the doctrines of grace. We dismiss the charges, that those who do not his writings, and call him a Hyper-Calvinist and ask you to read or your self and learn from a master in Israel. Bierton Particular Baptists have republished the whole of Dr. Gills Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity, The Cause of God And Truth.

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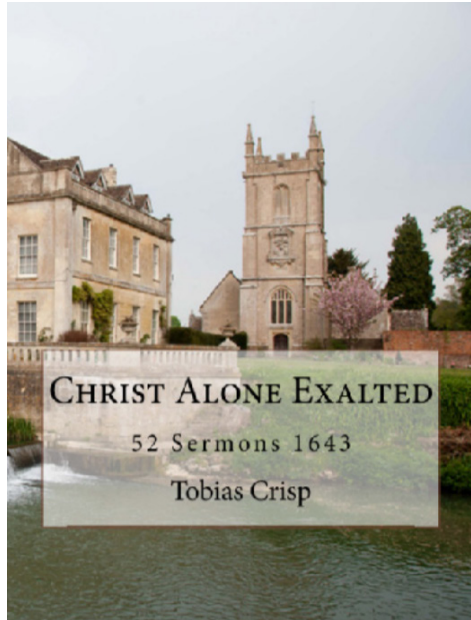
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CHRIST ALONE EXALTED



52 Sermons 1643

Authored by Dr Tobias Crisp D.D., From an idea by Bierton Particular Baptists, Created by David Clarke

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Tobias Crisp was a preacher of the gospel in England in the 17 century. He was born in 1600 and died in 1643 at which time these sermons were published.

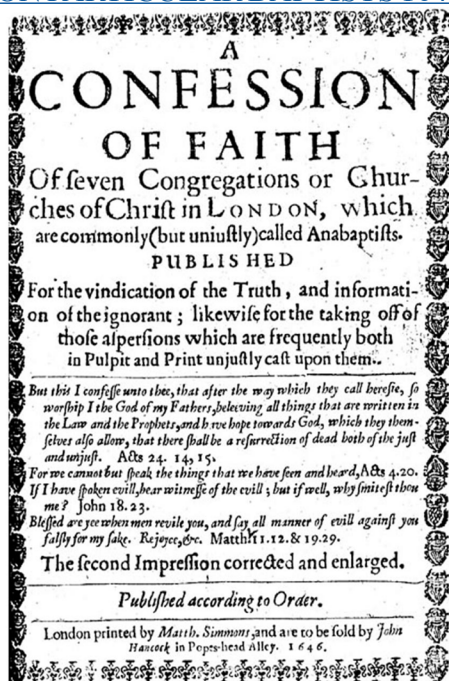
He lived at the time when the First London Particular Baptist Confession of 1644 was published and it is clear from these sermons he taught Calvinists truths.

He preached the doctrines of grace and was charged with being an Antinomian and provoked opposition from various quarters.

Dr. John Gill republished these sermons along with comments, in his

defense, showing that Tobias Crisp clearly taught the truths of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE FIRST LONDON PARTICULAR BAPTISTS 1644-66 CONFESSION



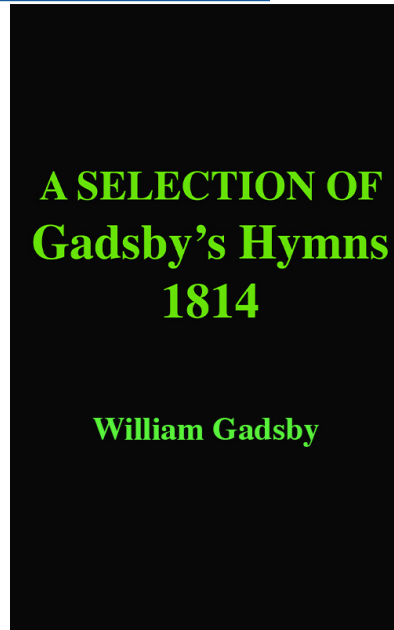
Compiled by David Clarke

1 FIRST LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH 1644

Subscribed in the Names of seven Churches in London

2 FIRST LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION 1646, 2nd EDITION

The Second edition is better than the first confession as it is much less legalistic but strong in the teaching of salvation (Soteriology) and predestination. This book included a set of recommended readings relating to Reformed theology.



A Selection of Gadsby's Hymns 1814 Paperback – 15 July 2021

by William Gadsby (Author), David Clarke (Editor)

The occasion of this publication is brought about by the gradual change that has taken place among Christians and them seeking to worship God in a public way. It has been noted that many have forsaken the use of a hymn book and reverted to singing, in a public way, by reading from an overhead projector. Very often the projection of the words of the hymn are out of step with the timing of the singing of the song, which is very off putting. Also with the use of such projection only one verse at a time may be viewed and the worshippers cannot look ahead or return to a previously sung verse to reflect or anticipate the sense and meaning of the hymn.

It has also been noticed the many such songs have a copy write symbol restricting the use of such songs and very often the substance, sentiment and doctrinal content is often lacking, and in many case doctrinally unsound and so unfit for public worship.

It has often been the experience of the publisher that when any such attempt to worship publicly and any combination of some of those things just mention takes place, it become unacceptable and an internal groan is experienced and a sigh expressing, 'Why have Christians forsaken the us of well tried hymns and presented in a personal copy of an hymn book? A hymn book that can be used personally and privately at will. For this reason instead of moaning it was felt something could be done about this matter

and so a small collection of well proven, doctrinally sound hymn in the form of hand held Hymn book has been produced.

Ephesians 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

LET CHRISTIAN MEN BE MEN, 2ND EDITION

1 Corinthians 16:13 Quit Ye Like Men



David Clarke

David Clarke tells of his Secession from the Berton Strict and Particular Baptist Church, in 1984 over matters of conscience. This Church was formed in 1831 and was a Calvinist Protestant dissenting society and became a Gospel Standard cause in 1981. Sadly the church fell into serious doctrinal error teaching general redemption this was just one of the reasons for his secession. David was called by the Lord and sent by the church the gospel in 1982 When acting as the secretary he had to deal with a range of serious issues that arose within the church. This book deals with all those doctrinal and practical issues that arose and how he responded to them. He deals with the reasons for his secession and clearly spells out the distinguishing doctrines of grace treating the subjects of Particular Redemption, Gospel preaching the false notion of Duty Faith and Duty Repentance, the role

of women in the church, Articles of Religion, and the relationship of the believer to the Law of Moses. He maintains the gospel is the believer's rule of life for the believer and not the law of Moses. That there are no such things holy tables and the chapel building is not the house of God. David remains the sole member of the Church after all its former members died and that the church did not terminate his membership after his secession David continues his mission work and calling published a range of Christian books and has been engaged in gospel ministry in Pakistan and the Philippines.