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# A SYSTEM OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

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Vol. 1 of 2

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by  
William Lindsay Alexander

Forgotten Books

# Forgotten Books

## A System of Biblical Theology

By

William Lindsay Alexander

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# A SYSTEM OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

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# A SYSTEM

OF

# BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

BY THE LATE

W. LINDSAY ALEXANDER, D.D., LL.D.,

PRINCIPAL OF THE THEOLOGICAL HALL OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES  
IN SCOTLAND; MINISTER OF AUGUSTINE CHURCH, EDINBURGH,  
ETC. ETC.

*IN TWO VOLUMES.*

VOL. I.

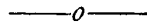
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1888.



# P R E F A C E.



THIS work consists of lectures delivered by the late Dr. Lindsay Alexander to the students of the Theological Hall of the Congregational Churches in Scotland. The course of theological study in that institution extended over four years, in each session of which Dr. Alexander delivered lectures on one of the four divisions of theology given in these volumes. Although he held the post of Professor of Theology for the long period of twenty-nine years, he was in the habit of carefully revising and largely rewriting his lectures for each successive session, and those now printed were, for the most part, written by him during the last few years of his life, while those written at an earlier date show marks of careful revision. All of them may therefore be regarded as setting forth his matured views on theological subjects.

The imperfect arrangement of the author's MSS. and their voluminous extent have rendered it necessary for me to give to the work more editing than I could have wished. In the first place, I have taken the liberty of departing from the lecture-form of the MSS., and of arranging the matter in the form of chapters and sections, the latter being more convenient than the former to readers of a book, by enabling them to follow with facility the subjects treated when given in consecutive order. I have thus been able to omit the recapitulation with which Dr. Alexander was wont to preface each lecture. I have, however, endeavoured to supply the place of these recapitulations by giving headings to many of

the chapters and sections, and by using numerals to indicate the place of each section in its relation to the several parts of the whole work. In the Synoptical Table of Contents given at the end of the second volume, I have also endeavoured to furnish an abstract of all the subjects treated in their logical connection, which may be useful as an introduction to the study of the work in detail. These are all the additions I have made to Dr. Alexander's MSS., with the exception of detailed references to books, chapters, and verses or sections of Scripture, and of classical and theological authors which I have supplied where they have been omitted by the author. Had I felt free to do so, I might have added many more headings to sections and paragraphs throughout the work, so as to indicate clearly and fully the passage from one subject or argument to another, but I have preferred to supply these in the Synoptical Table, where they will be found in full.

In the second place, I have to note that I have been compelled to omit a large part of the matter of the MSS. in order to bring the work within the limits of two volumes. The only alternative to this was condensation of the matter, which I regard as not competent to an editor, but only to an author in dealing with his own work. In regard to the omissions, however, I have endeavoured to act under the guidance of the author himself, furnished in those indications given in several of his introductory lectures (selections from which form the Introduction to this work) of what he regarded as the main body of his teaching, and what he regarded as merely introductory or subsidiary to that. In the closing part of the Introduction it will be found that he aimed at the "construction of a Biblical rather than a Dogmatical or Ecclesiastical Theology." Accepting the Bible as a divine revelation, and as comprehending within it not only those truths peculiar to itself, but also all the teachings of nature concerning religion, he made it his chief aim to set forth in scientific form the doctrines of Scripture concerning God and man in their relations to each other. While recognizing the importance of the subjects usually treated under the head of Natural Theology, he regarded the dis-

cussion of these, and also of subjects bearing on the philosophical aspects of theology, as somewhat aside from his proper function as a teacher of Biblical Theology. Guided by the expression of his own views, I have therefore omitted all lectures on what may be called extra-Biblical subjects, and have found all the less difficulty in determining what subjects may be properly included under this head, because Dr. Alexander seldom failed to indicate, in a sentence or two, when he dealt with subjects of a subsidiary nature as distinguished from the main body of his teaching. Most of the lectures omitted fall under Parts I. and II., Theology proper and Anthropology. From Part I. the omissions are of lectures on "The Concept of God," and "The Existence of God," including discussions on the argument *a priori*, the historical, physical, anthropological, and teleological arguments, an outline of which will be found in Dr. Alexander's article on "Theology" in the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Several lectures and parts of lectures on modern speculations regarding the origin, creation, and antiquity of man have also been omitted from Part II., on the ground of the lecturer's distinct intimation, that although he entered upon the discussion of these subjects for the benefit of his students, he regarded this as somewhat aside from his function as a teacher and expounder of the Biblical doctrine concerning man. Other omissions are noted and explained as they occur throughout the work. I feel bound to say, however, that notwithstanding these necessary omissions, I believe the lectures now published embody very fully and fairly Dr. Alexander's theological teaching, and that any advantage that would have accrued from the publication of all the matter of his MSS. would have been chiefly in the direction of amplified illustration and proof of the positions maintained in this work.

The reasons given for producing the work in the form of a treatise on Biblical Theology have also determined its title. It is a Biblical Theology in the sense, to use the author's own words, that it is an attempt to "collect and classify the different statements of Scripture so as to present the truth they teach in its purely Biblical form, and under the modifi-

cations which are peculiar to each writer;" and it is a "System" of Biblical Theology in the sense that the author has aimed at "a systematic and scientific expression of the contents and full meaning of what the Bible states only in germ, or loosely and popularly." I am aware that the designation "Biblical Theology" is used by some theologians in a sense different from that now given, but, in view of the ambiguity that attaches to the phrase, it may be sufficient to explain, as I have done, the meaning given to it in this work.

I desire to express my sense of obligation to Dr. Alexander's representatives, not only for consenting to the publication of these lectures, but also for the confidence they have placed in me, in leaving me full liberty to prepare the work in such a form as might, in my judgment, furnish an adequate presentation of his theological teaching. Whatever reception it may meet with, I have unhesitatingly accepted the responsibility of advising its publication; and although I could have wished the preparation of it for the press had been in abler hands, I have been moved to undertake the onerous duty of editor chiefly by the fear that by declining it the work might either have failed to be published, or publication have been unduly delayed. While I confess to the natural desire of a grateful and admiring student to have placed on record a memorial of some of the best work of a revered teacher, it is the high excellence of the work itself, and my conviction that it goes far to supply an acknowledged want at the present time, that have mainly weighed with me in seeking its publication. What many theological students and thoughtful religious persons are at present anxiously desiring, is such a statement of what the Bible teaches regarding the most important doctrines of religion as shall show neither the special pleading of writers who feel bound to defend the religious creeds and systems of the ecclesiastical body to which they belong, nor the bias of those who feel called on to write as the avowed opponents of what is usually regarded as orthodox doctrine. I claim for this work that it makes a near approach to supplying this want. It is no doubt true that the author had very pro-

nounced religious opinions and beliefs, and that these were mainly on the side of what is called the Calvinistic school of theologians; but the mental independence which he brought to the study of Scripture is, I think, sufficiently shown by his fearless rejection of some of the characteristic dogmas of both the strict and moderate schools of Calvinistic theology. Of the former he set aside as non-Scriptural the church or catholic form of the doctrine of the Trinity, of the Eternal Generation of the Son and Procession of the Spirit, of Adoption, and accepted only in a modified form the doctrine of Imputation; while of the doctrines of the latter school, which have chiefly prevailed in the denomination to which he belonged, he set aside, as failing to be an adequate exhibition of the teaching of Scripture, the doctrine of an indefinite or universal atonement. His suggestive reference to what he calls the "ecbatic" aspect of the atonement is also proof of how carefully he sought to exhibit a doctrine more fully in harmony with all the statements of Scripture than that of either the strict Calvinistic or Moderate Calvinistic school. The open mind which he brought to the Divine Word is also strikingly shown, not only in the care with which he adduced in proof of his positions only those passages which could be shown to have a sound exegetical basis, but also in his decided rejection of passages which, although accepted by interpreters of high reputation as proofs of doctrines which both he and they held in common, he set aside as lacking exegetical validity. It ought to afford no small degree of satisfaction to a student of Scripture to feel that he has the aid of a teacher who makes it manifest that he has but one purpose before him—to set forth what Scripture teaches, neither more nor less; and who makes equally manifest his resolution to be moved from this purpose, neither by undue regard for traditional beliefs, nor by the desire to propound new theories of his own. I indulge the hope that a study of this work will exhibit the author as one who possessed these qualities in a high degree, and as one who, in regard to every religious theme that engaged his attention, sought to give a clear and accurate answer to the question, "What saith the Scripture?"

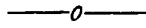
Although the fashion of dedicating books has now nearly passed away, I would fain inscribe this work to the memory of its honoured author, and to that of the esteemed colleague with whom he laboured in happy fellowship, and who has, with him, now entered on his reward; to his former colleague, now happily surviving; and to the students, now labouring in the ministry in many lands, who often recall, with devout gratitude to God, the invaluable service rendered to them by the beloved teacher who, sparing no labour, made abundantly manifest his affectionate and anxious solicitude on their behalf, that they might become faithful and able ministers of the Divine Word.

JAMES ROSS.

POLLOKSHIELDS, GLASGOW,  
*May* 1888.



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E R R A T A.

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- Page 133, line 10, *for* “nothing in utter,” etc., *read* “nothing is utter,” etc.  
 ,, 351, line 11, *for* “lend” *read* “lends.”  
 ,, 384, line 17, *for* “fruit” *read* “direct.”  
 ,, 385, line 26, *for* “include” *read* “exclude.”  
 ,, 402, line 19, *for* “grossest” *read* “grosser.”  
 ,, 437, line 7, *for* “balls” *read* “bells.”  
 ,, 468, line 15, *for* “sanguina” *read* “sanguine.”  
 ,, 480, line 16, *for* “would” *read* “could.”

VOL. II.

- Page 64, line 6 from top, *for* “phraselogy” *read* “phraseology.”  
 ,, 246, line 15, *for* “*quorundum*” *read* “*quarundam*.”  
 Pages 395, 396, 398, delete marks of parenthesis from the Greek numerals  
 α, β, γ, and δ respectively.

# INTRODUCTION.



## THEOLOGY.

1. THE word THEOLOGY is a designation compounded from the Greek, after the analogy of other words employed in modern usage to denote the scientific development of any department of knowledge. In all words in which the Greek *λογος* is used, it is employed to designate the arrangement in a manner accordant with reason of the facts and phenomena belonging to the department described by the word to which it is appended. A “logy” of any subject is more than a mere description or general arrangement of what appertains to that subject; it is such an arrangement as is rational, as sets forth and illustrates the principles or general laws under which all belonging to that subject may be classified. Taken strictly, Theology may therefore be held to describe that portion of religious science which has to do with the being and perfections of God; and to this restricted sense some writers have proposed to confine it. In ordinary usage, however, its signification is much more comprehensive. As all religious ideas have to do immediately or indirectly with God, Theology, or the science of God, has been held to embrace within it the entire range of religious truth. It may be defined, therefore, as a summary of religious truth scientifically arranged, or as a philosophical digest of all religious knowledge.

2. As Theology is quite a general term, designating the scientific analysis and classification of religious principles, it may be applied to the systems of false religion as well as to that of the true. Hence we have books on the Theology of the heathen, on Muhammedan Theology, etc. As commonly used, however, the word is restricted to the religious system

contained in the Bible ; and, accordingly, Systematic Theology, as usually understood, is a scientific arrangement and presentation of the religious truths taught in the word of God. Thus viewed, it stands closely connected with religion, which is a term that may be taken either objectively or subjectively. In the former application it embraces the mass of facts and principles which are the objects of study or belief to the religious mind ; taken subjectively, it expresses the state of which that mind becomes the subject as percipient or credent of these facts or principles. Theology stands connected with both of these acceptations ; with the former, inasmuch as it aims at the scientific construction of the truths which form the object of religious study and belief ; and with the latter, in so far as it, by such construction, facilitates the production of that religious state of which the mind is the subject through the medium of these truths. It is obvious that it is only with religion in its objective application we have immediately to do. In the Bible we find a mass of spiritual truths which constitute the Christian religion ; and what we have to do is to collect, compare, and classify these truths according to their inner connection, so as to evolve, so far as that is possible, a complete and systematic view of the Christian religion.

3. Theology is sometimes called Dogmatic, sometimes Speculative, and sometimes Polemic Theology. These terms have reference to the different aspects under which it may be viewed. As the truths with which it specially deals are principles held and taught as certain, it is dogmatic ; as they are viewed not so much in their practical bearings as in their relation to each other as concepts of the mind, it is speculative ; and as no man can lay down a system of theological truth without finding occasion to defend the views he unfolds against a multitude of conflicting and antagonistic views, it is polemical. Other designations are sometimes to be met with, such as Akroamatic (*διδασκαλία ακροαματικη*), which has reference to its being taught orally in colleges or academies ; and Catechetic, which has reference to its being presented in the form of a catechism, etc. But these designations are no longer in use.

4. The science of Theology as thus defined proceeds on the

assumption of certain facts or principles which it holds for true and legitimate. (1) It assumes that God and the things of God can be learned by us only through the revelation of them by God Himself to His creatures. (2) It assumes that the lessons taught of divine things by the works of God and by His word are in perfect harmony with each other; and this on the general ground that if both have proceeded from the all-perfect mind of God, it is impossible but that they should perfectly accord in the utterances they give concerning Him. (3) It is assumed in Theology that as all the phenomena of nature are alike authoritative, so all the statements of Scripture are alike to be deferred to as presenting to us the mind of God. This is assumed on the general principle that the Bible is the word of God, that all Scripture is *θεοπνευστος* — a principle, not, of course, to be assumed without proof, but the proof of which must be accomplished at a previous stage of the investigation.

5. The *object* of theological investigation being the written word of God, the proper *method* of that investigation has now to be considered. Starting from the assumptions already laid down, the theologian has to endeavour to construct into a harmonious and systematic whole the truths which he finds revealed concerning God and divine things. As by the very ground on which he professes to stand he renounces the idea of having to excogitate or devise a scheme of religious truth, and assumes to himself the office simply of an explorer of truth revealed, it is only by an inductive process that he can possibly gain his end, and it is therefore by the inductive method of inquiry that he is to build up the superstructure of his science. His first step in this process and by this method is the collection and verification of facts, these being the data from which all his conclusions are to be drawn. Careful scrutiny and the application of all the necessary tests of accuracy, together with copiousness of collection so as to draw the induction from the largest possible area, are indispensable in every scientific inquiry, and he who neglects these, though he may sometimes make a felicitous guess at truth, can never securely construct a system. As applied to Biblical investigation, this indispensable requirement of the inductive method means the copious collection of passages

bearing on the subject in hand, and the ascertaining, by the use of proper methods of interpretation, of the exact meaning of each in the connection in which it stands; for it is obvious that unless a passage be taken in its *true* meaning, its value as a proof passage is destroyed.

Having by a process of careful observation and scrutiny collected and verified his materials, the theologian has next to classify them according to their subjects; and having done this, he may proceed to compare and weigh those of each class, one with another, for the purpose of eliciting the great general truth which they in common express. In some cases he will find this done to his hand in the Bible; for as part of that book consists of theological discussion, it is only what may be expected, that in some instances, if not in all, we shall find the general truth to which a comparison of instances would lead us enunciated as a principle already ascertained, a theological dogma already proved. In this case the theologian may content himself by simply transcribing the scriptural dogma as a matter already settled; or he may proceed with it deductively, and show how it holds true in each of the instances on which it rests; or he may ignore for the moment the authoritative announcement, and build up analytically from these instances the dogma afresh for himself. Men will be determined which of these three methods to pursue very much, in all probability, by the peculiar habit of their own minds; but for scientific purposes I cannot but believe the third to be the preferable method. It is the method which the inquirer must pursue in all cases where the oracle does not authoritatively pronounce the conclusion at which he seeks to arrive. In this case his only resource is to compare passage with passage, and to educe as the general truth taught that which harmonizes with them all.

Now, it will be observed that whether we take a dogma enunciated in Scripture and reason down to its revealed elements, or take these elements and reason up to the dogma, whether enunciated in Scripture or not, we pursue a process purely logical in its character. The conclusion, therefore, ought to have all the certainty to which a logically-drawn conclusion is entitled. An error may be committed by the party conducting the process; but if the premises assumed by



him are authentic, and the process of reasoning legitimately conducted, it is impossible that the conclusion should be otherwise than correct. On this ground, then, theology may fairly claim to rank as a science; it consists of propositions which profess to be logically deduced from certain legitimate premises. Whether the premises assumed *be* legitimate and the reasoning strictly logical, is matter of fair inquiry; but when these conditions are satisfied, the conclusions of theology are as much entitled to be regarded as scientifically established as are those of the astronomer or the geologist.

6. Let us now consider for a little the *legitimacy* of such investigations in the department of divine truth. Here three cases may be supposed,—

(1.) There is the case of those truths in regard to which Scripture supplies us with both the general principle, or one containing whole, and the constituent parts. In this case it will not admit of question that the investigations of a theologian are legitimate, whether he pursue the synthetic or analytic method. In either case he simply studies with intelligence an express revelation. The containing whole and the constituent parts are in this case alike parts of revealed truth, and all that he does is to apprehend the connection between the two. Take one of Paul's lengthened arguments, for instance, in the Epistle to the Romans or the Epistle to the Hebrews.<sup>1</sup> Each of these is a logical process of systematizing divine truth; and though stated popularly or rhetorically, it is nevertheless a logical process fundamentally, and is addressed as truly to the logical faculty as if it were as dry and formal as a page in Aristotle or Thomas Aquinas, and depends for its validity and full influence on the reader upon its being capable of being explicated in the accredited forms of logic, which are just the formal laws of human thinking.

(2.) The second case that may be supposed is that of truths not formally enunciated in a general form in Scripture, but the constituent parts or elements of which are clearly revealed to us. In this case we say it is the office of the theologian to reason inductively or analytically from the constituent parts to the constitutional whole; and we maintain such a

<sup>1</sup> [Throughout this work the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews is assumed.—ED.]

process is perfectly legitimate, and for these reasons : (a) It is only carrying out a mode of investigation which the sacred writers have themselves employed. (b) Where God has been pleased to reveal to us all the constituent elements of a general truth, it seems only reverend and devout in us to elicit from these the truth they combine to constitute. (c) It seems vain to forbid this inductive process from the revelations of Scripture ; for it is simply impossible for any man to make himself familiar with the revelations and refrain from following it. Induction is simply the mind of the man thinking according to one of the great formal laws of thought ; and it is a natural impossibility for his mind to come under the conditions of the law and not obey it. If he apprehend the constitutive parts of a containing whole, he is as sure to obey the law of his mind by trying to apprehend the whole which they constitute, as a stone cast into the air is sure to return towards the earth's surface. Hence all men who read the Bible do instinctively form a system out of it, and do so by reasoning analytically from special instances to general principles or truths. In this they obey a law of nature ; and hence, instead of denouncing this, the wiser and better course is to teach them how to make the induction accurately. Theologians they *will* be, whether we will or not ; what ought to be chiefly aimed at is that they shall be as good theologians as possible.

(3.) The third case we may suppose is that of truths which are found stated in Scripture, or which may be legitimately elicited from scriptural statements implicitly contained in them, but of which the sacred writers do not make such full use as an application to them of a logical process of deduction may enable us to make. In other words, we may often be able to pursue a statement of Scripture into many conclusions of a doctrinal kind which are not themselves stated in Scripture. In this case we proceed synthetically and not analytically, reasoning down from general principles to special truths, instead of up from special truths to general principles. Without the application of this method it would be impossible to complete our theological systems. The question is whether we are at liberty to use such a method of investigation in dealing with Scripture.

In answer to this it seems natural to observe that if we may employ one method of logical inquiry in order to ascertain divine truth, we may no less legitimately use another and equally accredited method. As the inductive and deductive processes include the whole of logic, and divide between them the entire domain of that science, it seems obvious that if the one may be used by the theologian for the upbuilding of his science, the other may be used as well. I might also urge similar arguments with those adduced under the previous case, such as that we have the example of the sacred writers themselves to sanction and encourage this instrument of reasoning, and that it is impossible from the constitution of our minds to avoid using it on such a subject as theology. But, leaving these considerations, I shall advert to an objection urged by those not friendly to a logical theology. This strictly logical process, say they, can be carried out only by the invention of premises, for it is rarely that more than one of the premises necessary for a syllogism is supplied by Scripture, and in consequence of this there is a great temptation to a theologian to go greatly beyond his depth, to erect dogmas upon very insecure bases, and to demand for what may be no better than an error of his own mind a reverence equal to what is due to Scripture. Now, in so far as this is urged by way of caution, and as a warning against building strong conclusions upon uncertain premises, we accept it ; but beyond this we cannot attach any force to the objection. When both the premises are stated in Scripture (I, of course, assume the passages to be taken in their just meaning as determined by the rules of a sound hermeneutic), it will hardly be proposed by any that we should be restricted from drawing the conclusion to which these premises necessarily lead, for this would be to forbid what is impossible to any man who really conceives and apprehends the premises to avoid doing. As little, I apprehend, will any one in this case be inclined to prohibit our regarding the conclusion as of equal authority with an express statement of Scripture ; because this would be to affirm that a conclusion might be necessarily deducible from premises and yet be of inferior certainty to them, which is impossible.

No less legitimate seems the procedure of the logical theologian when one of the premises is a statement of Scripture and the other is some principle of common sense or some necessary truth. In this case both his premises are certain, for no man can consistently hold Scripture to be certain who denies the fundamental principles of all reason, and consequently cuts away the only ground on which the claims of Scripture ultimately rest; and both his premises being here certain, the theologian may proceed with his deduction as securely in this as in the former instances. Less confidently can the legitimacy of his procedure be affirmed when one or both of his premises is only *probable*; and yet when it is remembered how much of what men confidently believe and act on rests on only probable evidence, and when it is considered that for the authority of Scripture itself we have no more than probable evidence,—strong, indeed, and very convincing, yet not demonstrative, or such as to render belief in Scripture a necessary consequence,—it may be allowed to the theologian to erect his conclusions on premises for which he can adduce only probable proof. Here, however, it behoves him to be cautious and modest; and especially to avoid attempting to sustain his position by strong assertion, vehement declamation, or bigoted censures directed against those who differ from him in his conclusions. If truth that is probable be asserted as if it were certain, harm is done and blame is incurred; but if probable truth be asserted modestly and simply as probable truth, it would seem very censorious to forbid its being sought for or presented.

Such are the limits within which I should be disposed to restrict the application of logic to the formation of a theological system, and for the legitimacy of this within these limits I would contend. It is only when men have trespassed these limits that they have done mischief, or committed folly in theological speculation.

But some will probably say, Why systematize Scripture truth at all? Why not leave it, as God has placed it in the Bible, in all its free and unfettered development? Now, that God has been pleased to present His truth to us in the Bible in an unsystematic form is most true, and we cannot doubt that in this He has been guided by a wise regard to the

welfare of man. We can even see many wise and good ends answered by this constitution of Scripture. How much of the unabated interest of readers of the Bible is due to this very thing! For this several features will account. One of the most prominent of these is the unsystematic arrangement of its materials. In this respect it is with the study of God's word as it is with the study of His works. Every one knows and feels how much more adapted to the uses of life, how much more beautiful and attractive, how much more provocative of persistent study the world is in its present form and arrangement than if any systematic order had been observed in laying out its different phenomena. What a miserable thing it would be were the world arranged with the order and stiffness of a vast museum or scientific garden! How immensely less pleasing to the eye, and less suited to the wants of man! And how speedily would the study of it become insipid and wearisome, and science itself reach its boundaries, be deprived of its stimulus, and be no longer attractive! It is strictly the same by analogy with the written word of God. But for the manner in which its materials are arranged it would be less useful and less attractive by an inconceivable amount than it is. The freeness and abundance with which its treasures are scattered about furnish at once occasion for research and a stimulus to investigation. But this striking analogy between the works and word of God fairly leads us to this,—that as the free and diversified arrangement of the objects of nature does not forbid but rather excites to the systematic classification and scientific apprehension of its phenomena, so the analogous characteristic of Scripture ought not to be held as forbidding the attempt to classify and scientifically systematize the phenomena therein presented to us, but should rather encourage and stimulate to this. It would have been a serious loss to mankind had the great Author of the Bible sent His truth to us in the form of a confession of faith, a catechism, or a system of theology. But whilst He has consulted for our benefit by sending Scripture to us in the form in which it exists, it surely argues no presumption on our part if we attempt to discover the inner connection of its different parts, to evolve the harmony which pervades the different

materials, and to elicit the principles which lie at their basis and make them capable of being arranged into one systematical and comprehensive whole.

7. Having discoursed on the object and method of theological study, I now wish to direct your attention to the *instrument* which we use in our researches in this department. This must necessarily be the natural reason of the inquirer, using reason in its wide sense as comprehensive of all the cognoscent faculties of the mind. God has bestowed these faculties upon us for the purpose of enabling us to acquire knowledge and to apprehend truth; and there is no other medium by which in our present state truth and knowledge can reach us but this. In regard to natural truth we know nothing until our intelligent faculties have been brought into contact with natural phenomena, and by our exercise of these faculties we have apprehended the qualities and relations of these phenomena. It is the same in regard to spiritual truth; it becomes truth *to us*, it exists as knowledge for *us*, only as we by an exercise of our faculties upon it apprehend it in its qualities and relations. And whether we seek to trace that truth historically or to construe it scientifically, it is through the alembic of our own minds that the whole must pass ere it can assume the form which we are desirous it should take.

This may seem too obvious to require to be insisted upon; and yet there appears to be a vast amount of confusion in the minds of many on this very subject. There are persons who speak as if they would deny to reason any place whatever in the investigation of theological truth, whilst there are others who seem to think that it is partly by reason and partly by some other instrument, which they call spiritual emotion or religious intuition, that we arrive at a knowledge of divine things. By persons of the former class a sharp distinction is drawn between reason and revelation, and they contend not only that it is from the latter alone that man can draw his knowledge, but that the instrument by which that is drawn is faith, and not reason or human intelligence. Those who belong to the latter class usually discard revelation altogether in the proper sense of the term, and make man's moral and spiritual consciousness at once the source and the instrument

of all religious knowledge—though some appear to have a misty idea of some internal manifestation of the Deity to the soul of man, in virtue of which man has an intuition of the spiritual and the divine.

Now, all this appears to me to be traceable either to a confounding of things that differ, or to incorrect views of the constitution and working of the human mind in reference to the pursuit of knowledge. A very few observations will suffice, I believe, to dispel the confusion, and place the true view of this subject clearly before the mind.

(1.) It is absurd to place reason and revelation opposite each other as separate sources of religious knowledge. This is an error of the same sort as would emerge were one to place the firmament and man's reason over against each other as separate sources of astronomical knowledge. The fallacy here is that of confounding the materials with the instrument—the source with that which draws from it what it supplies. Revelation and reason are no more distinct sources of religious knowledge than the spring and the pump are distinct sources of the water which we draw by artificial means from the bowels of the earth. Both are necessary to the result—the one as furnishing the materials, the other as the instrument by which these materials are brought forth to use. *All* the materials of divine knowledge must come by revelation; nay, we may extend the position, and say that the original materials of *all* knowledge must be furnished by revelation, *i.e.* must be supplied to our hand directly by God. Man cannot create, he can only discover truth. God must furnish the materials of our knowledge, whether sacred or secular, out of His own infinite mind; man can but observe, compare, separate, combine, and arrange these materials, and draw from his conceptions of them such inferences as they may suggest. The former of these is properly an act of revelation, the latter is an act of reasoning; the one is divine, the other is human. In giving us this revelation God may employ various methods. He may scatter the materials of knowledge among the phenomena of creation; or He may evolve them in the relations and actions of human beings; or He may authoritatively assert them in words spoken or written. But in every case the revelation is His,

and it remains utterly silent and uninformative to man until he employs his intelligent powers upon it for the purpose of educing from it the truths it is fitted to unfold. All knowledge is something construed by reason from revelation ; and it is a gross confusion of terms and thought to speak of reason and revelation as distinct sources of knowledge.

(2.) It seems equally out of place to contrast faith with reason as instruments of investigation or media of knowledge ; as if it were by faith alone that we acquire divine knowledge, and by reason alone that we secure natural knowledge. A careful analysis of the facts of human consciousness conducts to the conclusion that faith or belief is a part of reason, and that all knowledge rests upon belief as its ultimate basis. "Credo ut sciam" was the maxim of Augustine, and it is one that holds true universally. Until we believe something, there is no point from which our investigation of truth can start—no basis on which we can rest the lever by which we are to move the world of knowledge so as to draw it to our selves. Hence, as all science, formally developed, sets out from the enunciation of certain axioms or fundamental truths which are accepted without proof, all knowledge rests ultimately upon certain truths which are implicitly admitted or explicitly avowed by the mind. These, whether called primary truths, first principles, principles of common sense, or original beliefs, and whether described as given to the mind by a sort of connate revelation, or as obtained by a natural intuition, or as produced by a mental incapacity not to think them, are admitted by all philosophers of any note to exist, and to lie at the basis of all our science and all our reasoning. Now, these fundamental truths are accepted by us by means of faith. We believe them without being able to prove them. Faith is just as much the faculty by which we arrive at a knowledge of them as sight is the faculty by which we arrive at the knowledge of visibility, or judgment the faculty by which we arrive at a knowledge of the relations of ideas. It is absurd, then, to speak of faith as if it had nothing to do with secular or natural knowledge ; it is in reality that without which secular knowledge is to beings constituted as we are an impossibility. Equally untenable, on the other hand, is the notion that religious knowledge is attainable



only by faith or belief. The Bible is addressed to all man's faculties—to his judgment, reason, imagination, as well as to his faith. What it unfolds to us is an ultimate fact we must accept as such, and here is the proper sphere for belief; we know such facts only by God's word, and we must be content to take God's word for them, just as we take God's speaking to us in the constitution of our own minds or in the phenomena of nature for the ultimate facts and fundamental beliefs on which all natural knowledge is founded. The only difference between the facts of Scripture and those of nature in this respect is that in the former case God *tells* us the fact, and in the latter He *shows* us the fact. But in either case it is simply by an act of belief that we come to know it. When, then, God announces to us in the Bible a fact concerning Himself or concerning His relations to us, our business is to accept it as such; and here, I take it, the part of simple belief or faith terminates. What is built upon the fact we *know* only by the exercise of our intellectual powers, by which we construe the truths unfolded to our minds. Combining reason and faith in one category as forming the complement of man's intellectual powers, we pronounce *that* the proper instrument by which he is to construct out of the Bible a theology or scientific compend of the truths it contains.

8. There is one caution needful in connection with the use of the mind as the instrument of theological investigation, as of all scientific investigation of whatever kind. While the materials of our science are divine, the positions or logical forms of our science are purely human. They are *dogmata*, the forms under which the facts of revelation appear (*δοκουσι*). They are no more God's word than the positions of natural science are God's works. In both cases the multifarious phenomena that are scattered over the field by the divine hand are God's, whilst the scientific enunciation concerning them is merely our way of representing the meaning and connection of these phenomena. We must therefore beware of placing the dogmas of theological science on the same footing with the statements of Holy Scripture. The latter are divine; the former are merely human. The one must be true; the other may be false.

9. From these statements it will be perceived that the only source from which I propose to draw the materials of our science is the written word of God. Receiving the Bible as the word of God, I regard it as the infallible, and the only infallible, record of religious truth; and as I believe it contains all the religious truth of which we can know anything in our present state, I propose to confine myself to a search after what it teaches, and to an attempt to reduce that to such a systematic arrangement as I have above described. In assuming this ground, I would not be thought to overlook or condemn the distinction which has been made between nature and Scripture as distinct sources of religious knowledge, and, by consequence, the distinction between Natural and Revealed Theology as sciences relating respectively to these sources. I do not for a moment deny that nature is a source of religious knowledge, and that great and valuable truths concerning God and our relations to Him may be gathered from the constitution and order of the universe of which we form a part, so far as these are patent to observation. I object, indeed, to the phraseology in which this is often expressed, because the phrase "Natural and Revealed Theology" proceeds upon the assumption that there may be a theology the objects of which are not revealed. But as the object of all theology is religious truth, and as religious truth can come to man only by a revelation, it is manifestly incorrect to speak as if some religious truth could come to us without a revelation. The religion of nature is a revealed religion as much as the religion of the Bible, though the form and extent of the revelation may be different in the one from the other.

But whilst I admit that much religious truth may be learned from the facts of the universe, I do not see the necessity of treating the theology of nature apart from that of the Bible, or adverting to it in any way in the teaching of theology, except as elucidatory or confirmatory of what the Bible says. For, even assuming, what has by no means been proved, that the proper limits and contents of what is called Natural Theology can be settled, the theology of the Bible, when fully unfolded, will be found to comprehend all the teachings of nature on the subject of religion. This arises from the circumstance that the Bible, as the later revelation,

assumes, where it does not formally enunciate, all the principles of the earlier; just as in the Bible itself the New Testament assumes or reiterates all the religious principles unfolded in the Old. "Christianity," as Bishop Butler says, "is a republication of natural religion . . . of that religion in its simplicity, free from the superstitions with which it was totally corrupted, and under which it was in a manner lost," though, as Butler also says, it also contains "an account of a dispensation of things not discoverable by reason."<sup>1</sup> We may expect, therefore, to find in the Bible all the truths which the religion of nature could unfold, and these in their simplicity clearly and authoritatively enunciated. Nor in this shall we be disappointed. Some truths, indeed, of a fundamental kind—such as the existence of God, the spirituality of the mind of man, the distinctions in morals, etc.—are rather assumed as already known than formally asserted or proved; still they are there, and to be recognised as essential parts of that system of truth which the Bible contains. In confining ourselves to this, therefore, we shut ourselves out from no part of the domain of theological truth, whilst we avoid much doubtful disputation and save ourselves much profitless investigation.

In defining and explaining our subject, I have further to observe that I shall aim at the construction of a Biblical rather than a Dogmatical or Ecclesiastical Theology. With many writers theology is the science of Church doctrines,—the classification and exposition of the opinions held to be orthodox by the general consent of all Christians, or as enunciated in the symbols of some particular section of the Christian Church. Thus, Clarisse, an excellent writer on theological encyclopædia, defines Dogmatic Theology as "An exposition of the commonplaces of Theoretical Theology ordered according to the law and strictness of the school, which with many is wont to be called theology *κατ' ἐξοχήν*."<sup>2</sup> In like manner, Schleiermacher defines Dogmatical Theology as the "science of the doctrines which have obtained in any Christian society at any precise period;"<sup>3</sup> and in another of his writings he says that "the presentation of the doctrinal concepts of a Church or Church party during a given period is

<sup>1</sup> *Analogy*, part ii. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Encyclop. Theol. Epit.*, p. 369.

<sup>3</sup> *Christl. Glaube*, Th. i. s. 1.

the office of Dogmatic.”<sup>1</sup> So also Twisten thus determines the subject of his lectures on theology: “If by Biblical Dogmatic be understood the exhibition of the doctrines and modes of teaching of the Biblical writers in their entire peculiarity, we must come to the assertion that the Biblical Dogmatic is not ours. What then? We answer, It is the dogmatic of the Church to which we belong, consequently Evangelical Lutheranism, inasmuch as we are members of the Lutheran Church.”<sup>2</sup> Now the position I wish to occupy is the opposite of this. Church Theology, which this writer embraces as his special subject, I intend to pretermit, except as I may be led to notice it for historical or polemical purposes; and the special theology which he refuses I embrace as the proper object of my profession.

In thus declining to occupy myself with Church Theology as a primary object of investigation, I conceive that I am acting in the spirit of the principles by which, as Congregational Independents, we are distinguished. For us there is no “Church” in the political and ecclesiastical sense of the term, and though there are certain views of divine truth which are commonly understood amongst us as accordant with Scripture, we have adopted no symbol or authoritative exposition of the doctrines which we profess. I should be at a loss, therefore, were I to set about teaching Church Theology, to know which Church to follow as the authoritative exponent of religious truth; nor should I have any standard to appeal to which my hearers would agree to accept as decisive. Under these circumstances I am in a manner shut up to a purely Biblical Theology as the only department where I can find proper scope as a teacher. I would not, however, be regarded as in this case succumbing to an unwelcome necessity. I should not wish it to be otherwise. Whilst I am far from underrating the scholastic theology as a result of human thought and genius, and whilst I think it wise and becoming to render the most respectful attention to what grave and learned and godly men have deliberately adopted as a just expression of the truths of Christianity, I nevertheless conceive that in the teaching of theology there is something higher and better to be aimed at than merely to expound and criticise the judg-

<sup>1</sup> *Kurze Darstellung*, § 32, s. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Vorlesungen*, i. s. 37.

ments of other men, however good or able. Let us take help from such by all means, so far as they appear to us qualified to render it; but when the ancient fountains of divine truth are open to us in the word of God, who would be content to occupy himself with the secondary and inferior supplies which are to be found in the writings of men, whether individuals or collective bodies? "The interpretation of the Scriptures," says Bacon, "which are the fountains of the water of life, are of two sorts: methodical and solute [or at large]. For this divine water, which excelleth so much that of Jacob's well, is drawn forth much in the same kind as natural water useth to be out of wells or fountains; either it is first forced up into a cistern, and from thence fetched and derived for use, or else it is drawn and received in buckets or vessels immediately where it springeth: the former sort whereof, though it seemeth to be the more ready, yet in my judgment is more subject to corrupt. This is that method which hath exhibited to us the scholastic divinity, whereby divinity hath been reduced into an art, as in cisterns, and the streams of doctrine or positions fetched and derived thence."<sup>1</sup> As at once the easier and worthier course, then, I propose to go at once to the fountainhead, and draw from those "wells of salvation" which God has opened for us in His word.

[The main divisions of the science of Biblical Theology given in this work are, First, THEOLOGY, or the doctrine of Scripture concerning God; Second, ANTHROPOLOGY, or the doctrine concerning Man; Third, CHRISTOLOGY, or the doctrine concerning Christ; and Fourth, SOTERIOLOGY, or the doctrine of Salvation. These are the divisions now generally adopted by teachers of theology; but the order in which they are given is determined by the point of view from which the subjects are regarded. At one period Dr. Alexander included the subject of Christology under Soteriology, and thus restricted the course of teaching to the three main divisions of Theology, Anthropology, and Soteriology;<sup>2</sup> but he appears to have found this plan less convenient than the one adopted in this work,

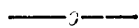
<sup>1</sup> *Advancement of Learning*, Book ix.

<sup>2</sup> See Lecture on Theology, *W. Lindsay Alexander, D.D., LL.D.: His Life and Work*, p. 344. Nisbet & Co., 1887.

and to have reverted to the fourfold division given in his article on "Theology" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (8th ed.). The principle upon which this division proceeds may be thus indicated:—The "two poles of theological science" are God and man—theology in its more restricted sense, and anthropology. A study of the statements of Scripture concerning God and man discloses the fact that their relations have been disturbed by the sin of man, whereupon the question arises, What does Scripture teach concerning the reconciliation of man and his Maker? In attempting to answer this, the medium of reconciliation is found in the person and work of Christ, and a study of the doctrine concerning Christ—Christology—thus follows in natural order. Lastly, the reconciliation effected by Christ is viewed as realized in the salvation of man, the nature, grounds, agency, ultimate cause, and manifested results of which fall to be considered under the head of Soteriology.—ED.]

# PART I.

## THEOLOGY.



### CHAPTER I.

#### RELATIONS OF NATURAL TO BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

FROM the domain of what is called Natural Theology, including nature, experience, and reason, we cannot obtain all the information that is requisite for our enjoying such a view of God as is needful before we can truly worship Him, and reasonably rest upon Him as the object of our religious emotions and tendencies. We come from the inquiry within this field with a solid conviction that He is, and that He is a Being of wisdom, power, and apparent beneficence ; but beyond this our impressions are far from being clear or firm. There is a presumption that He is all-perfect, infinite, and eternal ; but on these points we feel that we stand in need of more copious, authentic, and convincing information. As a unity of plan pervades the universe, we may presume that the Creator of it is probably one, though we feel that this by no means necessarily follows from the facts observed. We are at a loss also to gather from the phenomena of nature and experience whether the Being to whom they point us possesses a material or composite nature like ours, or whether He exists as pure incorporeal spirit. In short, on a multitude of important points we feel that we are without satisfactory information, and are led earnestly to desiderate some authoritative teacher who may clear away the mist that obstructs our vision, and may guide us to conclusions at once precise and well established.

And to bring us to this point, and excite in us this desire, is one of the great uses of natural theology. If the results of that study are but scanty, if the truths to which it conducts are but dimly discerned, the natural and proper effect of this on every serious and thoughtful mind is to provoke to further investigation, and to the desire for some higher and better teaching than nature can supply. If from this source nothing more were to be learned than simply that it is *possible* that God is, no earnest mind could refrain from feeling that even in this would lie a sufficient reason for the use of all possible means by which the search after God might be successful. There is thus laid upon us from the lessons of natural theology a stringent obligation to inquire whether any fuller revelation of God has been given to men than the page of nature unfolds. And thus we are handed over, as it were, by the teachings of nature to that other source of divine knowledge which has been provided for us by God—the Holy Scriptures. To these we now proceed for the purpose of gathering from them those lessons concerning God which they supply.

In looking at the scriptural teaching concerning God, in the general, we find that whilst the sacred writers assume the existence of that previous knowledge of God which nature supplies, they, at the same time, confirm as well as supplement the conclusions to which the phenomena of nature conduct us. Before proceeding to the more special examination of the doctrine of Scripture concerning God, it may be well to notice a few points in which it furnishes this confirmatory and corroborative support to natural theology.

1. Scripture amply confirms the conclusion that we can never arrive at a full and direct knowledge of God, and that it is only partially and by analogy that we can apprehend Him. The Bible offers to us no definition of God; it attempts no explanation of the mystery of His Being; it supplies to us no aid by which we can arrive at a comprehension of His nature. On the contrary, it discourages all such ambitious endeavours. “Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?” “Behold, God is great, and we know Him not;” “touching the Almighty, we cannot find Him out.” “His greatness is unsearchable.” When we talk of Him, “we cannot order our speech by



reason of darkness." "Verily, Thou art a God that hidest Thyself." "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see" (Job xi. 7, xxxvii. 23; Isa. xlv. 15; 1 Tim. vi. 16). Such is the language in which Scripture speaks to us of God, and sets before us the unsearchableness and incomprehensibility of His being and perfections. It teaches us that for us it is impossible to penetrate or lift up the veil that hides the Eternal from our view, that it is only as He is pleased to suffer some rays of His invisible glory to come forth upon us that we know anything truly concerning Him, and that what alone it beseems us to do is to accept the facts of His being and perfections as revealed to us, with adoring worship to wait at His footstool, and with full and ready obedience to do His will.

In accordance with this, Scripture represents God under those analogical forms which are borrowed from the conditions, relations, and ways of men. Out of this comes that anthropological representation of God which is characteristic of the Bible. Whilst its writers are careful to assure us that God is not a man as we are, that He is spirit and not flesh, and that no representation can bring Him adequately before the mind of man; they at the same time freely ascribe to God qualities, affections, and relations which are in themselves, and taken literally, purely human. He sees with eyes, hears with ears, acts with hands, walks with feet; He is grieved, is angry, repents, loves, hates; He is a Father, a Husband, a King, a Friend; and other similar qualities and acts and relations are ascribed to Him. By some these anthropomorphisms of the Bible have been objected to; they have denounced them as too gross and rude, and fit only for semi-barbarous conceptions of the Deity; and on this ground they have even proposed to set aside the Bible as unworthy of the place it claims to hold in the religious teaching of mankind. But such objectors forget that the very same difficulty on which they insist attaches to the lessons of natural reason; and they always forget to tell us how, with minds such as we now possess, we are to think of God at all otherwise than anthropomorphically. Were it needful, it would not be difficult to show that their own attempts to speak

of God are just as much vitiated by this imperfection as are those they so loudly denounce. They speak of Him as a Father, as loving us and watching over us, as spreading a table for us, and casting a shield around us, and such like. What, I ask, are these but anthropomorphisms ; and does it not indicate mere caprice and prejudice for men to reject or depreciate the Bible for its anthropomorphisms, when in the very act of doing so they manifest their inability to speak of God without resorting to similar forms of representation ? With what consistency, for instance, can men speak of God as a Father, whilst they object to the Bible for speaking of Him as a Judge ? or how can they deem it becoming to represent Him as feeding and caring for and watching over His intelligent creatures as His children, while they think it too gross to represent Him as commanding, reproofing, judging, and sentencing them as His subjects ? It is, no doubt, possible to say something about God without resorting to anthropomorphisms ; possible to speak of Him only in the most abstract phraseology as The Deity, The Infinite, The Absolute, and such like. But if in this way anthropomorphisms are avoided, they are avoided by the evacuation of all thinkable reality from the concept of God. A Being so purely abstract is for our concrete existences tantamount to nothing. And so, in their professed desire to elevate God above the mists of common conception, they raise Him on so high a pedestal that He utterly passes beyond our vision, and is lost to our view amidst clouds and darkness.

2. A second remark of a general kind I would make on the relation of nature and Scripture to each other in respect of their teachings concerning God is, that whilst the Bible adopts and carries out the analogical and anthropomorphic representation of God which nature also constrains us to adopt, the former supplies to us a just basis for this in the information it gives us concerning the original constitution of man. Man, we are told in the Bible, was made at first in the image and likeness of God. What this statement exactly imports may furnish subject of inquiry to us farther on in our course ; at present it is enough to call attention to the fact that the Bible declares man to have in his original constitution a resemblance to God. In God, therefore, lies the

archeal type, so to speak, of man, and man as he exists is in his nature a manifestation or representation in some degree of God. It is not therefore a mere arbitrary accommodation to our limited faculties when God represents Himself to us by analogies borrowed from man. These analogies really exist; they lie deep in man's nature; and they furnish not only the readiest but the truest representations of God that can be supplied.

3. The Bible reiterates and confirms the conclusions of natural theology as to the distinction of God from the world, representing Him as the Creator and Upholder of all things; the Eternal, Uncaused, Vivifying Power by which all that exists has been brought into being, is vivified and made to subsist, and by which the whole frame of being is held together. It teaches us to discriminate Him as a Spirit from the material universe, as true and real from what is merely phenomenal, as self-existent from what is dependent, as unchangeable from what is in a constant state of flux and transition. It thus clears away much mist and uncertainty that hangs around the speculations of mere unassisted reason, and utters with a clear voice divine oracles regarding the being and perfections of God.

4. The Bible announces with distinctness and emphasis the unity of God. It thus accounts for that unity of design and working which appears in the universe, and presents it as the result of purpose in the one creating and ruling mind, not merely as the result of harmony of plan and concurrence of action among a plurality of agents. The study of the universe may suggest to us the probability of one sole and Supreme Creator and Ruler, but it is only from Scripture that certainty can be reached on this point.

5. But besides thus reiterating, completing, and illustrating the teachings of natural religion, the Bible has many peculiar and special revelations to make known to us concerning God, immensely important for us to know, but of which the page of nature has no trace. Of these some are of the same class as those already made known to us by nature, but there either very imperfectly hinted at or not indicated at all—such as certain of the attributes of God and characteristics of His manifestations; whilst others are of an entirely peculiar and special kind, differing, not in degree and number only,

but in kind and nature from those which the universe unfolds to us. These peculiar revelations stand connected especially with the scheme of redemption which the Bible unfolds. "It is here," as Dr. Chalmers has remarked, "where the main helplessness of nature lies. It is baffled in all its attempts to decipher the state and the prospects of man, viewed in the relation of an offending subject to an offended sovereign. In a word, its chief obscurity, and which it is wholly unable to disperse, is that which rests on the hopes and the destiny of our species. There is in it enough of manifestation to awaken the fears of guilt, but not enough again to appease them. It emits, and audibly emits, a note of terror; but in vain do we listen for one authentic word of comfort from any of its oracles. It is able to see the danger, but not the deliverance. It can excite the forebodings of the human spirit, but cannot quell them—knowing just enough to stir the perplexity, but not enough to set the perplexity at rest. It can state the difficulty, but cannot unriddle the difficulty—having just as much knowledge as to enunciate the problem, but not so much as might lead to the solution of the problem. There must be a measure of light, we do allow; but, like the lurid gleams of a volcano, it is not a light which guides, but which bewilders and terrifies. It prompts the question, but cannot frame or furnish the reply. Natural theology may see as much as shall draw forth the anxious interrogation, 'What shall I do to be saved?' The answer to this comes from a higher theology."<sup>1</sup>

The information which the Bible gives us concerning God and His ways towards us is spread over its entire surface, and lies embedded in all its strata. In the Old Testament, however, the revelations presented wear an aspect of incompleteness as compared with those of the New. The teachings of the former are more elementary than those of the latter; truths are shadowed forth rather than fully displayed; hints are given, glimpses of spiritual mysteries are afforded, that rather stimulate to inquiry than satisfy the mind that searches after God; and as the lessons of nature hand us over to the Bible for further instruction concerning God, so the teachings of the Old Testament at once prepare us for and send us to

<sup>1</sup> *Natural Theology*, Select Works, vol. v. p. 495.

the teachings of the New for the completion of our theology. It is the same grand apocalypse of God which is presented to us ; but it is in divers manners, and by a progressive unfolding, that it is conveyed. In the later revelation not only is all that the earlier teaches concerning God reiterated, but He here comes very nigh to us ; He here speaks to us by His Son, who is Himself God manifest in the flesh, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His Person ; we are brought thereby into close individual relation to God, so that we may be said to see Him ; and the longing aspiration of the heart, which expressed itself in the language of Philip when he said, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," finds its satisfaction in Christ's reply, "He that hath seen ME hath seen the Father."

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## CHAPTER II.

### I. THE NAMES OF GOD.

In proceeding to consider the Bible revelations concerning God, the first thing that demands our attention is the *Names* by which God there designates Himself. As the Bible professes to make known to us, not God as He is in Himself, but His *Name* or outward manifestation of Himself to His intelligent creatures, so it attaches special importance to the words by which this manifestation is indicated to us. All the names by which the Bible designates God are significant ; and thus each of them stands as the symbol of some truth concerning Him which He would have us to receive. All this renders it of importance to us that we should rightly apprehend the import of the Divine Names in Scripture.

Of these names there is one which may be regarded as the *proper* and *peculiar* name of God, the name which He has appropriated to Himself, and which He will share with none other ; of the rest some are *appellative*, and others are *attributive* or *descriptive*.

i. THE PROPER AND PECULIAR NAME OF GOD is contained

in the four letters יהוה. As usually pointed, this word appears as יהוה; but, as is well known, the points here appended are those appropriate to אֱלֹהִים (the sheva being substituted for the chateph-pathach in the first syllable, probably as an abbreviation in writing); which by a perpetual K'ri the Massoretes direct to be read in order to avoid the utterance of the peculiar name of God, which the Jews held to be irreverent. For the same reason when יהוה and אֱלֹהִים occur together, as *e.g.* in Isa. xxii. 12, 14, to avoid repeating Adonai, the points appropriate to Elohim are placed under יהוה, and it is so read. At what time this superstitious reverence for the name of God crept in among the Jews we cannot discover. It must have existed anterior to the composition of the apocryphal writings, and to the translation of the LXX., as in these the word *Kyrios* is always used as the proper name of God. From the occurrence of the word, however, on the Moabite Stone it would appear that in the time of King Mesha the Jews did not hesitate to use the word, so that it became known to the neighbouring nations as the name of the God whom they worshipped. The entire disuse of the word, which has prevailed for so many ages, has caused the proper pronunciation of it to be entirely lost from traditionary recollection, so that it is only from etymology that it can be with probability recovered.

From Ex. iii. 14 and vi. 2, it is certain that the ancient Hebrews regarded the word as forming part of the substantive verb היה, of which the earlier form was הוה. Of this earlier form the 3rd person singular of the imperfect would be יהוה, answering to the יהיה of the later form; and this Gesenius, Ewald, and many others consider to be the proper pronunciation of the tetragrammaton. Fürst, on the other hand, thinks the regular form would be יהוה or יהוה. Perhaps the fact that the Samaritans pronounced the word *Iaβe*, as Theodoret (*Quas. in Exod.* xv.) informs us, may be allowed some weight in favour of the reading Jahveh. It matters little, however, whether we read the word Jahveh or Jihveh or Jeheveh, so long as it is admitted that it is the 3rd pers. sing. of the imperfect of the substantive verb. Indeed, as "Jehovah," though really no word at all, but only a misreading of the original word by one who did not know

that the points under it are those belonging to Adonai, has nevertheless established itself in common usage, and is undoubtedly more euphonious than any of the others, it would be foolish now to try to introduce any of them in its stead. The importance of retaining the right etymology of the word arises from this, that we are thereby enabled to ascertain the meaning and import of the name which God announced as His proper appellation. In Hebrew it is not uncommon to find a nominal form derived from the 3rd pers. sing. of the imperfect used as an appellative; and such forms appear to indicate that the quality expressed by the verb exists supremely in, or is the characteristic of, the object to which the name is applied. Thus we have יִצְחָק, "He that laughs," "the laugher," from צָחַק, "to laugh;" יַעֲקֹב, "the supplanter," from עָקַב, "to supplant;" יִצְרָה, "the refractory," from צָרָה, "to be perverse or refractory," and many others. Following the analogy of such formations, the name יְהוָה, whether pronounced Jahveh or Jihveh, or Jeheveh, implies the concentration, so to speak, in God of the quality of being or existence; to *be* is His peculiar characteristic; He *is* in a sense in which no other being is; He is self-existent, and cannot but be; He is the unchangeable, infinite, eternal essence. With this explanation of the word all those passages of Scripture, in which stress is laid on it as the name of the Almighty, accord. It is because this is His name that He changes not (Mal. iii. 6); that He is the King of the whole earth, reigning for ever (Ps. x. 16, xcix. 1, cxlvi. 10); that He is the Author of creation and the Universal Ruler (Amos v. 8, ix. 6; Ps. lxviii. 4; Jer. xxxii. 27); that His people may confidently call on Him as ever present, and as having all things in His hand (Jer. xxxiii. 2, l. 33, 34); and that in this lies a security for His forgiving grace enduring from generation to generation. In the opinion that in this lies the significance of the name, the ancient Jews and most scholars of eminence in recent times have concurred, among whom are Buxtorf, Hottinger, Hitzig, Maurer, Gesenius, Knobel, Delitzsch, Hävernick, and Hengstenberg. More weighty authority in a question of this sort could not be adduced. It may be added that the LXX. render אֱלֹהֵי אֱדֹמִים by *εγω ειμι ο ων*, and the Greco-Venet. renders אֱלֹהֵי by *ο ουδωδης*.

If the tetragrammaton conveys the idea of absolute being, then, as this is not separable either in reality or in thought from eternal self-existence, the name must include this concept also. Accordingly, in some of the modern versions "The Eternal" (*L'Eternel*, *Der Ewige*) is given as the rendering of the tetragrammaton; and this Gesenius, Hengstenberg, Rosenmüller, Tuch, and many others approve. It is favoured by the *ο ων και ο ην και ο ερχομενος* of Rev. i. 4, 8, which is only a periphrasis of eternal.

To some it has appeared that the idea thus conveyed of God is too abstract to be suited to the genius of the ancient Hebrews. To meet this Gesenius has suggested that the word may be pointed יהוה, and taken as the 3rd singular of the imperfect in Hiphil of the verb הוה; in which case it would mean, "He who causes to be," that is, "The Creator." But though the ancient Hebrews were more given to look at and speak of things in the concrete than to indulge in abstract speculation, there is no reason to suppose them incapable of receiving and realizing the concept of simple existence, of pure being. This is a concept which a child or a rustic may be made to receive, and the ancient Hebrews were for the most part far above the level of children or rustics in capacity for spiritual ideas. As for the suggestion of Gesenius, it is undoubtedly ingenious; but it is exposed to two objections which are fatal to it—the one, that the verb nowhere occurs in the Hiphil, so that the word he suggests is purely conjectural; and the other, that in none of the passages in which the name is used does the idea of creativeness come into prominence. Besides, seeing God elsewhere calls Himself Creator, using the proper Hebrew word for this, ברא, why should it be supposed that He would construct a new and peculiar word to express this idea? and seeing creation was only one among many works proceeding from Him, why should this be selected as embodying the one concept specially and peculiarly designative of Him?

By some stress is laid on the fact that it is the imperfect or future tense from which the name is formed; and they would explain it accordingly. Thus Baumgarten says, "We must proceed to יהוה from the words אהיה אשר אהיה; and thus Jehovah is, as He Himself declares, the historical God, the



God of Abraham. The reference becomes clear when, with Aquila and Theodotion, we give the mood its usual, *i.e.* future, tense meaning. Since the repetition of יהיה cannot be tautological, we translate 'I shall be who I will and should be' ('Ich werde sein der ich sein will und soll'). We have thus here the reference to the promise to the fathers, which ever points to a future manifestation of Jehovah."<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch adopts substantially the same view: "Creation," says he, "is the beginning, and the bringing of everything created perfectly to its idea is the end. The kingdom of power must become the kingdom of glory. Between lies the kingdom of grace, a long history, whose essential content is redemption. יהוה is the God who mediates the beginning and the end in the lapse of this history—in one word, God the Redeemer."<sup>2</sup> That the idea here suggested is substantially true cannot be questioned; God the everlasting is from that very fact God who is ever revealing Himself to His creatures, and in the sphere of this fallen world ever revealing Himself as the Restorer and Redeemer; but that His reason for taking to Himself the name Jehovah was to convey this truth, or that this is to be found in the futurity form of the word, seems altogether without ground.<sup>3</sup>

This idea has been carried still further by Mr. Tyler,<sup>4</sup> by Mr. Macwhorter,<sup>5</sup> and by Mr. Macdonald,<sup>6</sup> by whom the term Jehovah is made to bear reference to the future manifestation of God the Saviour in Jesus Christ. What has been advanced in illustration of their views by these writers, contains much that is ingenious, interesting, and instructive; but their entire theory seems to me to want a basis in fact on which to rest.

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Comment. zum Pentat.* i. p. 410.

<sup>2</sup> *Genesis*, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> One may cite Delitzsch here against himself. Writing of nouns formed from the future (or, as he calls it, the imperfect) of verbs, he says (*Isagoge in Gram. et Lex. Ling. Heb.*), "In nmm. formandis ad habitum quondam vel actionis vel status qui personæ vel rei inhærescat, significandum imperfecta verba adhiberi." This is fully supported by the usage of the language; in all such nouns it is the eminence or predominance of the quality in the object, and not progressiveness or continued development of that quality, which the form of the word is designed to convey.

<sup>4</sup> *Jehovah, the Redeemer God*, etc.. Lond. 1861.

<sup>5</sup> *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Jan. 1857.

<sup>6</sup> *Introduction to the Pentateuch*.

Mr. Macwhorter renders the exclamation of Eve on the birth of her son Cain thus: "I have gotten a man, even him who is to be," or to "come;" with this Mr. Tyler substantially coincides; and on this their theory rests. Now, is such a rendering grammatically possible? Can a single instance be adduced of a verb not *already* recognised as a proper name being placed in apposition with a preceding clause by means of **וְהָיָה**? And, with respect to the whole class to which this view belongs, may we not ask whether it be not liable to the objection of conveying to us unworthy views of God, as if He, the immutable and eternal, should give as His *peculiar* name,—the symbol conveying the true concept of Him,—a word which expresses rather what He is to *become*, as manifested to men, than what He *is* in Himself?

On the whole, we accept as that best sustained the old view, that by this name God would convey to us the idea that PURE BEING is His peculiar and characteristic quality.

I may remark, in passing, that the formation of names from the imperfect of verbs in Hebrew finds an analogy in the Latin, when from the future participle active nouns are formed which express the action of the verb in an agent. Thus from *scripturus* we have *scriptor*; from *moniturus*, *monitor*; *auditurus*, *auditor*; and innumerable others. These future participles are never used as adjectives, but always as substantives, and they express the idea that the agent is still at work, that his work is not done, that he continues to do it. They thus answer closely to the imperfect in Hebrew, which expresses, not a temporal relation primarily, but simply that the action indicated by the verb is not completed; so that it may be rendered either by a present or a future, or even by a past, as the context may determine.

It yet remains to inquire at what time **יְהוָה** came to be known as the proper name of God. Here the question resolves itself into an inquiry into the meaning of Ex. vi. 3. Is this to be regarded as the first revelation of the name as a name, or is the import of the statement that though the patriarchs before this time may have known the *word* as a designation of God, they had not had the means of realizing the full meaning of the appellation—that not before this had the concept of God conveyed by that word been

fully made known to them? The former of these views is probably that which the first reading of the passage would suggest; but it is exposed to such serious difficulties that it seems untenable. How, on this view, are we to account for such a statement as that in Gen. iv. 1, that in vi. 6, that in xii. 8, and many similar passages? To say that in these passages the word is used by prolepsis, is to resort to a very arbitrary and violent expedient for escaping from a difficulty. In such a proper name, also, as *Moriah* (מֹרְיָה) we have evidence of early acquaintance with the name Jehovah; and from the name of the mother of Moses, *Jochbed* (יֹכְבֵד), we learn that among his maternal ancestry this name was known. In the family of Jacob, also, we have such names as *Ahijah* and *Abiah* (*Abijah*), to which may be added the names of the two wives of Ezra or Ezer, *Hodiah* and *Bithiah* (1 Chron. ii. 25, vii. 8, iv. 18), all indicating a familiarity with the peculiar name of God before the time of Moses. In the face of these facts, the opinion that the name Jehovah was for the first time made known to Moses on the occasion referred to, cannot be retained. Adopting the other view, the statement "by my name Jehovah was I not known to them" is best explained by a reference to Ex. xxxiii. 19; Ps. lxxvi. 1, etc.<sup>1</sup> "The name Jehovah," says Kurz, "was (or rather *became*) undoubtedly a new one then, but only in the sense in which Christ said (John xiii. 34), 'a new commandment give I unto you,' whereas He merely repeated one of the primary commandments which we find in the Old Testament, and meet with on every hand in the laws of Moses. It was a commandment, however, the fulness and depth, the meaning, force, and value of which were first unfolded by the gospel. And just as the greatest act of love which the world ever witnessed provided a new field for the exemplification of this command in greater glory than was possible under the law, and thus the old commandment became a new one; so did the new act of God in the redemption of Israel from Egypt furnish a new field in which the ancient name of God struck fresh and deeper roots, and thus the ancient name became a new one."

<sup>1</sup> Hengstenberg, *Beitrag zur Auth. des Pentateuches*, i. p. 268 ff.; Kurz, *History of the Old Covenant*, ii. pp. 98, 215; Delitzsch, *Genesis*, p. 26.

Attempts have been made by some to find a heathen origin for the name Jehovah; but the futility of these have been so amply exposed, and the hypothesis is now so generally repudiated by scholars, that it seems needless to occupy space by detailing them.<sup>1</sup>

In composition the word יהוה is abbreviated into יהו, *Jeho*; יו, *Jo*; יהי, *Jahu*. The name יה, *Jah*, is also an abbreviation of the tetragrammaton; but it is chiefly used in poetry and in devotional ejaculations. The name appears entire also in some proper names, viz. Jehovah Jireh, etc.

Besides that which God assumes to Himself as His proper and incommunicable name, other designations of Him are used in Scriptures. We proceed now to consider the second class of the divine names, viz.,—

ii. APPELLATIVES. These are—

(i.) אל. This is supposed to be derived from a root אָל, no longer in use, signifying “to be strong.” It is used, however, not as a descriptive epithet, as if equivalent to “the strong one,” but as an appellative. In prose it is generally used with some qualifying attribute or adjective, as אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיִם, etc.; but in poetry it is frequently used simply as a designation of the Almighty, as in Num. xxiii. 8: “How shall I curse whom God (אל) hath not cursed?” etc. It is sometimes used with the possessive suffix of the 1st person אֱלֹהַי. It is used of idols or false gods, as in Isa. xlv. 10, 15, and in such phrases as אֱלֹהֵי נֹכְרִים, etc. This term seems to have been in use as a designation of deity among all the Semitic nations. It appears in the *Il* of the Phœnicians, the *Al* and *Allah* of the Arabs, the *Illo* of the Syriac, and the *Al* of the Samaritans.

(ii.) אֲדֹנָי. This, derived from דָּן or דִּין, “to judge, to rule,” properly means lord, and answers to the Greek *κύριος*, and the Latin *dominus*. It does not appear in any of the cognate dialects, though we find a trace of it in the Chaldaic proper name Baladan (בַּלְאֲדָן), and some have connected it with the Greek *Ἀδωνις*, which Hesychius interprets by *κύριος*. When used of God in the O. T. it is used in the

<sup>1</sup> See Tholuck, “Ueb. die Hypothese des Ursprungs des Namens Jehovah aus Ägypten Phœnicien oder Indian,” in his *Verm. Schriften*, i. 377–405; Gesenius, *Thes. s.v.*

plural אֱלֹהִים, probably as the plural intensive or quantitative, used to denote manifold and vast greatness, as in such words as שָׁמַיִם, "heaven;" מַיִם, "water," etc. Adonai is thus = *dominissimus, i.e. summus dominus*.

(iii.) אֱלֹהִים. This, the appellation most frequently used of God in the O. T., is the plural of אֱלֹהִי, which is also found, though only in poetry, and with the later writers. Some refer this to the same root as אֱל, and suppose the primary idea of the name is that of strength or power. It is more probable, however, that these words belong to different roots, and that אֱלֹהִים is derived from אֱלֹה, a root no longer extant in Hebrew, but surviving in the Arab. <sup>أَلِهَ</sup> *'aliha*, <sup>أَلِهَ</sup> *he was astonished, was seized with fear*. It thus, as an abstract noun, denotes primarily fear, and then secondarily, an object of fear or reverential awe. As used of the Divine Being, it indicates Him as an object of fear and reverence, and thus corresponds to the פֶּחַד of Gen. xxxi. 42, 53, "The fear of Isaac," by which Jacob swore, *i.e.* the Being whom Isaac feared, revered, and worshipped. This being the generic idea of the word accounts for the wide usage of it in Scripture, where it is not only used of the true God as the proper object of fear and worship, but also of heathen deities, both in the singular and in the plural (comp. Dan. xi. 37, 39; Ex. xii. 12, xviii. 11, etc.). The singular is also used tropically of any object of trust or confidence, as in Hab. i. 11, "Then his spirit transgressed and passed over, to whom his strength was for a god;" and in the remarkable passage, Job xii. 6, where of the robber it is said, אֱלֹהִים בְּיָדוֹ, "who brings his god in his hand," *i.e.* his weapon in which he trusts; just as Mezentius in the *Æneid* (x. 772) is represented as exclaiming: "Dextra, mini deus, et telum quod missile libro, Nunc adsint." In one passage Elohim is used of an apparition as an object of awe and dread: "I saw," said the woman to Saul, "Elohim ascending out of the earth" (1 Sam. xxviii. 13). It is used also of kings and judges; but not of kings and judges as such, but of them as representatives and vicegerents of Jehovah, the great King and Judge; so that Elohim in such usages really means God as represented by the king or judge; comp. Deut. xix. 17 and Ps. lxxxii. 1; and accordingly in Ex. xxi. 6, the LXX. render

אלהים by *προς το κριτήριον του Θεου*. Whether Elohim is ever used of angels may be doubted. In the LXX. several passages are so interpreted; but this is due probably to a feeling on the part of the translators, who shrank from giving the word its proper meaning in these passages. Thus Ps. viii. 6, where it is said of man that God has made him a little lower than Elohim, the LXX. render by *ἡλαττωσας αὐτὸν βράχυν τὴ παρ' ἀγγέλους*. So in Gen. iii. 5, some of the ancient versions and interpreters explain *כאֱלֹהִים*, “and ye shall be as God,” as meaning, “ye shall be as angels.” It is best, however, in both passages to retain the proper meaning of the word. Satan sought to induce Eve to take of the forbidden fruit by assuring her that thereby she should “become as God, knowing good and evil;” and the Psalmist, recognising that God had made man in His own image, and had set him over all the works of His hands, speaks of man as thus inferior only to God Himself. In Ps. cxxxviii. 1, where the A. V. renders, “before the Gods will I sing praise unto thee,” and where the LXX. has *ἐναντίον ἀγγέλων*, the *גִּבּוֹרֵי אֱלֹהִים* of the original probably means nothing else than “before God,” *i.e.* before the visible emblem of His presence in the temple; as the Psalmist says elsewhere, “I will worship towards Thy holy temple” (Ps. v. 7)—the place where God was especially present to receive the worship of His people.

With the article *הַ* is God *κατ' ἐξοχην* the One true God. Elohim, however, without the article has the same force, and is so used in a multitude of passages. When used of God it is usually construed with verbs and adjectives in the singular. For this peculiar construction of a plural substantive with singular adjuncts various suggestions have been offered by way of accounting. All are agreed that it is a *constructio ad sensum*; but what is the sense thereby indicated, critics are not agreed. The older theologians held that the fact of the Trinity was thereby indicated, the plural substantive being expressive of the distinction in the Godhead, the singular adjunct intimating that nevertheless God is one. This is now almost universally rejected; but I am not sure that it deserves to be so. It is undoubtedly a law of Hebrew syntax that an object in which plurality is combined into a unity is construed in the plural with verbs and adjectives in the singu-

lar. Thus we have Ps. lxxvii. 15, רִבְהָ תְהוֹמוֹת, “a great sea;” Ps. xviii. 15, בְּרָקִים רַב, “much lightning;” עֶבֶר הַמַּיִם, “the waters” (“the body of waters”) “has gone over me;” Isa. xvi. 8, שָׂדֵה עֲמֵלָל, “the field” (“the glebe,” comprising several portions) “languishes,” and many others. This being an established usage of Hebrew speech, it does not appear to me at all improbable that it was because the ancient Hebrews knew somewhat at least of the distinction in the Godhead that they construed not only Elohim, but other designations of the Deity in the plural with verbs and adjectives in the singular. If this be rejected, the most probable hypothesis is that Elohim is the plural intensive, though it is not easy to see in what respects it *is* intensive, the singular, Eloah, meaning quite as much as the plural Elohim; and on this hypothesis the peculiarity of construction above noticed is left wholly unaccounted for.

As Elohim is often used as equivalent to Jehovah, and the two names are often used together, and as they are not infrequently interchanged, it becomes of interest to inquire into the relation of Jehovah to Elohim. As both of these are designations of the one God, it is not surprising that we should find sometimes the one, sometimes the other, and sometimes both together used by the sacred writers. It is remarkable, however, that usually when the writer employs the one he does not in the same section or context employ the other. This has excited notice, and has led to much investigation; some contending that the use of the one term or the other is determined by the suitableness of its significancy to the subject of the context in which it occurs; others finding in the distinctive use of the terms traces and evidences of separate authorship of the sections; while others see in this nothing but one of the accidents of composition. A few general observations may not be out of place here.

1. The first two of the hypotheses just stated have been generally here put forth as directly antagonistic to each other. But it does not seem to have been sufficiently adverted to that both rest really on the same fundamental assumption—that, namely, of such a distinction in the meaning of the two terms as renders it proper that the one and not the other should be used in certain connections. This is avowedly the assumption

of those who advocate the former of the two ; but it is not less by implication involved in the latter. For if the difference of usage is traceable to difference of authorship, then as each author must have had a *reason* for preferring the one name to the other, and as the only reason that could have dictated such a preference is one arising from the signification of the word, we are, as much on this hypothesis as on the other, thrown back on the inquiry whether any such distinction of signification can be established as will account for the one name being used in any given connection rather than the other. We say the only reason that could have led different writers to use the one word rather than the other is such a distinctive difference of sense as rendered the one word proper and the other not in the connection ; for to what else can the preference of the one to the other be referred ? It cannot be pretended that both names were not equally familiar to every Hebrew writer ; and if it be said that *mere accident* determined it, a cause is assumed which will account for the diversity as well on the hypothesis of *one* writer throughout as on that of *several*, which is a virtual giving up of the latter hypothesis entirely. We conclude, then, that the assumption we have specified is essential to both hypotheses. The question, then, comes to be, Can such a distinction of meaning be established ? That the two words in their primary etymological sense are distinguishable from each other lies on the surface ; but this is not the question here. The question is, Are they *so* distinct that a correct writer would feel in some connections he could use only the one, and in other connections only the other ? To this question no satisfactory answer has been yet given. Many suggestions have been offered as to the distinctive difference of the two words ; but they can be regarded in no other light than as the *a priori* guesses of learned and ingenious men. As yet no attempt has been made to discover by careful induction what is the conclusion which the usage of Scripture authorizes on this point. 2. Sufficient care does not seem to have been taken to eliminate passages which can contribute nothing to the settlement of the question at issue—to “purge the instances,” if we may use the language of Bacon. Of the many cases in which Elohim is used, a very large number prove nothing whatever as to any *preference* on the part of the



writer for that name rather than Jehovah, simply because the grammatical conditions of the sentence precluded the use of a proper name such as Jehovah. In all cases, for instance, where a pronoun or adjective has to be used along with the appellation of God, the writer lies under a necessity of using Elohim and not Jehovah. On the other hand, there are cases where Jehovah could alone be used; as, for instance, when Jacob says (Gen. xxviii. 21), "Then shall Jehovah be my God," or when Pharaoh asks (Ex. v. 2), "Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice?" or when Moses said to Pharaoh that he would pray Jehovah to send a judgment on him, that he might know that the earth is Jehovah's (Ex. ix. 29); or when Moses cried, when he saw the people offering idolatrous homage to the calf, "Who is on the side of Jehovah?" (Ex. xxxii. 26); and a multitude of similar instances where, from the very circumstances of the case, only a proper name could be used. Such instances are obviously to be abstracted from; and when this is done with due care, it will be found that a very large proportion of the cases in which either word is used is accounted for without the aid of either of the hypotheses above stated. 3. Due regard does not seem to have been paid to the bearing of *exceptive* cases on the question at issue. It is a rule of the inductive method, that where any hypothesis is found irreconcilable with any ascertained fact which, if true, it ought to embrace, it must be set aside as thereby invalidated: "*Data instantia cadit inductio*" Now there are instances of the use both of Jehovah and of Elohim in the O. T. which cannot be brought under either of these hypotheses; and from this it follows that both are logically unsound; each involves the fallacy of an "undistributed middle." Such exceptional passages, for instance, in relation to the document hypothesis are found in Gen. iv., which is said to be Jehovistic, but in which, at ver. 25, we find Elohim used; in Gen. vi. 1-6, where Jehovah and Elohim are both used; in Gen. xx., where Elohim is chiefly used, but where, in ver. 4 and ver. 18, we have Jehovah. Such instances are plainly utterly irreconcilable with the hypothesis of an original Elohist document with which a Jehovistic has at a later period been interwoven. Equally irreconcilable with both

hypotheses are those passages in which the narrative is plainly uniform and continuous, but where the document hypothesis would require us violently to dislocate the whole, and where it is impossible to discover any such differences of reference and application in the portions where the two divine appellations are used respectively, as a regard to the sense hypothesis would demand. To this objection we have never seen a fair and tenable answer. It is easy to say the passages are interpolated, or to suggest the agency of a second, third, or seventh reviser; but to men of scientific habits of research such expedients only serve the more to condemn the hypothesis they are adopted to save. 4. It would be well, before setting to work to form hypotheses affecting the integrity and genuineness of the sacred books, were some attempt made to settle on a solid basis the *criteria* by which questions of this sort are to be determined. Especially in relation to such a use as that before us it would be well to settle with some degree of precision, and by means of a large induction from the phenomena of literature, what kind and degree of variety in phraseology and style afford a safe criterion of diversity of authorship. At present it seems to be chiefly the critic's own subjectivity that determines his conclusion, the consequence of which is that different men arrive at conflicting conclusions, all of which are alike without any solid ground on which they can be rested. It would be well, before we dispute further on such points, that some *organon* of the higher criticism were in recognised use among critics.

These remarks are designed to point towards the desirableness of a reconsideration of the subject of the relation of Elohim to Jehovah in the usage of the sacred writers, from a more strictly scientific point of view than has hitherto been assumed. Learning has done its utmost in regard to this matter; all the facts of the case have been collected and elucidated by scholars of the first eminence; it is only from a juster application of the method of scientific investigation to these facts that any further light can be hoped for. As things stand now, the prevalence of the one term in a context rather than the other can be regarded in no other light than as one of those accidents of composition for which we are unable to account.

iii. The third class of names of God in the Bible are those which may be denominated ATTRIBUTIVE or EPITHETICAL. Of these the following are the chief:—

(i.)  $\text{אל שדי}$  or  $\text{שדי}$ . This seems to have been the earliest name of God; it belongs to the times of the patriarchs. Derived from the root  $\text{שד}$ , the fundamental idea of which is “strong,” and which appears in the verb  $\text{שדר}$ , “to force,” “to lay waste,” this name characterizes God as revealing Himself in power and might. Hence in the LXX. and in the N. T. it is represented by the Gr.  $\text{παντοκράτωρ}$ , and in the A. V. it is correctly expressed by Almighty. It is not, however, the mightiness of God in the general, or as manifested in the government of the world at large, that is indicated by this name; rather is it His might as seen in subordinating nature to the interests of His spiritual kingdom, and in securing protection and blessing to His people. As Delitzsch has remarked, “ $\text{אלהים}$  is the God who forms nature so that it is, and upholds it so that it continues;  $\text{אל שדי}$ , the God who compels nature so that it does what is contrary to itself, and controls it so that it bows to and serves grace;  $\text{יהוה}$ , the God who within nature effectuates grace, and ultimately in place of nature establishes a new creation of grace.”<sup>1</sup> The name Jehovah thus comes to supersede the name El Shaddai; and as the former unfolds its meaning, the latter recedes till it is ranked as only one of the general names of God, with  $\text{אל}$  and  $\text{אלהים}$ . Only rarely, and in reference to special manifestations of the divine power on behalf of His people, is it used subsequently to the patriarchal age, as in Ruth i. 20; Ps. xci. 1; Isa. xiii. 6; Ezek. x. 5; Joel i. 15.

(ii.)  $\text{אל חי}$ ,  $\text{Θεος ζων}$ , “the Living God.” This is involved in the concept of Jehovah: He who emphatically *is* necessarily exists, and is the Living One. As such He is placed in contrast with the gods of the heathen, which are dumb idols, mere nothings, that cannot help their votaries, or hear them when they cry (Deut. xxxii. 37–39).

(iii.)  $\text{עליון}$ , LXX.  $\text{ὑψιστος}$ . By this name the divine supremacy is indicated: God sits supreme over the universe, enthroned in the heavens; comp. Gen. xiv. 20; Ps. xcvii. 9. This name was widely diffused among the Semitic peoples.

<sup>1</sup> *Genesis*, chap. xvii. 1, p. 371, 2nd ed.

We find it used by Melchizedek, the Canaanitish prince-priest (Gen. xiv. 18); it is the name by which the King of Babylon designates the Deity, to an equality with whom he proudly aspires to climb (Isa. xiv. 14); it is the name which the Phœnicians and Carthaginians gave to Saturn, their supreme god; and it appears in the *Pænulus* of Plautus (v. 1. 1) as a general title of the gods and goddesses, for the “Alonim valonuth” of that passage are undoubtedly a transliteration of *עֲלִיּוֹנִים וְעֲלִיּוֹנוֹת*. We have this word also in the proper name Abdalonimus, *i.e.* עֲבֶד-עֲלִיּוֹן, servant of the highest; comp. Heb. עֲבַדְיָהּ and the modern Arab. *Abdallah*.

(iv.) אֱלֹהִים, *Θεὸς αἰώνιος*. God, the Living One, is the “Eternal One:” “I,” saith He, “live for ever,” ה' אֲנִי לְעוֹלָם, Deut. xxxii. 40; comp. also Ps. xc. Because God is thus eternal, and so independent of all change, He is at all times able and ready to succour and comfort His people; Isa. xl. 28; Ps. cii. 28.

(v.) אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת, *ο Θεὸς των δυνάμεων*, “God of Hosts.” This designates God as the ruler of the celestial armies, as having power over all nature, as above the stars and heavenly bodies, as the Lord of angels and celestial powers, who delight to do His bidding and fulfil His will. This name does not occur in the Pentateuch, or in the earlier historical books, but it is very common in the prophetic writings, except that of Ezekiel; nor does it occur in Job, or any of the writings ascribed to Solomon.

To these may be added such terms as אב, *πατήρ*; בעל, *δεσποτης*, *κυριος*, which, however, are hardly to be reckoned as names of God, being descriptive rather of relations in which He stands to His creatures than of Himself.

The names of God in the Bible reveal Him to us as the supreme, all-governing Being, to whom all power and authority belong, to whom reverence and worship are due, and who dwells in the majesty of His own essential being, having a name which none but Himself can bear, and a glory which He will not give to another.

## CHAPTER III.

## GOD.

## II. DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

*Preliminary.*

The names of God being all significant, it seemed a fitting introduction to the consideration of what He would have us to know concerning Himself that we should consider those appellations in which He has been pleased to symbolize, as it were, His perfections. We now proceed to consider these perfections as they are more fully set forth for our study in His word and in His works.

This branch of theology is commonly designated that which treats of *the divine attributes*. The subject is one which admits of a very copious treatment; but according to the plan I have laid down for myself, I shall content myself with merely sketching out the wide field in outline, referring you to books where you will be aided in studying it in detail for yourselves.

By the attributes or perfections<sup>1</sup> of God, we mean those qualities which we ascribe to Him for the purpose of expressing our conceptions of His infinite essence in relation to the universe and to ourselves.

In the outset there are certain erroneous or confused modes of thought upon this subject of which we must be careful to purge our minds.

1. We must not think of the attributes of God as qualities superadded to His essence. This caution is necessary because, as we naturally pass from conceptions drawn from ourselves or the objects around us to conceptions of God, and as the qualities we see in ourselves or surrounding objects are for the most part something added to the essential nature of the object, and consequently capable of being detached from it, there is a danger of our thinking of the divine attributes in

<sup>1</sup> By the Greek Fathers they are called *αἰτίματα*, *αἰτίαι*, and *νοήματα*.

the same way. Thus, *e.g.*, when we ascribe to a man strength, or wisdom, or goodness, we impute to him qualities which are not essential to him as a man, qualities which at one time perhaps he had not at all, and of which he may come to be utterly divested. Now, in thinking of God, we must abstract from all such modes of conceiving His attributes. He can receive no addition, experience no change. “*Nunquam novus, nunquam vetus*” as Augustine expresses it. His attributes, therefore, are Himself—He, not His. Their relativity to Him is apparent only, not real, arising simply from our modes of contemplating Him. On this point all the great divines are agreed. “His attributes are not accidental, but as respects the thing itself, they are the very essence of God viewed under this or the other mode or respect of considering it. For if they were accidents, they would add a new entity and perfection, and the essence of God would not be in itself perfect.”<sup>1</sup> “The divine attributes do not denote anything added to the divine essence, but are only inadequate conceptions of an essence infinitely perfect. The divine essence is like an incomprehensible ocean of all infinite perfections, which the human intellect is impotent to exhaust in one simple conception, and hence by various conceptions, as if sip by sip, it draws somewhat out of that infinity.”<sup>2</sup> Hence it came to be laid down as a locus or position in theology: “*Attributa divina in se ac per se considerata sunt realiter et simplicissime unum cum divina essentia.*”

Here it may perhaps occur to some of you to ask, If the attributes of God are not to be severed from His essence, why speak of His essence and His attributes as separate objects of consideration? This question leads me to remind you that what is in reality one and indivisible may be distinguished in thought. This is what the old divines meant when they said on the point before us that the divine attributes are distinguished from the divine essence, “*non ex natura rei, sed ratione tantum.*” A distinction “*ex natura rei*” is one which affirms a difference of things, such as *body* and *rotundity*; a distinction *ratione* is one which simply affirms that what cannot be distinguished in reality may be conceived or thought

<sup>1</sup> Calovius, *Systema Loc. Theol.* ii. 221.

<sup>2</sup> Quenstedt, *Theol. Didactico-polemica*, etc., i. 297.

discriminatively. It may place this in a clearer light if I state historically the process of thought on this subject. Among the schoolmen, then, whilst all admitted that the distinction is subjective, *i.e.* that the attributes of God have not such an objective reality that they can be objectively distinguished from the divine essence and from each other, but are only so regarded by us, the question was discussed whether the attributes of God are to be distinguished from the essence of God *realiter* or only *nominaliter*, *i.e.* whether the distinction is one actually existing, or only a distinction of names as applied by us. When these questions passed from the schoolmen to the divines of the Reformation, both sides of this alternative were discussed, and it was decided that the distinction was neither *realiter*, nor simply *nominaliter*, but *formaliter*, *i.e.* “*secundum nostrum concipiendis modum.*” In this conclusion the best theologians may be said now to rest. The distinction is subjective rather than objective; “it is founded, not in inner distinctions in the divine essence, but in the accompanying representations with which the idea of this is placed in combination;”<sup>1</sup> or, as Quenstedt expresses it, “the foundation of this distinction are various extrinsic things known along with it, as, *e.g.*, diverse effects or respects or negations according to which God is conceived by us.”

Whilst, however, we hold the attributes of God to be distinguishable from His essence only as thought by us, we must guard against the extreme of regarding this distinction as purely arbitrary or fictitious. Into this extreme some modern divines of Germany have fallen. Thus Hase does not hesitate to ascribe the whole conception of divine attributes “to poetry and popular instruction rather than to science;” and Schleiermacher lays it down as one of his theological positions, that “the attributes which we ascribe to God cannot denote anything special in God, but only something special in the manner in which our feeling of entire dependence on Him is referred;” and he ascribes the introduction of this mode of contemplating God “to the religious poetry of the Church, and to the popular experience which sought to vivify and confirm the simple representation of the Supreme Being by

<sup>1</sup> Twisten, ii. 27.

speaking of Him in expressions such as we are wont to use of finite beings.”<sup>1</sup> This, however, is carrying the subjectivity of this mode of representing God much too far. When we ascribe to God certain attributes, I think it essential to the validity of the conception that we should believe that there is in God something that actually corresponds to these; in other words, that when He manifests what we call an attribute, He acts according to a necessity or propriety of His own nature. They are not real distinctions in God, as if He were confounded and not a pure simple essence; they are only distinctions which appear to us, and which we name from analogy with ourselves; but they have a ground or foundation in the nature of God. They are not mere poetical fictions, nor are they accommodations to popular feeling; they are, like all other anthropomorphisms, human modes of conceiving and expressing actual facts in God as revealed to us. As the Thomists expressed it, “*Attributa Dei different tantum ratione, sed fundamentum habent ex natura rei.*”<sup>2</sup> “Simplicity of essence,” says Quenstedt, who has written admirably on this subject, “does not abolish the verity of the divine attributes, but it excludes composition. It is one thing to think what is in act and reality *one* in God, as if in act and reality *manifold*; it is another to conceive what in God is one, as virtually or by eminence manifold. The former would be wholly false; the latter is not false, though inadequate.”<sup>3</sup>

2. As the attributes of God are not something really distinct from Him, so they are not really distinct from each other. “God,” says Augustine, “may be spoken of *multipliciter*, as great, good, wise, blessed, true, and whatever else may not unworthily be ascribed to Him. But His greatness is the same as His wisdom; for it is not by mass that He is great, but by virtue. And His goodness is the same as His wisdom and greatness, and His truth the same as all these. It is not one thing with Him to be blessed, and another to be great or wise, or true or good, or altogether to be Himself.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Glaubenslehre*, i. 255, 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Index to St. Thomas's *Summa*, under “I. *Attributa*,” with relative passage.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. viii. sec. 2, qu. 2, *ix* 4. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *De Trinitate*, vi. 7.



This, like the former, is necessitated by the simplicity of God. Were His attributes really distinct qualities, the totality of His essence would be the sum or complement of these separate qualities, and hence He would not be pure essence, but a composite essence, and so capable of division, and therefore of dissolution. It is essential, therefore, to a just conception of God that we should regard these attributes not merely as all in harmony, but as in reality one. They differ not *in re*, but *formaliter*; *i.e.* we think them virtually different because we have no other way of expressing or conceiving the different relations in which different things stand to the one indivisible and unchangeable Jehovah. As the sun illuminates, warms, melts, hardens, and does many different acts at one and the same time, and by one and the same power (so far at least as we know), whilst we feel ourselves constrained to attribute to it various powers by which these different acts are accomplished; so, in endeavouring to construe to our minds the one God in His different relations to the universe, we ascribe His diversities of operation to different perfections or attributes. Or we may take an illustration from the constitution of our own minds, which are one and indivisible, but to which we ascribe diverse powers or faculties, these being not real entities, but simply, as Addison expresses it, “the different ways or modes in which the soul can exert herself.”<sup>1</sup>

The point now before us is one on which there have been controversies in the Church since a very early period. In the 4th century, during the Arian controversy, it came up in consequence of Eunomius of Cappadocia maintaining the capacity of man to understand God, and holding that the perfections of God were in Him as our qualities are in us. He was opposed by Gregory of Nyssa and by Augustine. Among the schoolmen, especially in the 14th century, the disputes of the Nominalists and Realists brought into prominence the question whether the divine attributes are to be distinguished *realiter* or only *nominaliter*; the Scotists holding by the latter side of the alternative, while the Thomists adopted a sort of middle course, and held, as already mentioned, that the distinction was not *in re* but *in ratione*, and that not “per

<sup>1</sup> *Spectator*, No. 600.

meram operationem intellectus, sed cui est fundamentum aliquod in re." In later times the Socinians have revived the Eunomian doctrine, that the attributes of God are really distinct from His essence ; their end being to obtain a firmer footing for their denial of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. It may be worth while in a few quotations to show the current of orthodox belief on this subject from the early sages downwards :—

Athanasius : " But these [attributes] are not like a certain quality (*ποιότης*) in Him ; away with this ! it is unbecoming (*ἀπρεπές*) ; for God would thus be found compounded of substance and quality ; for every quality is in a substance, and according to this the divine indivisible monad would appear as being compounded, being divided into essence and accident." <sup>1</sup>

Cyrril of Jerusalem : " We speak concerning God, not what is necessary (for to Himself alone are these things known), but such things as our weakness is able to carry. For we do not expound what God is, but acknowledge with candour that we know not the exactitude concerning Him ; for in things relating to God a great part of knowledge is to confess ignorance." <sup>2</sup>

Augustine : " A nature is called simple on this ground, that it is one to which it does not appertain to have anything which either may be lost, or so that what has should be one thing and what it has another ; such as a vessel having some fluid, or a body heat, or the air light or warmth, or the soul wisdom. None of these is that which it has ; for the vessel is not the fluid, nor the body the heat, nor the air the light or warmth, nor the soul wisdom. Hence it is that these may be deprived of that which it has, and may be turned and changed into other habits and qualities, as the vessel may be emptied of the fluid of which it is full," etc. <sup>3</sup>

Anselm : " If it be incomprehensible how the Supreme Wisdom knows those things which He does [His works], of which we must needs know so much, who will explain how He knows Himself concerning whom nothing or next to

<sup>1</sup> *Cont. Arian.* iv. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Cat.* vi. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *De Civit. Dei*, book xi. chap. x.

nothing is known by us ?” Anselm, however, contends that “we may discourse truly concerning the divine nature though that nature remain ineffable, provided we do not think it as expressed by the propriety of its essence, but signified so far as it is by means of something else.”<sup>1</sup>

In the Middle Ages a fierce controversy arose between the Scotists and Thomists as to whether we have a knowledge of the quiddity of God merely (*cognitio quidditatis Dei*) or a quidditive knowledge of God as well (*cognitio quidditiva Dei*). Such phraseology may appear to us ridiculous, but the distinction it expresses is a real one. A knowledge of the quiddity of God is a knowledge of something essentially belonging to Him and characterizing Him ; a quidditive knowledge of God is a knowledge of all that belongs to Him, His entire nature, so that nothing remains hid. This higher knowledge the Scotists held man capable of acquiring ; and in opposition to them the Thomists maintained that we do not thus know God thoroughly, but possess only a knowledge of His habitude or manner of acting towards His creatures. Thomas Aquinas himself thus states his views on the distinction of the attributes : “ Our intellect, since it cognizes God from creatures, forms in order to know God conceptions proportioned to the perfections proceeding from God to His creatures. Which perfections pre-exist, indeed, in God unitedly and simpliciter, but in creatures are received dividedly and in multiplicity. Therefore, as to the diverse perfections of the creatures there responds one simple principle represented variously and by multiplicity in the diverse perfections of creatures, so to the various and manifold concepts of our intellect there responds one wholly simple, but according to these conceptions imperfectly understood. And hence the names attributed to God, though they signify one thing, yet because they signify it under many and diverse relations, are not synonymous.”<sup>2</sup>

I have already cited several passages from the older Lutheran divines, Twisten, Calovius, Quenstedt, etc., bearing on this subject. I shall only therefore add two brief testimonies from this source.

Gerhard : “ The attributes of God are in Him inseparable ;

<sup>1</sup> *Monology*. c. xxxi. and lxxv.

<sup>2</sup> *Summa*, part i. qu. 13, art. 4.

for as it is impossible to separate the essence of a thing from the thing itself, so also the attributes cannot be separated from God, since they are the essence of God.”<sup>1</sup>

Calovius : “ If they really differed from the essence after the manner of accidents, there would be composition in God ; and since accidents are by nature posterior to essence, there would be a prior and posterior in the order of nature in God, which things are *απιστα*. If they were distinct really, they could not be predicated of God in the abstract, and yet He is called in the abstract Truth, Life, Love. If the power differed from the essence of God, He would not be *αυτεξουσιος*, of Himself powerful, but on account of power superadded to His essence.”

In the Reformed or Calvinistic Churches this question does not appear to have excited so much notice as in the Lutheran. We can, however, from this source also adduce some very decided testimonies. I select the following :—

Turretine : “ The orthodox teach that the attributes are really identical with the essence of God, but that they are distinguished virtually and by eminence. . . . The attributes of God cannot in reality differ from His essence, or one from another as thing and thing, because God is in the highest degree simple and perfect. . . . Yet that the attributes of God differ as well from His essence as from each other, is clear from the diversity of the conceptions. For where there is reason for founding distinct formal conceptions of anything though in itself one and simple, there of necessity is given some distinction virtual and eminent ”<sup>2</sup> [that is, as Turretine himself explains it, there is a distinction determined either by the thing containing potentially different effects, or by possessing in union what in others are distinct, or by having eminent efficiency, which may be the principle of diverse actions]. Marck : “ The attributes of God are perfections by which He presents Himself to be known by us feeble ones, and is more distinguished from creatures. These are not distinct in reality, either from one another or from God Himself, because of God’s independence, simplicity, and immutability ; but only as respects their objects, effects, and our mode of conceiving. Commonly the difference is said to be *rationis ratiocinate*,

<sup>1</sup> *Loc. Theol.* iii. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Instit. Theol. Elenct.* vol. i. p. 206.

which is said to have some foundation in the thing,"—as distinct from a *distinctio rationis ratiocinantis*, which is the product of a mere operation of the intellect.<sup>1</sup> Venema: "In a *positive* sense this property [simplicity] denotes that all the attributes of God are essential to His nature, so that they are identified with it; and though they are various according to the aspect in which they are viewed, they are nevertheless in manner and degree immutable as His nature itself. They are, moreover, so connected that one involves, is inseparable from, and draws along with it the others. Not that one is another, for the ideas we form of them are different; but that one requires another, and that all are linked together by an inseparable bond. God therefore, in a positive sense, is a simple uncompounded Being, inasmuch as His attributes are always the same, and cannot be dissociated from one another. In a *negative* sense, this property consists in God's entire exemption from every kind of composition."<sup>2</sup> Stapfer: "Whatever follows from the essence of God and cannot be separated from it is called a Divine Attribute. The divine attributes are variously enumerated, but they do not differ from each other, but are distinguished only by our mode of conceiving them; for whatever is in God, is God Himself."<sup>3</sup>

It may illustrate the perfect harmony of divines on this subject if to these testimonies of Lutheran and Calvinistic divines I add the declaration of Arminius: "Whatever is absolutely predicated of God is to be understood essentially and not accidentally; and those things which are predicated of God are in God not many, but one (Jas. i. 17): It is only in our mode of considering them, which is a compound mode, that they are distinguished as being many and diverse; though this may not inappropriately be said—because they are likewise distinguished by a formal reason."<sup>4</sup>

Descending to more recent divines, I could fill page after page with extracts from them enunciating the same doctrine, but it is unnecessary; it is a doctrine in which all evangelical

<sup>1</sup> *Medulla Christianæ Theologiæ*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Institutes of Theology*, translated from original MS. by Brown, p. 135.

<sup>3</sup> *Instit. Theol. Polem.* i. p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> *Works* by Nichols ii. p. 115. See also Limborch, *Theol. Christianæ*, book ii. chap. ii.

writers are unanimous so far as they have touched on it. A few may be found who still hold by the Nominalist doctrine, that the distinction of the attributes from the essence of God and from each other is due only to finite modes of thinking and feeling, and so is really an illusion ; but the majority hold that whilst these attributes are not to be regarded as really distinct, there is ground in the reality for the distinction which we make formally. We may call them “redintegrations and applications of the concept of God” (Nitzsch), or “Concepts of the concept of God in relation to the world,” or we may resort to simple phrase and say (with Twisten) that “they express real relations in which God stands to the finite, or rather in which it stands to Him, and which we, according to our narrow modes of representation, must present individually if we would not merely in words acknowledge the infinitude of His being and working, but would also in some measure rise to Him in our thoughts ;” but the sentiment is substantially the same. I shall therefore confine myself here to one extract, which I give chiefly because of the admirable statement, as it appears to me, which it furnishes of the whole subject now before us. It is from the *Christliche Dogmatik* of Dr. Martensen : “The divine essence manifests itself in its attributes. Were God simple unity (*das einfach Eine*), the mystic abyss in which all precision (or definiteness) was swallowed up (*το απλως έν*), there would be nothing further to be known in this unity. But the living God manifests the unity of His essence through a multiplicity of essential determinations or attributes. These attributes express one and the same essence from different sides ; they are different fundamental outcomings of one essence. They are consequently not outside of each other, but in each other ; they mutually interpenetrate and have their point of unity in one and the same divine personality. Though they are thus distinctions which may be removed as well as adhibited, yet they are by no means to be viewed as mere human modes of conceiving the divine essence ; they are not human modes of conceiving, but God’s own modes of manifestation. We cannot, therefore, assent to the Nominalist doctrine, which treats ideas and general con-

cepts as *ours*, and hence also the concepts with which we denote the Divine Being as simply the expression of *our* theory of the universe, not as something in God Himself. Whilst we admit that the idea of God must be purged of all that is *simply* human, of all false anthropomorphisms, we must nevertheless regard Nominalism as destroying the concept of *manifestation* (or revelation). There is a destruction of the innermost truth of the faith, if it is only we who think God as Holy and Just, whilst He Himself is not Holy and Just,—if it is only we who invoke Him by these names, while He Himself does not so make Himself known to us. Hence we teach with Realism that the attributes of God are objective determinations in the revelation of God, and consequently have their root in His inner being.”<sup>1</sup>

3. Having reached correct and precise views as to what we mean by the attributes of God, the next question that comes up to us respects the way in which we arrive at the conception of these attributes—the method, that is, by which we gather from nature or are taught in the Scriptures the knowledge of God in His attributes.

In answer to this I have to call your attention to a distribution which has come down to us from a very early period in the history of dogmatic theology, and is still recognised by theologians. According to this, there are three ways in which the divine attributes become known to us: (1) *Via negationis* (κατ' ἀφαίρεσιν), by which we remove from God all the imperfection belonging to creatures and pronounce Him free from this; (2) *Via eminentiæ* (κατὰ σχέσιν), by which we ascribe to God in infinity whatever excellences we find in creatures according to their measure; and (3) *Via causalitatis* (κατὰ φύσιν), by which we conclude that those perfections are in God which are required by the production and conservation of the universe. Of these it is evident that the first two must always go together; for we cannot pronounce God free from imperfection without ascribing to Him infinite excellence. It is evident also that we must confine the teachings of the way of eminence with those of the way of causality in order to reach just views of God; for it is only as we ascribe to God that intelligence in perfection which we find in measure

<sup>1</sup> *Christliche Dogmatik*, p. 112, 3rd ed.

in ourselves that we think of Him as God, or as something different from a mere world-power. Thus it appears that all these methods mutually supplement each other, and that it is from the whole that we obtain just views of God so far as such are attainable by us.

This distribution is due, in the first instance, to a Neo-Platonist writer of the 4th or 5th century who wrote under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite. It figures prominently in the writings of the schoolmen, and has been generally adopted by modern divines. Though not, of course, explicitly announced in Scripture, all the three methods it embraces are employed by the sacred writers. Thus when God says (Mal. iii. 6), "I am Jehovah, I change not," or when it is said, "God is not a man that He should lie, or the son of man that He should repent" (Num. xxiii. 19), we are taught by the way of negation. When the prophet asks (Isa. xl. 18), "To whom will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?" or when our Lord says (Matt. vii. 11), "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him," we are taught by the way of eminence; and when Paul reasoned with the Athenians, that if we are the offspring of God "we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or stone graven by art and man's device," he taught them by the way of causality. For the principle of this distribution, therefore, we have the highest authority.

But this principle is not only one recommended to us by authority, it is one which lies deep in the very nature of the case. It is evolved necessarily out of our very idea of God as an intelligent Being distinct from the world, and on whom the world depends. We can predicate His absolute distinctness from the world only by affirming His immunity from all those limitations that characterize the world of creatures; we can construe the dependence of the world on Him only by regarding Him as endowed with all those powers which are needful for the creation and upholding of it; and we can reverence Him as an intelligent and moral agent only by ascribing to Him in the highest degree those qualities which essentially characterize intelligent and moral natures. In



this distribution, therefore, we recognise not a mere arbitrary or empirical method, but one which has a real and abiding basis in the object-matter of discourse.

True and valuable, however, as this method is in itself, it cannot be held as of itself complete or sufficient. Strictly speaking, there are innumerable imperfections and limitations which must be denied of God; innumerable operations which must be ascribed to Him; so that the question arises how all these are to be arranged and discriminated so as to enable us to obtain a definite and yet exhaustive enumeration of the divine attributes. To accomplish this, recourse has been had to a classification of these, and by this means the end may be in some measure reached, provided the classification be sufficiently comprehensive to prescribe for each attribute its proper place and sphere. But, after all that we may attempt in this direction, it will be found that we can make only a more or less near approach to such a classification, and that no scheme yet proposed is perfect.

4. Different schemes of classification have been proposed with a view of securing a just and luminous survey of the divine attributes. The following is a digest of these schemes, with the principle on which each is based. I. According to the form in which they are expressed, they are arranged as *proper* or *metaphorical*, *affirmative* or *negative*; thus eternal self-existence is counted a proper and affirmative attribute, whilst unchangeableness is regarded as metaphorical and negative. II. According to their inner relation to each other, as *primitive* or *derivative*; thus absolute perfection may be held as a primitive attribute of God, and all the rest as derived from it; or love or holiness may be fixed on as the primitive of which the rest are derivatives. III. According to God's relation to the world, as *immanent*, *quiescent*, *internal*, *absolute*, or *transient*, *operative*, *external*, *relative*; thus unity, truth, goodness, etc., are ranked as immanent perfections of God,—perfections resting in His being, while omnipotence, grace, justice, etc., are regarded as transient or outcoming perfections,—passing, so to speak, from God over upon His creatures. IV. According to their relation to human capabilities, as *communicable* and *imitable*, or *incommunicable* and *inimitable*, the latter being the special characteristics of God, such as self-

existence, infinity, omnipotence, whilst the former may exist in measure in His creatures, such as goodness and truth. V. According to their inner compass or tenor, as *general* and *ontological*—such as belong to the divine nature viewed *per se*, or *special*—such as are derived from the idea of God as a spiritual essence; thus eternity, immensity, immutability, etc., are ontological attributes; while omniscience, wisdom, holiness, etc., are special attributes. VI. According to the analogy of man's nature, as *metaphysical* and *natural*, or *moral*, the former including such perfections as belong to the divine essence, the latter such as characterize His mind and will. These are by some distinguished also as *universal* or *special*. VII. According to the varied relation of the consciousness of God to the pious feeling as determined—1. by the feeling of dependence apart from any sense of guilt—eternity, omnipotence, etc.; 2. by the feeling of antithesis created by a sense of sin—holiness and righteousness; and 3. by the feeling of difference arising from a sense of God's grace—love and wisdom. This is Schleiermacher's scheme, and it bears traces at once of the genius of the man, by which he made everything seem to fall in with his peculiar hypothesis, and of the fanciful and purely subjective character of all his modes of thought.

I have thought it right to give you this sketch of these different schemes, that you may at your leisure examine them for yourselves, and adopt or reject as you may think best. It would lead us into a discussion of too protracted a kind for the limits of this course were I to subject each of them to a minute criticism; and without a *minute* criticism I apprehend justice could not be done, either to the subject itself or to our own convictions regarding it. Suffice it to say, then, that whilst none of these can be regarded as perfect, that which on the whole I think is to be preferred is the one numbered VI. in the digest above given. I prefer this, partly because it is the common division followed in this country, and it is not desirable to depart from the common path except for some very cogent reason; partly because, as we have all along gone upon the principle that the concept of God is formed by us after the analogy of our own spiritual nature, there is a decided propriety and advantage in adopting a scheme of the divine attributes based on this principle in preference to any other.

Be it ever borne in mind, however, that whilst we distinguish the natural or metaphysical perfections of God from the mental and ethical, we do so merely in accommodation to our own limited modes of thinking; in themselves these cannot be separated; they are co-ordinate, harmonious, and equal manifestations of that one infinite essence which no man hath seen or can see.

The metaphysical or natural perfections of God are those which are manifested in relation to Being in general; His moral perfections are those which have respect to His relations to Being in particular, such as the created universe, intelligent or sentient existences, etc.

### *i. Natural Perfections of God.*

Now BEING or EXISTENCE, as it manifests itself to us, may be contemplated in three relations or under three conditions, as 1. Existence in Time = Protensive Being; 2. Existence in Space = Extensive Being; and 3. Existence in Degree = Intensive Being. In speaking of the natural perfections of God it may be of advantage to take note of these distinctions; and, whilst keeping ever in mind that such conditions apply to the divine existence, not directly, but only analogically, to consider these perfections under the three heads thus marked out.

(i.) *Natural perfections of God viewed in relation to existence in time, or protensive existence.* Here we proceed wholly by the *via negationis*, all the perfections of God under this head being simply the negation in Him of any of those limits which time imposes on us. Thus we ascribe to Him—

1. *Eternal Existence*, by which, in other words, we deny that He ever began to be—or that He can cease to be, or that He is subject to any succession of existence. He is wholly above and beyond time, and His eternity is (as Schleiermacher has expressed it) “the timeless primal causality of God, conditioning not only the temporal, but time itself.” He is the Source and Lord of Time, and contains in Himself its reason and order—“Operator omnium Temporum,” as Augustine says, “Omnia tempora Tu fecisti, et ante omnia tempora Tu es.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Confess.* xi. 12, 13, p. 213, ed. Pusey.

In the Scriptures this perfection of God is frequently and emphatically insisted on. God is before all, and endures for ever; He is from eternity to eternity, Ps. xc. 2; and of His years there is no end, Ps. cii. 27. He is *αφθαρτος*, "incorruptible," passes not away, Rom. i. 23; and He alone hath immortality, 1 Tim. vi. 16. In our relations to time we are wholly different from Him; for with Him one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, Ps. xc. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 8. He is emphatically *αἰώνιος*, eternal — not only exempt from temporal sequence and temporal limitations, but also the actual cause of time and time's things.<sup>1</sup> Comp. also Ps. cii. 25–27; Gen. xxi. 33; Isa. xl. 28, xli. 4, etc.

Theologians have distinguished eternity *a parte ante* from eternity *a parte post*. The former, when affirmed of God, is tantamount to an assertion of His self-existence. The eternal existence of God involves, as a matter of course, His self-existence; for that which has been from all eternity cannot have been derived or caused. God has the ground of His being in Himself alone; He exists from and according to His own inner essentiality. It is wrong to speak of Him as self-caused, for He is absolutely uncaused. Even such an expression as "aseitas," that commonly used by theologians to indicate His self-existence, is to be avoided, for we can hardly think God as being *from* Himself without thinking Him as in some sense self-caused. What is intended is that God exists by the necessity of His own nature, that He has the ground or reason of His existence in Himself, that He exists "of and by Himself, and with all actual perfection originally in His own essence." When eternity *a parte post* is attributed to Him, it is affirmed that His existence shall never terminate, that He is *αφθαρτος*, and has in Himself *αθανασία*. The Bible affirms both of these of God; He is *אֵלֹהִים עַד-עוֹלָם*, and it combines both in the epithet *αἰώνιος* as applied to Him. It is probably with reference to the same idea that the apostle denominates God *Βασιλεὺς τῶν αἰώνων*, 1 Tim. i. 17.

"Anni tui," exclaims Augustine, addressing God, "dies

<sup>1</sup> Nitzsch, *Christliche Lehre*, p. 159.

unus; et dies tuus non quotidie sed hodie, quia hodiernus tuus non cedit crastino; neque enim succedit hesterno. Hodiernus tuus Æternitas.”<sup>1</sup>

2. As God exists out of time and is above time, so He is not subject to any change through the lapse of time. Hence we ascribe to God as an attribute *unchangeableness* or *immutability*, by which we intend that neither as respects His essence, His perfections, His knowledge, nor as respects His purposes, is He capable of change; in other words, we affirm the perpetual identity of the divine essence in itself and in its attributes, and deny that there is in God any change physical, intellectual, or ethical. He never advances, never recedes. With Him there is no succession, no vicissitude. He inhabits eternity. He occupies a perpetual Now.

This attribute is inseparable from the former.<sup>2</sup> We can, indeed, think unchangeableness apart from eternal self-existence; and we can conceive a being who shall exist for ever and yet be liable to change; as, on the other hand, we can conceive a being who shall be unchangeable as long as he exists and yet not exist for ever. But, in reality, eternity and immutability are inseparable; for that which changes must have begun to be, and may cease to be. Self-existence also necessitates immutability; for to affirm that a being exists by the necessity of his own nature, is tantamount to asserting that he cannot but be what he is. Unchangeableness is also inseparable from the divine perfection; for he that changes becomes at each change either less perfect or more perfect than he was before, *i.e.* he either loses something he had, or gains something he had not before; and to affirm this of an All-Perfect Being would be a contradiction in terms.

The unchangeableness of God is affirmed in Scripture repeatedly, and in striking terms; see Ps. cii. 26; Mal. iii. 6; Eccles. iii. 14; Jas. i. 17; Heb. xiii. 8.

(ii.) *Natural perfections of God viewed in relation to existence*

<sup>1</sup> *Confess.* p. 213, ed. Pusey.

<sup>2</sup> Ἀναλλοίωτος καθὼς ἀθανάτος ἐστι, Theoph. *ad Autolyc.* i. 4. “Deum immutabilem et informabilem credi necesse est, ut æternum. Transfiguratio autem interemptio est pristini,” Tertull. *adv. Praxeam*, 27.

*in space, or extensive existence.* Here we proceed again wholly by the way of negation. We deny 1. that God exists in space. Space, like time, belongs to Him, not He to it. He has no composition of parts, no form or figure. Hence He is *indivisible*—a simple essence. Hence the *immensity* of God, whom no space can enclose, no limits define. Hence, too, the *invisibility* of God; for as the proper object of sight is coloured and figured extension, sight cannot discern Him who is without parts or form. 2. We deny that God is limited by space in His operations, that is to say, He moves and acts on all things irrespective of any limits imposed by space. As Schleiermacher expresses it, “This is the spaceless causality of God conditioning all space and all things in space.”

These two negations constitute what is commonly called the *omnipresence* of God. Some divines have distinguished between substantial omnipresence and operative omnipresence, by the former of which they intend that God’s *essence* is everywhere, and by the latter that His *operative power* or *energy* is everywhere present. If by this is meant nothing more than that neither in essence nor in operation is God limited by conditions of space, and that when He operates it is not by a *diffused* energy or virtue, such as that, for instance, by which fire operates, but by an immediate influence, the statement coalesces with the positions above laid down, and must consequently be accepted by us. But if this distinction is adhibited for the purpose of setting aside the former kind of omnipresence and adopting the latter as the only real one, it must be rejected as landing us in a conclusion which is not only inadequate, but also erroneous. In this case the omnipresence of God would be virtual only, not actual; just as the sun is virtually present throughout the sphere it illuminates or warms, though actually limited in space, and far distant from the objects on which it operates. This is the doctrine of the Socinians, to which some of the Remonstrant party and many Rationalists incline.<sup>1</sup>

In the Scriptures this distinction is not made. They speak of God’s presence everywhere, through all space, without distinguishing His *adessentia* or real presence from His *præsentia*

<sup>1</sup> See Hahn, *Christliche Glaubensl.* p. 187.

*operativa* or operative presence; comp. 1 Kings viii. 27; Ps. cxxxix. 7-13, xliii. 2, lxvi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 23, 24; Amos ix. 2, 3; Acts xvii. 24-28.

In this respect the older divines followed the Scriptures. Calovius defines the divine omnipresence as the "attribute by virtue of which God, not only by propinquity of substance, but by efficacious operation, is present with all His creatures." Quenstedt says the divine omnipresence "infers two things: 1. Propinquity and adessence to the creatures, substantial, illocal, uncircumscribable, and indivisible, which the school men call *immediatio suppositi*; 2. efficacious and omnipotent operation, which they call *immediatio virtutis*" In like manner Gerhard, Hollaz, Buddeus, Turretine, etc. Even Limborch, though usually inclining to the Remonstrants, in this instance vigorously opposes them.

Of this omnipresence of God it is impossible for us to form any *positive* conception, to say nothing of any *adequate* one. All attempts to construe a real omnipresence that has no definite relation to space, we find to be beyond our reach; the subject eludes our grasp, and the more we try to hold it the more do we feel our impotency to apprehend it. All we can say, I believe, is (to quote the words of Dr. Payne), that "by the omnipresence of Deity we mean, that in some manner unintelligible to us He is present in every part of space and in every moment of time."<sup>1</sup>

In attempting to express ourselves on this subject it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to avoid using, on the one hand, words that convey no meaning; and, on the other, to utter sentiments not distinguishable from Pantheism. What idea, for instance, is conveyed to the mind by the assertion of Augustine, "*Deus non alicubi est*"? or that of Des Cartes, "*Deus est nusquam, sive nullibi*"? And if, on the other hand, we say with Augustine, "*In illo sunt omnia*," is it possible for us to construe the assertion logically to the mind without predicating of God something like the Spinozistic doctrine, that He is identical with the extended or material creation? We even need to beware how we speak or think of Him as filling all space, being actually present everywhere,

<sup>1</sup> *Theology*, etc., i. p. 50.

and so on, or use of Him such language as Pope, for instance, employs when he says,—

“ All are but parts of one stupendous whole  
 Whose body Nature is, and God the soul ;  
 That, changed through all and yet in all the same ;  
 Great in the earth as in the æthereal frame,  
 Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
 Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees ;  
 Lives through all life, extends through all extent,  
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent ;  
 Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,  
 As full as perfect in a hair as heart ;  
 As full as perfect in vile man that mourns,  
 As the rapt seraph that adores and burns.  
 To Him no high, no low, no great, no small,  
 He fills, He bounds, connects, and equals all.—”<sup>1</sup>

Or use such language as Newton and Clarke have employed when they call space “the sensorium of Deity ;” or listen to the Roman poet when he exclaims,—

“ Jupiter est quodcumque vides, quodcumque moveris ;”<sup>2</sup>

Or assent to the Roman philosopher when he says to one who ascribed his gifts to nature, “ Non intelliges te, cum hoc dicis, mutare nomen Dei? Quid enim aliud est Natura quam Deus, et divina ratio toti mundo et partibus ejus inserta ?”<sup>3</sup> There is a sense in which all these statements are true as well as striking ; but they may be made the vehicle of conveying dangerous and false views of God’s presence in the universe. Viewed merely as analogical and anthropomorphic modes of representing the divine omnipresence, they are worthy of commendation ; but taken literally and logically, they would land us in Pantheism by either identifying God with the created universe or making Him the “anima mundi,” the “spiritus intus,” that moves and vivifies the inert mass. On a subject of this sort we cannot too carefully remember how utterly impossible it is for us to speak otherwise than by imperfect images and enigmas. “On a subject,” says Dugald Stewart, “so infinitely disproportioned to our faculties, it is vain to expect language that will bear a logical examination. Even the sacred

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Man*, Ep. i. l. 267–280.

<sup>2</sup> Lucan, *Pharsalia*.

<sup>3</sup> Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, Bk. iv. chap. 7.



writers themselves," he continues, "are forced to adapt their phraseology to the comprehension of those to whom it is addressed, and frequently borrow the figurative diction of poetry to convey ideas which must be interpreted, not according to the letter, but the spirit of the passage."<sup>1</sup>

The negation of space as limiting God stands closely connected with the assertion of the *divine spirituality*. "God is a spirit,"—perhaps the only pure and absolute spirit in the universe. But when we say this, what do we mean? Obviously nothing more than that He is a living personal power, not limited by the conditions of space. Beyond this we can form no idea of absolute spirit. He is a Being who cannot be seen or touched, a Being who is not extended or figured, a Being who does not need to move from place to place in order to be actually present in any given place. By these propositions we assert His spirituality, and by these also His omnipresence and immateriality. These, then, are substantially one and the same attribute; and so the Bible speaks of them; comp. Ps. cxxxix. 7; John iv. 24. It is in connection with this that God is emphatically called in Scripture by the frequently recurring phrase "The living God"—a phrase which, as has been remarked, is used not only to distinguish Him from idols, but to convey to us that He is the living one *in se*, since the Spirit of God is in continuous act.<sup>2</sup> Hence some of the old divines maintained that "*Deus est actus purus*," or "*actus simplicissimus*,"—a position by which they sought to intimate that God, as the infinite Life, contains within Himself the sum or complement of all actual and possible modes of being. "God," says Nitzsch, "is not *a* spirit; but God *is* spirit, *i.e.* perfect consummate life; He has the complement of being; whereby He is distinguished, not only from the pretended gods as the living and true, but from all other actual life and being as He who alone hath immortality, and as the Creator of all things."<sup>3</sup>

(iii.) *Natural perfections of God viewed in relation to existence in degree, or intensive existence.*—Here we still proceed

<sup>1</sup> *Dissert.* p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> See Hall's Sermon on Isa. xxxi. 3. *Works*, vols. v. and vi.

<sup>3</sup> *Syst. der christlichen Lehre*, p. 144.

chiefly by the path of negation, denying in God those limitations in degree of existence which we find in all other beings. Hence we ascribe to Him 1. *Infinitude of Being*, meaning thereby not the *perfection* of His attributes, which is another consideration, but the *boundlessness* and *fulness* of His essence. Though there are other beings in existence besides Him, and though these are like Him in intelligence and powers, their being imposes no limit or qualification or restraint whatever on His. He remains still the great and terrible God, the alone God, to whom dignity and majesty alone belong, whose greatness is unfathomable, and whose understanding is infinite. In Him all Fulness dwells. 2. *Incomprehensibility*; by which is intended not merely that no being has understood or comprehended God, but that no being ever can do so, save God Himself; comp. Job xi. 7; Ps. cxlv. 3; Rom. xi. 33; 1 Tim. vi. 16, etc. 3. *Majesty and glory, unlimited*. He dwells in light which is inaccessible and full of glory. The Lord is clothed with majesty. Honour and majesty are before Him. He is "the only wise God, to whom belong glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen."

Such are the Natural Attributes of God properly and strictly so called—the Attributes which He manifests simply as existing. To these some add under this head Omniscience and Omnipotence; but for these a more appropriate place will be found under the head of the Mental and Ethical Perfections of God, to which we shall proceed in next Lecture.

Dr. Samuel Clarke, whose work on the *Being and Attributes of God* is one of the great books in English theology, speaking of the manner in which these attributes of God are to be thought by us, says, "'Tis evident that the self-existent Being must be Infinite in the strictest and most complete sense. But as to the *particular manner* of His being infinite or everywhere present in opposition to the manner of created things being present in such or such finite places: this is as impossible for our finite understandings to comprehend or explain as it is for us to form an adequate idea of Infinity. Yet that the thing is true, that He actually is omnipresent, we are as certain as we are that there must something be infinite; which no man, who has

thought upon these things at all, ever denied. The school men, indeed, have presumed to assert that the immensity of God is a *point*, as His Eternity (they think) is an *instant*. But this being altogether unintelligible, that which we can more safely affirm, and which no Atheist can say is absurd, and which nevertheless is sufficient to all wise and good purposes is this, that whereas all Finite and Created Beings can be present but in one definite place at once, and corporeal beings even in that one place very imperfectly and unequally, to any purpose of power or activity, only by the successive motion of different members and organs ; the Supreme Cause, on the contrary, being an infinite and most simple essence, and comprehending all things perfectly in Himself, *is at all times* equally present, both in His simple essence and by the immediate and perfect exercise of all His attributes, to every point of the boundless immensity, as if it were really all but one single point.”<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER IV.

### GOD.

#### II. DIVINE ATTRIBUTES—*continued*.

##### ii. *Moral Perfections of God.*

Having, according to the scheme proposed, considered the natural, ontological, or metaphysical perfections of God, I now proceed to the consideration of His *Moral Perfections*—using the term “moral” not as synonymous with *ethical*, but as opposed to physical or simply natural, and as including the *mental* as well as the *ethical* perfections of God. And here, pursuing the analogy of the human nature to the divine, we shall consider the attributes of God under the twofold division of *Intelligence* and *Will*.

(i.) *The Divine Intelligence*.—The intelligence of God is His own self-consciousness, if we may use such an expres-

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 43, 44.

sion ; or, as one of the older divines describes it, it is that “ by which God most perfectly knows not only Himself, but all besides, whatever it may be, in one eternal and most simple act ; not,” he adds, “ a quality or cognition distinct from the intelligent faculty itself, but the divine essence itself by which as cognoscent it is apprehended.”<sup>1</sup>

In Scripture the intelligence of God is spoken of as His “ knowledge,” *דַּעַת*, *γνῶσις* ; His “ understanding,” *בִּינָה* or *συνεσις*, *ἐπιστήμη* ; His “ wisdom,” *חָכְמָה*, *σοφία*, *φρόνησις*. The verbs *דָּעָה*, *εἶδεναι*, *יָדַע*, *γινώσκειν*, *הָקִיר*, *ερευναν*, are also used of God.

The intelligence of God, though formally distinguishable from His essence, is essentially identical with it. It is formally distinguishable inasmuch as His essence is immanent and absolutely necessary, whilst His intelligence is transient in so far as it passes to things without, and is not necessary in so far as it has to do with what is contingent and the object of free will. Essentially, however, it is identical with His Being ; for were His intelligence really distinct from His essence, it would be something added to Him from without, something accidental to Him, something which might be separated from Him, which would be incompatible with His simplicity, and, moreover, His being and His intelligence would thus be made finite, which is incompatible with His infinitude. “ God knows the world from eternity, but He knows it not necessarily as and because it is not a necessary existence ; He knows from eternity all free actions of intelligent creatures, yet He knows them not of necessity because and in so far as they are not necessary.”<sup>2</sup>

The divine Intelligence may be considered—

1. As to its object or in respect of its compass. Here God's attribute is *Omniscience*. His knowledge is absolutely perfect ; by one simple and eternal act of intelligence He knows all things that are, that have been, that will be, or that by any possibility can be. The compass of His knowledge is infinite. It embraces all things, great and small, hidden and manifest, present and future, necessary and contingent, everything, without exception, in the whole range of existence. God knows Himself—His essence, His per-

<sup>1</sup> Calovius, *System*, ii. p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Klee, *Dogmatik*, ii. 56.

fections, and all His designs and acts. The Infinite can alone know the infinite; and the knowledge of the infinite can alone engage and occupy the infinite mind. And God, knowing Himself, must know all things; for in Him, the Infinite, all things "live and move and have their being."

The multiplicity of the objects of the divine intelligence does not impair its unity, and its unity alters not the multiplicity and unity of the objects. God knows things as they are; the past as past, the future as future, the free as free. As Eternal He is present to all times, so that every time, with all that is therein, is to Him knowable and known. He foresees all that is contingent as well as all that is necessary, — the thoughts, purposes, and actions of His intelligent creatures, as well as the successive phenomena of the physical universe. Nor does this foreknowledge of His intelligent creatures alter or suspend their freedom; for the foreknowledge is not the cause of their thoughts and actions, but these, in that they happen, are the ground of the foreknowledge. As Jerome says, "That something shall be does not arise from God's knowing it, but because it shall be God, prescient of things to be, knows it." All that God foresees shall certainly happen, but not because He foresees it; it comes to pass ever according to its own nature, the necessary as necessary, the contingent as contingent, the free as free. "My power," says Augustine, "is not taken away by His prescience, nor is it more certainly with me because He, whose prescience fails not, has foreseen that it shall be with me." Within certain limits we can foresee the actions of our fellow-men, and even predict results; we can, from what we know of a man's general character, temperament, and tendencies, form a highly probable, almost certain, conclusion as to how he will comport himself in any given circumstances, and we can predict that a certain issue will be the result of a given condition to any man; but no one would for a moment suppose that this prescience on our part interfered in any way with the man's freedom, or in any way necessitated the issue contemplated. Why, then, should it be imagined that God's foreknowledge of men's purposes and actions should interfere with man's freedom? "Why do you demand," asks Boethius, "that those things which are seen by the divine eye should

come to pass of necessity when men do not make to be necessary those things which they see? For of the things which you see to be present, does your seeing them add any necessity to them? By no means. But if one may compare the divine present with the human present, as you see certain things in this your temporary present, so He sees all things in His eternal present. Wherefore this divine foreknowledge changes not the nature and propriety of things. [God] beholds as present with Him things such as they shall come to pass in time in the future; nor does He confound the judgments of things; and by a single intuition He discerns as well what are to come to pass necessarily as what are to come not necessarily.”<sup>1</sup>

“Not after our manner,” says Augustine, “does God either foresee what is future or look at what is present, or look even on what is past, but in a manner far and widely diverse from the custom of our thoughts. For He does not see by a change of thoughts from this to that, but altogether incommutably, not of things that happen in time so that the future are not yet, the present are now, the past are not now; but He comprehends all these in a stable and sempiternal present; nor does He see in one way with the eyes, in another with the mind; for He is not composed of soul and body; nor in one way now, in another formerly, in another afterwards; since His knowledge does not change by a variety of three times, to wit, present, past, and future, as does ours; with Him there is no mutation nor the shadow of change. Nor does His attention pass from thought to thought, but in His incorporeal vision all things He knows are present at once.”<sup>2</sup>

In a similar strain writes the great theologian of the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas: “It is wrong to say that human acts and events are not under the divine prescience and ordination. Nor is it less wrong to say that the divine

<sup>1</sup> *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, lib. v. 6. Boethius was a Roman Senator and a high officer of State in the reign of the Emperor Theodoric. He fell a victim to the jealousy of this semi-barbarous prince, and was put to death in A.D. 524. It was while waiting in prison the execution of the sentence which had been pronounced against him that he composed the work from which I have quoted. “A golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully,” Gibbon.

<sup>2</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, lib. xi. c. 21.

prescience and ordination render necessary human actions. By this liberty of choice, opportunity of conciliating, utility of laws, care to do well, the justice of rewards and punishments would be taken away. It is, therefore, to be considered that God has knowledge of things otherwise than man has. For man is subject to time, and therefore knows things temporally, regarding some things as present, recalling some as past, and foreseeing some as future. But God is superior to the course of time, and His being is eternal; whence also His knowledge is not temporal but eternal. Now the comparison of the eternal with the temporal is that of the indivisible with the continuous. For in time there is found a certain diversity of parts succeeding, as prior and posterior, as in a line there are found different parts arranged one after the other. But eternity has neither prior nor posterior, for with eternal things there is no change. And so eternity is wholly simultaneous, just as a point is without parts locally distinct.”<sup>1</sup>

(1.) The divine omniscience is frequently asserted in Scripture. *a.* In the general: “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do” (Heb. iv. 13; comp. also 1 John iii. 20; Dan. ii. 22; Acts xv. 18; Prov. xv. 3; Job xxviii. 10; Ps. cxlvii. 4, 5, etc.). *b.* All the conditions of His creatures (Ps. cxxxix.; Matt. vi. 8, 32, x. 30, etc.). *c.* All the thoughts and actions of men: “The Lord looketh from heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of His habitation He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth” (Ps. xxxiii. 13, 14); “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good” (Prov. xv. 3; comp. also Isa. xxix. 15, 16; Jer. xvi. 17, xvii. 10; Matt. vi. 4, 6, vi. 8; Luke xvi. 15; Acts i. 24; 1 Cor. iv. 5, etc.). *d.* All things future as well as things present and past to us: “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure” (Isa. xlvi. 9, 10; comp. also Isa. xlii. 8, 9, xliii. 9, xliv. 6 ff.; Jer. i. 5; Gal.

<sup>1</sup> *Advers. Græcos*, etc., c. 10.

i. 15, etc.). God's knowledge is thus unbounded: "His understanding is infinite" (Ps. cxlvii. 5); "there is no searching of His understanding" (Isa. xl. 28); His judgments are "unsearchable, and His ways past finding out" (Rom. xi. 33).

(2.) This attribute of God we can contemplate only in the way of negation; we can simply think and affirm that there is nothing which God does not see and know. We may indeed, in some small measure, attain to a thought of God's knowledge by the way of eminence; we may realize to our minds the knowledge of a man like Aristotle or Bacon, or the knowledge of the ruler of a vast empire, with the condition of which, and the circumstances, wants, and wishes of its inhabitants, he is familiar; and we may think this as indefinitely increased, and try to grasp the conception of One to whom everything is known. But we shall find that it is only a little way that we can go in this course, and that when we have done our utmost, the only thing of which we are quite sure is, that what we have been seeking to know passeth knowledge. To acquire a positive and adequate conception of Omniscience, we should require to be ourselves omniscient. When, however, we contemplate God as the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe, we feel constrained to ascribe to Him this attribute. He by whom all things have been made must know His own works. He by whom all things are upheld and regulated cannot be destitute of that unerring insight and universal knowledge without which mistakes might be committed that would plunge the whole in irreparable confusion. And He who is to judge His accountable creatures, not merely by their actions but by their words and most secret thoughts, must possess that intimate acquaintance with all that is in them as well as all that proceeds from them, without which such judgment is impossible. He who predicts future events also must be omniscient; and in the prophecies of Scripture we have thus an illustration brought nigh to us of God's boundless knowledge; as Tertullian says, "*Præscientia Dei tot habet testes quot facit prophetas.*"

(3.) This divine omniscience is from eternity. God's knowledge is not amassed, not accumulated by experience, not increased by continued accessions. His intelligence admits of



no expansion; it can suffer no diminution. He foresees what is to happen in time from “before the foundation of the world.” His purposes are formed “before the world began.” No adviser hath directed the Spirit of the Lord; none as His counsellor hath taught Him, or showed Him the way of understanding. He is the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.

(4.) This knowledge is as precise and minute as it is vast and all-embracing. “O Lord,” exclaims the Psalmist, “Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand on me” (Ps. cxxxix. 1–5). “He looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven.” “The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him” (2 Chron. xvi. 9). Hence all that God declares is absolutely without mistake or defect—absolutely true and right. The Omniscient cannot err or fail.

(5.) The divine knowledge, as respects its compass, has been distinguished by the scholastic divines as—

*a. Scientia necessaria.* By one simple and eternal act of intelligence God knows Himself, and in Himself the necessity of all existing things. The necessity here affirmed is opposed not to freedom, but to arbitrariness and uncertainty. The knowledge is not empirical, but antecedent and essential.

*b. Scientia libera, or Sc. visionis.* By this is intended the knowledge whereby God truly knows all really existing things beside Himself. This knowledge has respect to things dependent on the divine will, and which appear to us accidental, but are not really so. It is called “scientia visionis,” because by it God knows actual existence by beholding it, as it were, face to face. Some go so far as to subdivide this knowledge into knowledge of reminiscence, knowledge of vision, and knowledge of prescience; but this is too anthropomorphic, and overlooks the fact that with God there is neither past nor future.

*c. Scientia media*, called also *Sc. hypothetica*, *Sc. de futuro conditionato* — the knowledge of what may take place, certain conditions being given, but does not actually take place; or the knowledge of things not actually existing, but which may be, provided certain conditions are fulfilled. The term “media” is applied to this, because the possible, which is its object, stands, as it were, between the necessary and the actual. The name originated with Peter Fonseca, a Jesuit; but the chief expositor of the doctrine is Louis Molina, a divine of the same school, from whom it is often called the Molinist doctrine.<sup>1</sup> It was not unknown, however, to earlier divines. Gregory of Nyssa, referring to the death of an infant, says, “It is likely that He who knows that which is future no less than that which is past, arrested the progress of the infant’s life, lest the evil which was perceived by force of prescience should have become actual in him had he lived.” Augustine also seems to have had this in his mind when he wrote, “It is false to say that the dead are judged according to those things which they would have done had the gospel come to them when alive; and if this is false, it is not to be affirmed that infants who perish, dying without baptism, deservedly so perish because God foresaw that if they had lived, and the gospel had been preached to them, they would not have believed it.”<sup>2</sup> Sir W. Hamilton has a note on this subject in his edition of *Reid’s Works*, p. 632, where he very clearly states the distinction between the three objects of the divine knowledge, and adduces as an example of the *scientia media* the case of “David consulting the Lord whether the men of Keilah would deliver him to Saul *if* Saul came down against the city. The answer was that they would so deliver him; upon which David, who had intended retiring into Keilah, adopted other plans” (comp. also Jer. xxxviii. 17–20, and Ezek. iii. 6). It may be doubted, however, whether there is any real ground for this distinction. Such expressions as those of David in the case adduced, and in the other passages referred to, are mere popular representations on which it would be unwise to found

<sup>1</sup> *De Concordia Providentiæ et Gratiæ divinæ cum libero arbitrio hominis*, Lissabon 1588.

<sup>2</sup> *De Bono Perseverantiæ*, c. 9.

a scientific distinction. With God there is really no “if;” and as the assumption of the hypothetical possible is, in fact, a confession of ignorance on our part, an acknowledgment that we know not whether the possible shall become the actual, it is surely unwarrantable to ascribe anything of this to God. God knows beforehand the free as free; and however impossible it may be for us to construe this to our minds, we must beware of attributing to God what is only something incident to our finite nature.

2. In respect of *mode* the divine intelligence may be described as (1) *Most true*: God has a perfect, exact, and entire knowledge of all things. (2) *Most certain and distinct*: His knowledge is special, and embraces the minutest particulars. (3) *Intuitive, immediate, pure*: not by sensible perception nor through means of the discursive reason, as with men. He knows things not as phenomenal, but in their inner essence, as they are in themselves by an immediate intuition. (4) *Simultaneous*: as opposed to successive, gradual, gathered from experience—a knowledge of the universal all, at once and for ever.

The omniscience of the Deity was acknowledged even by the heathen: *εἰδοτας μὲν τοὺς Θεοὺς καλουμένα* is the exclamation of Electra in the *Choephori* of Aeschylus (l. 192); Sophocles makes one of his characters invoke Apollo as one who, *δαιμωνων*, knew what she needed even though she did not ask it, for it is meet that those sprung from Zeus should see all things.<sup>1</sup> Pindar says, “If a man do anything and hopes to conceal it from God, he errs;” and, not to multiply quotations, we have Xenophon declaring by one of the interlocutors in the *Convivium* that “it is evident, as both Greeks and Barbarians reckon, that the gods know all things, both that are and that will be;” and he makes the same speaker express his confidence that the gods, being all-knowing as well as all-potent, were so his friends that, for the sake of taking care of him, he was at no time hidden from them neither by night nor by day, nor wherever he went, nor whatever he did;<sup>2</sup> all which Socrates declared to be perfectly credible.

3. The divine intelligence may be considered with respect to its *efficiency*. In this respect the intelligence of God is commonly called His *wisdom* (*חכמה*, *σοφία* or *φρονησις*), that

<sup>1</sup> *Electra*, l. 655–659.

<sup>2</sup> *Sympos.* c. iv. § 47 ff.

attribute by which He ever adopts with unerring skill means to an end, so as to effect His own purposes, and so as to secure the highest good to His creatures. "We distinguish," says Kant, "theoretic wisdom from practical. The former has to do with the true, the perfect, the good, the blessed; the latter with the best means of securing the best ends." It is in this latter sense that it is predicated of God; the former has reference rather to His knowledge as such. His work is perfect—perfect in its end, which is ever the best, and perfect in its means, which are ever those most adapted to secure the end.

The highest end is God Himself; the manifestation of His perfection, the display of His glory, is the grand end of all His works; and the best means are those which are at once the most simple and the most effective.

Scripture represents God as not only wise, but as the alone wise.<sup>1</sup> With Him are wisdom and strength; He is the only wise God. His wisdom is seen (1) By His works in creation: "O Lord," exclaims the Psalmist, "how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy riches" (Ps. civ. 24); (2) By His providence, Dan. ii. 20 ff.; comp. also Job xii. 13 ff.; (3) In the plan of redemption: this is emphatically "the wisdom of God," "the wisdom of God in a mystery," even that mystery "which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (Rom. xvi. 25 ff.); Christ "is the wisdom of God and the power of God" (1 Cor. i. 24); "in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3); and through them is "to God the only wise glory for ever" (Rom. xvi. 27); (4) In the salvation of men and in the training of the saved for the heavenly blessedness: in this God hath abounded towards them in all wisdom and prudence; and to the angels, who desire to look into the things connected with the development of the divine life in believers through the divine training, there is made known by the Church "the manifold wisdom of God" (1 Pet. i. 12; Eph. iii. 10).

<sup>1</sup> Pythagoras declared *μηδὶνα εἶναι σοφον ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ' ἢ θεον*. For himself he took the title not of *σοφός*, but of *φιλόσοφος*. Diog. Laert., *Proæm.* c. 8.

The wisdom of God is declared in Scripture to be deep and unsearchable, Rom. xi. 33 ; Isa. xl. 28. It is wholly His own ; “ Who,” asks the prophet, “ hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counsellor hath taught Him ? with whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him and taught Him the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and showed to Him the way of understanding ? ” (Isa. xl. 13). But what is thus in itself hidden in God and by man past finding out, God has been pleased to make known to us, especially in His word. What was but partially revealed to the men of the ancient dispensations, has in these later times been fully made known to us by the revelation of Christ. The unfolded mystery of the gospel is the crowning apocalypse of the wisdom of God. To the carnal mind, indeed, this seems folly ; just as to one whose eyes are weak a blaze of light has the effect of darkness ; but the foolishness of God, as men deem it, is wiser than men ; and to those who have spiritual discernment the light thus falling on them is sweet, and they behold with delight the sun of righteousness, whose radiance at once illustrates the divine glory and sheds illumination on the path of man.

(ii.) We come now to consider those attributes of God which belong to the *Divine Will*.

The will of God is that by which God is the supreme cause of being. It is the divine intelligence conceived as determining and acting. The will of God is God Himself willing ; it is His desiring and tending towards good, known by His intelligence, and His turning away from evil, known also by His intelligence ; it is the supreme faculty of acting and following out the knowledge of the highest good. It must ever be viewed as connected with the most perfect intelligence.

Scripture signalizes *will* as belonging to God. The expressions used are βουλή του Θεοῦ, θελημα τ. Θ., βουλή του θεληματος, ευδοκία τ. θελ., יְצַו, etc. It is not always, however, in exactly the same sense that the will of God is referred to in Scripture. Sometimes it means His secretory will or purpose, as in Eph. i. 11 : “ the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will ; ” sometimes it means God’s desire or wish or pleasure, as in Matt.

xviii. 14: "It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish;" and sometimes it means what God approves and enjoins on His intelligent creatures, as in Eph. vi. 6: "doing the will of God from the heart;" 1 Pet. iv. 2: "That he should no longer live . . . to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." The divine purposes are from eternity and are immutable, and His will in this sense *must* be accomplished: "Who hath saved us," says the apostle, "and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim. i. 9); "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations" (Ps. xxxiii. 11), etc. What God has pleasure in and desires, He has not always decreed shall come to pass, or He has decreed it shall come to pass under certain conditions which may or may not be fulfilled; and therefore what He desires, may not always be attained: thus though God delights not in the death of him that dieth, but will have all men to be saved, yet as He has not decreed that none shall perish, and has made salvation conditional on man's pursuing a certain course, all are not saved, multitudes perish. So also the preceptive will of God may not be done by men, who as free agents may or may not follow that path which God has commended and prescribed to them.

"The chief attribute of will," says Quenstedt, "is liberty. The liberty of the divine will, however, has relation to things *ad extra*; for all things extraneous to Himself God wills freely, so that He could also not-will them. Liberty pertains therefore to the will of God not *simpliciter*, but in respect of its being directed to other things extraneous to Him. The will of God concerning Himself is essential to God and simply necessary; by it God wills His own perfections wholly of necessity not freely, so that He cannot not-will or will this way or that way; which does not derogate from the divine Omnipotence or blessedness, but argues the perfection and immutability of God." God must ever will and act in accordance with His own nature. There is a necessity of the divine nature which determines all the purposes and doings of the Almighty; and hence it is that His way is ever

perfect, His purposes ever right, His testimony ever sure, and His judgments true and righteous altogether. But in relation to all that is extraneous to Himself, God's will is absolutely and perfectly free. There is, however, nothing of arbitrariness in this; God wills only as the highest reason dictates. "Liberty," says Leibnitz, "consists in *intelligence*, which involves a distinct knowledge of the object of deliberation; in *spontaneity*, with which we determine ourselves; and in *contingence*, that is to say, in the exclusion of logical or metaphysical necessity. Intelligence is as the soul of liberty, the rest as its body and basis. The free substance determines itself by itself, and that according to the motive of the good perceived by the understanding which inclines it without necessity; in these few words are comprised all the conditions of liberty."<sup>1</sup> And in another treatise he says, "To the nature of will freedom is required, which consists in this, that voluntary action be free and deliberate, and so as to include necessity, which takes away deliberation. Metaphysical necessity," he continues, "is excluded, the opposite of which is the impossible, or which implies a contradiction; but not moral, the opposite of which is the unbecoming. For God cannot err in choosing, and so He ever chooses what is most befitting; but this in no wise hinders His freedom; on the contrary, it rather renders it the more perfect."<sup>2</sup> Thus "the most complete liberty is a moral necessity to do what is good, a condition in which it is further morally impossible to will and do what is evil. Such moral or free necessity is only in God, whose will must ever choose the good which the most perfect intelligence perceives (*voluntas unice ad bonum determinata*). And this is the Holiness of God, that attribute in virtue of which His will ever exactly accords with the most perfect intelligence, or the harmony of His willing and working with His essential perfection;" — "*Consensus voluntatis liberrimæ perfectissimus cum legibus intellectus sapientissimi.*"<sup>4</sup>

This Liberty of God has been distinguished by theologians into *Libertas contradictionis*, by which He decrees whether anything shall be or shall not be; and *Libertas contrarietatis*,

<sup>1</sup> *Theodicée*, p. 3, § 288.

<sup>2</sup> *Causa Dei Asserta*, etc., § 20,

<sup>3</sup> Bretschneider, *Handbuch*, i. 341.

<sup>4</sup> Ammon, *Summa*, p. 133.

by which He decrees whether anything shall be thus or otherwise.

In ascribing to God perfect liberty two things are implied; the one, that no extraneous power can hinder Him from accomplishing His own determinations; and the other, that no limitation or affection can constrain Him to will or to do aught else than what He knows to be good; neither error can mislead Him nor the force of temptation draw Him from what He knows to be good and right. Thus to the Will of God we ascribe Omnipotence and Moral Perfection.

1. In ascribing to God *Omnipotence* it is meant that He has but to will to accomplish; in the language of Scripture, "He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast" (Ps. xxxiii. 9); "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth" (Dan. iv. 35). God acts according to will and purpose; He does not act by blind necessity, or by mechanical impulse, or by unreasoning passion; He wills to act, wills according to the highest reason, and what He wills to do is thereby done. As, on the one hand, nothing can hinder Him from doing what He wills; so, on the other, He ever can and does accomplish all that He wills. With Him all things are possible (Matt. xix. 26). "He is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. vi. 15). "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven and in earth, and in all deep places" (Ps. cxxxv. 6). Whatever He hath promised He is able to perform (Rom. iv. 21). Hence Scripture speaks of Him as *בָּבִיר*, Strong; *אֲבִיר*, Mighty; *אֲדִיר*, Potent; *יָבִיר*, Strong; *παντοκράτωρ*, Almighty; and ascribes to Him strength (*כֹּחַ*, *δυναμις*) and might (*גְּבוּרָה*, *ἐνέργεια*).

The Divine Omnipotence is inseparable from His being. As the absolute essence, He is the absolutely potent. Potency corresponds to essence; the absolute essence is consequently absolute potency. His omnipotence stands associated also with His omniscience; infinite knowledge is infinite power; "apud quem summa potestas est summa et secreta cognitio est."<sup>1</sup>

As the will of God is not separable from His intelligence, He can never will what is untrue, what is contradictory, what is contrary to Himself; and as He ever wills what is right

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *In Ps.* xlix.



and good, He cannot do what is evil; He cannot be unrighteous, He cannot lie, He cannot deny Himself. There is in this no limitation of the divine almightiness, any more than there is in saying He cannot die. The very opposite is the case. God could die only if some power outside of Him could prevail over Him, and in this case His omnipotence would be limited; and in like manner He could will or do evil only if some intrinsic influence could prevail so as to constrain Him counter to His own nature, and in this case also there would be a limitation of His omnipotence. As one of the ancient Fathers puts it, "The not being able to do any of these is the mark of boundless power, not of weakness; and, on the other hand, the being able [to do them] a mark of infirmity, not of power."<sup>1</sup> "God," says Augustine, "is rightly said to be omnipotent, and yet He cannot die, He cannot be deceived. For He is called omnipotent, in that He does what He wills, and suffers not what He wills not. If the latter could happen to Him, He would cease to be omnipotent. Hence it is just because He is omnipotent there are some things He cannot do." - "To God," says Tertullian, "nothing is impossible, save what He wills not."<sup>2</sup>

The power of God being infinite, it follows that nothing which He has made or done is so great or excellent that it cannot be transcended by something still greater or more excellent proceeding from Him. No bounds can be set to the manifestation of His power. What God at any time does is never the measure of His power to do.

The divine omnipotence is not limited by liberty in the creature; on the contrary, its highest manifestation lies in this, that a sphere of creature liberty consists under it and through it.

2. The absolute freedom of the divine will implies not merely the absence of all extraneous power by which the divine purposes might be hindered or frustrated; it implies also perfect moral freedom, the absence of everything that could move to aught inconsistent with the moral perfection of the divine nature. Hence to God is ascribed *Holiness*, by which is intended not merely moral purity, but the consummate excellence of God, that attribute by which God, subject

<sup>1</sup> Theodoret, *Eran.*, Dial. iii.

<sup>2</sup> *De Cirit. Dei*, lib. v. c. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *De Carne Christi*, c. iii.

to no constraint, ever chooses and decrees and does what is accordant with the highest perfection, the harmony of His will with all that is true, and right, and good, and pure. This is the will of God; and hence the heavenly hosts are represented as saying, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and which is, and which is to come" (Rev. iv. 8). God is emphatically the Holy One (שׁוֹבֵי, Lev. xi. 44; Isa. xl. 25; Hos. xi. 9; ο ἅγιος, 1 John ii. 20). Under this is included—

(1.) *Moral Purity.* God is called in Scripture ἄγνος, τελειος, οσιος, and is said to be ἀπείραστος κακῶν.

a. Ἄγνος properly means *clean*, and originally was used in a non-ethical sense as opposed to ρυπαρος; but both in the classical writings and in the N. T. it is used of moral purity, and that in the highest sense. In a line of Euripides it appears both with a physical and an ethical reference, ἄγνος γάρ εἰμι χεῖρας, ἀλλ' οὐ τὰς φρενας.<sup>1</sup> In the classics it is often applied as an epithet to the deities of the heathen; to Apollo, as the sun-god, because of the purity of light;<sup>2</sup> to Minerva, because of her virgin purity; to Ceres and Proserpine, to the Muses, and to Zeus himself.<sup>3</sup> In the LXX. it is used in a few instances with a moral sense, as in Ps. xi. [xii.] 7, where it is applied to the divine oracles (λόγια) as pure from all admixture of error or untruth; and in Prov. xv. 26, where it is used of persons pure in heart. In the N. T. it is applied to God (1 John iii. 3), as expressive of perfect moral purity. It predicates of Him that of the evil that is in the universe, the iniquity, impurity, and moral defect that exist outside of Him, He is wholly free; it does not touch Him; it exerts no influence on Him essentially; He is entirely above and beyond its reach. Closely allied to this is the phrase, ἀπείραστος κακῶν, as used of God (Jas. i. 13). God has, and can have, no experience of evil.

b. τελειος. This word has primarily a reference to τέλος, and designates one who has reached his proper end; hence one who is perfect and complete. In this sense it is applied in the N. T. to a work, εργον τελειον (Jas. i. 4),—a work to which nothing needs to be added, which is perfect and complete, and to the perfect knowledge which is to be attained in the future

<sup>1</sup> *Orest.*, 1604.

<sup>2</sup> Pindar, *Pythia*, ix. 112.

<sup>3</sup> Soph. *Elec.*, 86, ω φας αγνόν.

state as contrasted with that which we have here, and which is only ἐκ μερους. It is also applied in an ethical sense to charity (1 John iv. 18), and to men who are morally cleansed, and so in a measure have reached the end of their regenerated being (Eph. iv. 13 ; Phil. iii. 15, etc.); to the divine law (Jas. i. 25 ; Heb. ix. 11, etc.). It is used of God by our Lord when He said, "Be ye perfect (τελειοι), as your Father in heaven is perfect (τελειος)" (Matt. v. 48), where the followers of Christ are exhorted to seek that entire completeness of moral character and excellence, according to the measure of their finite nature, which in the infinite divine nature exists without measure. In classical Greek it is frequently found as an epithet of the supreme deities of the heathen, especially Zeus and Hera.<sup>1</sup>

c. *οσιος*. This properly means godly, and as used by men it primarily indicates piety.<sup>2</sup> It is so used in classical Greek, as, *e.g.*,<sup>3</sup> "Being a pious observer of his country's rites, he died without reproach, as it is becoming for the young to die." It is also used of a place dedicated to pious uses ; hence sacred, holy. As used of God, it indicates that He ever is, and acts in accordance with His own perfect nature ; that He is ever at one with Himself, and in accordance with that law which is the expression of His mind. This epithet is used of God in Rev. xv. 4 and xvi. 5. "The word ὀσιος," says Hengstenberg, "when used of man, denotes a tender, solemn regard towards God and the relations appointed by Him ; when used of God, it denotes regard to His own character, and government of the world as grounded thereon."<sup>4</sup> To these may be added the appellation φως as used of God. "This," says St. John, "is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you, that God is light (φως), and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John i. 5). By this is indicated, not so much the divine intelligence as the divine moral purity, God's absolute stainlessness, as well as the brightness, the lustre, the glory of His being as manifested to us. He

<sup>1</sup> See Pindar, *Pyth.* i. 67 ; Aesch., *Agam.*, 973 ; Plut., *Moralia*, p. 264 B. etc.

<sup>2</sup> As the Scholiast on Eurip. *Hecub.* 788, explains it : το προς θ-ους ιζ ανθρωπων γενο- ενον οίκατον οσιος καλουµεν.

<sup>3</sup> Aeschylus, *Sept. c. Th.*, 1010.

<sup>4</sup> *Comment. on the Apocalypse*, ii. 147, Eng. Tr.

not only has light and dwells in light, He is light; the pure light is His essence; no shade of darkness can be in Him.

(2.) *Absolute truthfulness and faithfulness.* This is the quality whereby God, who cannot lie or deceive, ever wills the performance and realization to His creatures of whatever He has either explicitly promised, or by implication certified in the order and constitution of the world. This is the *veracitas moralis Dei* as distinct from His *veracitas essentialis*, by which is affirmed the actual being of God as the *ens perfectissimum*. This attribute is called indifferently the truthfulness of God, His faithfulness, His infallibility, the oneness of His will, and has reference to His perfect constancy in uttering what is true, in keeping His promises, and in fulfilling His threatenings. Comp. Num. xxiii. 19; Ps. xxxi. 5, 6, xxxiii. 11; Rom. iii. 3 ff., xi. 29; 1 Cor. i. 9; 2 Cor. i. 18; 2 Tim. ii. 13, etc. On this attribute of God all certainty rests. Our belief in objective truth, our assurance of the constancy of natural law, our confidence in revelation, are alike guaranteed by it. God has established His faithfulness in the heavens, and it is praised in the congregation of the saints. All His words are true and faithful.

Closely connected with divine faithfulness is the divine immutability, for it is because He changeth not that His word standeth sure; and He changeth not, because all His counsels, decrees, statutes, and promises are founded on truth. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; the thoughts of His heart unto all generations. For ever is His word settled in the heavens; His faithfulness is unto all generations.

(3.) *Benignity and goodness*, or benevolence, *i.e.* God's goodness in relation to His creatures, that by which He ever wills their highest good. This is often in Scripture designated the Love of God; and this love is represented as finding its highest manifestation in creation, in providence, and in redemption; cf. Ps. viii., civ. 10 ff.; John iii. 16; Rom. v. 8; 1 John iv. 16, etc.

To the goodness of God all creation bears witness. How manifold and how marvellous are the adaptations of external nature to the wants and enjoyment of sentient and intelligent beings! Not only is provision made for the sustenance and well-being of the various tribes of animals, not only is it so

arranged that what is necessary for their sustenance is also conducive to their enjoyment, but we cannot look around us without perceiving that there are innumerable provisions which seem to have no other purpose than that of ministering to the pleasure and enjoyment of the animal creation. The goodness of God, "limited in its extent only by the limits of the universe itself, is present with us wherever we turn our eyes, since there is not a result of the wisdom and the power of God which is not in its consequences, direct or indirect, an exhibition of some contrivance for the moral or physical advantage of His creatures."<sup>1</sup> Nor is the goodness of God less apparent in the field of providence and the phenomena of event than in the field of creation and the phenomena of physical fact. The history of our race, nay, the daily experience of households and individuals, furnishes constant evidence of the goodness of Him who holds all things in His hand, and orders all events according to His own will. The earth is indeed full of the goodness of the Lord. He crowneth the year with His goodness. The goodness of God endureth continually.

It is in the work of redemption, however, that the goodness of God is most conspicuously displayed. Here His benignity is specially signalized in Scripture as His love and His grace (John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9; Rom. v. 8; Eph. ii. 4). This love of God is described also as His *ελεος*, pity or compassion (Jude 21; 1 Pet. i. 3; Rom. xi. 31), and as His *χρηστοτης*, His kindness or gentleness (Rom. ii. 4; Eph. ii. 7); and this is coupled with His *ανοχη καὶ μακροθυμία*, His patience and longsuffering (Rom. ii. 4), and with His *φιλανθρωπια* (Tit. iii. 4). St. James also speaks of God as *πολυσπλαγχνος καὶ οἰκτίρμων* (v. 11), very merciful (or affectionate) and pitiful.

God's love finds its adequate object only in Himself, but it flows over upon His creatures. The scholastic divines have set forth three degrees of this love of God to His creatures:—*a. Amor universalis* or *generalis*, God's benevolence or benignity towards all creation; *b. Amor specialis*, His love towards intelligent beings; and *c. Amor specialissimus*, His love to holy beings, both those unfallen and those redeemed by Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Brown, *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, etc., vol. iv.

(4.) *Justice*, צדק, δικαιοσύνη. This in Scripture is often tantamount to the divine holiness, the absolute perfection of God, the consummate and immutable rectitude of God. He is the righteous Lord who loveth righteousness; He is righteous in all His ways; His righteousness endureth for ever. In relation to His creatures, the righteousness of God is that by which He wills and does all that is conformed to rectitude, all that is befitting and proper, all that is in accordance with that law which He has promulgated, and which is the expression of His perfect nature. This righteousness manifests itself primarily as *Justitia antecedens, legislatoria* or *dispositiva*, according to which God has determined the ethical relations and duties of His intelligent creatures, whether by a formal law given orally or in writing, or by the natural law written on men's hearts, the law of conscience; and secondarily, as *Justitia consequens, distributiva* or *judicialis*, which has reference to the award of God as judge to His creatures for their actions, whether remunerative or punitive. In reference, however, to the remunerative righteousness of God, all right or desert of man is denied; God crowns man with His gifts, or rewards him, of pure grace. The good works of the righteous are rewarded by their reaping the fruits of their deeds.

The Biblical concept of righteousness is not exhausted by the idea of justice as commonly understood. We find it associated with goodness (Ps. cxlv. 7), with mercy (Ps. ciii. 17), with loving-kindness (Jer. ix. 24; Hos. ii. 19), with salvation (Ps. xeviii. 2, cxix. 123; Isa. xlvi. 13). In the N. T. the appointment of Jesus Christ to be a propitiation by His blood through faith is said to be a manifestation of the righteousness of God in the forgiveness of sins (Rom. iii. 25, 26); and it is further said that if we confess our sins, God is righteous to forgive us our sins (1 John ii. 9). The righteousness of God, therefore, is to be understood in a much wider sense than mere justice or equity. It is His all-embracing rectitude, His absolute moral perfection, the quality of ever being and ever doing that which it becomes Him to be and to do. Hence the righteousness of God is ever associated with His goodness. God alone is good in the highest sense; He alone out of the fountain of His own good-

will and gracious nature does good to His creatures; He does good, not as under any law or intrinsic obligation to do good, but because it is His nature to be beneficent; and so as His righteousness is His perfect conformity to His own essential nature, His goodness and His righteousness coalesce.<sup>1</sup>



## CHAPTER V.

### GOD.

#### III. THE DIVINE SUBSISTENCE.

From considering the attributes by which God reveals Himself to us, we now pass on to consider what has been made known to us concerning the peculiar mode of the divine subsistence. By this it is not intended that we should attempt to investigate the nature of the divine essence or the inner qualities of the divine existence. These are matters on which nothing has been revealed to us, and on which we believe it would be impossible in our present state to make anything known to us. All that we propose is to collect and arrange what has been unfolded to us respecting the mode of the divine existence as contrasted with the existences with which we are familiar in the world around us. Here there are two points which come before us; the one of which is the Unity of the Divine Essence, as contrasted with the specific multiplicity of all creature existence; the other is the Trinity in the one Godhead, as contrasted with the individual unity of each created mind. Looking at the creature universe we see every species consisting of many individuals; in contrast to this God is One. Looking at each individual mind of the creature world, we see it to be one concrete subsistence, one indivisible personality; in contrast to this God exists as Three Persons in the One Godhead.

<sup>1</sup> Ἀγαθὴ γὰρ ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη καὶ δίκαια ἔστιν ἡ ἀγαθότης αὐτοῦ. Clemens Alex., *Strom.*, vi. 14.

i. *The Unity of God.*

(i.) The Unity of God has by some been ranked among the divine attributes; indeed, this is very frequently done in systems of theology. Such a classification, however, is objectionable on two grounds, the first of which is that unity is a mere expression of the relation in which a being stands to number, and does not enter into the idea of his nature or essence as a distinguishing quality of that; and the other is, that as in ascribing to God the qualities which we call His attributes, we simply affirm of Him what would be true whether there were one God or many, in asserting His Unity we assert something quite different from these; we assert that that in which these qualities inhere is one. As Wegscheider has well expressed it, "The Unity of God is rather the foundation which must be supposed to the true idea of Deity."<sup>1</sup>

(ii.) In affirming the Unity of God, we affirm not so much the subjective oneness of the Divine Being as His objective oneness. In our language it is difficult to express this with exactness without coining a word. The Greeks by their distinction between εἷς and μόνος, and the Latins by theirs between *unus* and *solus*, may supply to us the means of remedying this deficiency; we may coin such a word as *soleity* or *monadity* to convey the idea that we really intend by the ambiguous term *unity*. In this respect the Germans have the advantage of us; they have the word *einheit* to convey the idea of *oneness*, or unity properly so called; and they have the word *einzigkeit* to express the idea of soleness, *i.e.* that the object of which it is affirmed is the only one of its kind. This latter is what we really have to affirm concerning God. He is *solus*, not *unus*; μόνος Θεός, as the N. T. expresses it (John v. 44; 1 Tim. i. 17). According to the technical language of the old divines, it is a *unitas numeri*, not a *unitas speciei*, that we are to assert. "Deus non specifica sed numerica unus est," *i.e.* God is not merely one in idea, in our thought, as the idea of a species though it contain many individuals is one; but one in fact, as an object, besides which there is none other of the same kind. When we say God is One, we mean not that there is but

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, p. 228, 6th ed.



one divine species, as we mean there is but one human species when we say man is one, or affirm the unity of the human race ; we mean that there is but one sole individual Being who is God, and may be truly so called.

(iii.) Of this fact we do not find that nature furnishes us with any clear and decided proof. All that we see there is unity of plan, the same laws regulating the events of the universe, and the same wise and good ends contemplated throughout ; but this is a proof at the best only of a unity of *design* ; it cannot prove that there is only one designer. After stating the usual arguments for the unity of God drawn from the uniformity of nature, Paley candidly adds, " Certain, however, it is that the whole argument for the divine unity goes no farther than to a unity of counsel." <sup>1</sup> " The designing," says Dr. Thomas Brown, " is not to our reason more than *one* ; since in everything we behold there is unity of that design, from which alone we have any reason to infer a designer." That this is all we can logically infer from the phenomena of the universe would follow even if *all* these phenomena were before us ; how much more forcibly does the conclusion press upon us when we consider that it is but a very little part of that universe that is subject to our scrutiny ! Even supposing the phenomena around us clearly to attest the divine unity, this consideration alone would preclude our affirming the position absolutely ; for though it might be proved that the part of the universe to which we belong, and which is patent to our observation, is the work of only one being, how do we know that it is the same being who has formed and who governs those parts of the universe which lie beyond our reach or ken ? If, indeed, it be admitted that the *necessary* existence of God as a self-existent being can be proved by reasoning *a priori*, the unity of His being would follow as a necessary deduction ; for there cannot possibly be *two* necessary and self-existing beings. This Mr. Gillespie has shown to demonstration in his work on the *Necessary Existence of God*. But until the validity of this *a priori* method of reasoning on this subject is more generally admitted, it is not desirable to rest on it alone for proof of anything we may wish to establish concerning God.

<sup>1</sup> *Nat. Theol.*, chap. xxv.

But though nature fails to furnish evidence of the divine unity, the appeal to her on this head is not fruitless, for it results in the conviction that there is nothing within the range of our knowledge that is opposed to this belief, nothing that constrains us to suppose a plurality of creators,—nothing that so much as suggests this to us. On the contrary, all that we find in nature falls in with this, and gives a preliminary probability in its favour; for where we find unity of counsel, it is antecedently more probable that this should proceed from one mind than from several. There *may* be many spiritual beings of greater or less power, and these *may* have been united in counsel and operation so as to produce the world, but there is no evidence of this in nature, and therefore, so far as the teachings of nature go, we can neither affirm this nor deny it. But the antecedent probability is that it is not so; and this is something with which to advance to the study of what the Scriptures declare to us on this point. Perhaps we should be justified in going even beyond this, and saying that, as it is incredible that, supposing there are more gods than one, the universe should present no clear traces of this, the strong presumption, the almost certain conclusion, is that there is only one.

(iv.) At the same time, it must be confessed that, however agreeable to enlightened reason, and however consonant with the facts of creation may be the doctrine of the divine unity, it does not appear to be one which, in the absence of revelation, man has been able to retain, or, when lost, to discover anew. That, in the early ages of the world, there was but one religion, and that a religion of Monotheism, is clearly attested by the Mosaic history, and seems to be the conclusion to which a careful analysis of the religious remnants of ancient superstitions conducts the philosophic inquirer. How this doctrine came to be superseded by the Polytheistic and Pantheistic systems of heathenism, it is not necessary for us at present carefully to inquire. Perhaps the most satisfactory hypothesis is that which traces this fact to the operation, under an ungodly influence, of that disposition to *philosophize*, *i.e.* to trace effects to a cause, which is characteristic of the human mind. In the infancy of science, men satisfy this disposition by ascribing all phenomena to the direct agency of

Deity, who is conceived of, not as having constructed and set in operation the beautiful machinery of the universe, regulating the movements of the whole by great general laws, and interposing by a direct act of His own power only when He sees meet to suspend the ordinary course of things and introduce a new set of phenomena, but as being Himself formally and directly the doer of all things,—the immediate and proximate cause of every event. In a mind thoroughly imbued with right views of the spirituality of the divine essence, and which delights in the contemplation of an infinitely powerful and wise Deity, such a philosophy might produce no effects unfavourable to the belief of the divine unity; but on a mind already debased by gross conceptions of Deity, and to which the idea of an omnipresent, omniscient, and almighty ruler was unspeakably repugnant, the effect could not fail to be very different. In such a case, the intellect would operate under antagonist forces. Superstition would lead men still to refer the phenomena of the material universe to divine power, whilst an ungodly heart would repel the idea of that power being attributed to one great creative and universally superintending Spirit. The consequence could only be the adoption of a sort of medium course, whereby a distinct deity was assigned to each phenomenon or class of phenomena, over which he was supposed to preside, and which he was regarded in every separate instance as directly effecting. Thus, I apprehend, arose that recondite nature-worship which appears to form the basis of all the older mythologies, and which in all probability constituted the first stage at which the human mind rested in its melancholy degeneracy from the simple faith of the fathers of the race.

(v.) At the time when the earliest books of the Bible were written, Polytheism was, with the exception of the descendants of Abraham and a few individuals of other tribes, apparently universal among men. To prevent the entire obliteration of divine truth from the world, God selected Abraham and his posterity as the recipients of a revelation concerning Himself, of which the assertion of His sole Deity was a fundamental part. We find, accordingly, that by that patriarch and his immediate descendants that doctrine was fully recognised as it had been by pious men who preceded him, and as it was by

such men as Melchizedek among his contemporaries. In subsequent times, too, much intercourse with idolaters tended, in many instances, to seduce the Israelites from their adherence to this belief; but this only gave occasion for more emphatic declarations of the claims of Jehovah to be feared and trusted as the only God. At the giving of the law on Sinai, this doctrine was asserted in the most solemn and impressive terms; and occupies, indeed, in itself or its consequences, the preamble and the whole of the first table, as it is called, of that statute. In the address of Moses to the people when, before his death, he rehearsed to them all God's dealings with them, and exhorted them to continuance in His service, great prominence is given to this doctrine: "Unto thee," says he, "it was showed that thou mightest know that Jehovah He is God; there is none else beside Him." "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thy heart, that Jehovah He is God, in heaven above and upon the earth beneath: there is none else." "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah thy God is one Jehovah" (Deut. iv. 35, 39, vi. 4). So also in later times the prophets were instructed to make to the people such declarations as the following: "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, Jehovah of Hosts, I am the first and I am the last, and besides Me there is no God." "I am Jehovah, and there is none else, there is no God besides Me" (Isa. xlv. 6, xlv. 5). In these passages, the doctrine of the divine unity is taught with all the clearness of which human language is susceptible.

Among a certain class of theologians, especially on the Continent, the position I have been endeavouring to establish has been disputed, and an attempt has been made to show that, from the writings of Moses especially, there is reason to conclude that the popular belief among the Hebrews was, that Jehovah was only their national or tutelar God, just as Chemosh was of the Ammonites, Moloch of the Moabites, and Baal of the Phœnicians. This opinion, which has found among its leading advocates such men as Bauer, Wegscheider, and De Wette, rests almost exclusively, as may be supposed, upon those passages in which Jehovah is called "the God of Abraham," "the God of the Israelites," "the Rock of Israel," "the Holy One of Israel" ("numen venerandum Israelitarum," as

Bauer renders it), etc. Great stress is also laid by them on the words of Jephthah to the Ammonites (Judg. xi. 24), "Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee? So whomsoever the Lord our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess." "Here," says Bauer, "Jephthah places Jehovah on a level with Chemosh, and attributes to the latter the same power as to Jehovah."<sup>1</sup> On this I would remark, first, that, even admitting the words of Jephthah to bear the meaning thus put upon them, it would not certainly follow that this was his belief, or that of his countrymen. In arguing with an opponent nothing is more common than to take up his own ground, and endeavour to show how, even on his own principles, he ought to yield the point in dispute. So here it is quite possible that Jephthah may be reasoning on the assumptions of the idolatrous Ammonites, and showing that even *supposing* Jehovah were no more than Chemosh, still, as they deemed themselves justifiable in taking possession of such territories as they conquered in the name of Chemosh, so they ought to admit the right of the Israelites to occupy what they conquered in the name of their God. It is obvious, therefore, that even on the neologian interpretation of this passage it affords no certain evidence that the religious opinions of Jephthah were such as its authors would have imputed to him. But, secondly, there appears nothing in Jephthah's words to justify the idea that he considered Chemosh to be as much a real deity as Jehovah. On the contrary, his reasoning is obviously *a fortiori*, as if he had said, If you, attributing your success to Chemosh whom you worship, possess whatever you conquer, much more ought we to keep what Jehovah, the supreme disposer of all things, has given us. That this was really the idea in Jephthah's mind appears evident from what almost immediately follows in ver. 27, where he says, "The Lord the Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon." This plainly assumes the supremacy of Jehovah over *both* parties, and ascribes to Him His proper place as the only and infallible arbiter of right and wrong. To infer, in the face of this, from the mere mention of Chemosh, that he placed this idol on a level with

<sup>1</sup> "Jephtha Jovam æquiparat Camoso, et huic eandem vim, quam Jovæ, tribuit." *Dicta Classica Vet. Test.* Pars I. p. 17.

Jehovah, is as unjustifiable as it would be to ascribe similar views of God to the Christian missionary who, in arguing with Hindoos, should refer to Brumha or Siva as *their* gods, and contrast with these *his* God Jehovah. Thirdly, on the general argument I observe, that when the Israelites spoke of Jehovah in the terms already quoted, they must have thereby intended either the one true God or some imaginary deity. If the former, then they really believed and maintained the doctrine of the divine unity after all, notwithstanding the use of those terms which are supposed to be incompatible with this; if the latter, then the Jehovah they worshipped was as much an *idol* as any of the gods of the nations around them, —a supposition which would land us in no less absurd than impious opinion, that all the denunciations of idolatry addressed by God to the Israelites were directed not so much against that sin in itself, as against the indulgence of it in connection with any other imaginary deity than that which bore the name of Jehovah. Fourthly, adopting the former part of this alternative, as that which reason and good feeling alike sanction, there can be no difficulty felt in the mind of any candid inquirer, as to the reconciliation of terms implying personal or national relation to the Deity, with the doctrine of the divine unity. The supposed discrepancy of these seems to rest upon some vague notion, that a Being who sustains certain *universal* relations to other beings, cannot at the same time sustain *particular* relations to individuals or classes amongst these. But this notion is manifestly opposed to all that we are most familiar with, both in regard to our selves and to God. To all His intelligent creatures He sustains certain relations in common, but to every class of them He sustains also other relations in particular. To all men He stands in the common relation of a Creator and Governor; but to some of them, besides this, He stands in the relation of a reconciled Father,—a God whose character has been specially revealed to them, and of whose pardoning grace they have had experience. Now, whatever community of *physical* relationship to God the race may enjoy as such, it is clear that, in a *moral* point of view, this class of persons stand in a relation of a far more intimate and endearing character to Him than the rest of mankind. Hence they are described as

“His people,” “the flock of His pasture,” the children of His love; and He is represented as in a peculiar manner their God, “manifesting Himself unto them as He doth not unto the world.” In this relationship stood Abraham and his posterity to the Almighty. Jehovah had chosen them from amongst all people to be “a special people” unto Himself. He had favoured them with a revelation of His will, and instituted among them the ordinances of His worship. More than this, He had even condescended to place Himself at the head of their political constitution as the King of Israel, by whom all their laws were enacted, and under whose special direction their government was administered. Under such circumstances nothing was more natural than that they should speak of Him as their God, without thereby intending to question or deny His universal supremacy as the God of the whole earth. This is language which even those who have borrowed their conceptions of God from the Christian Scriptures do not scruple continually to use; nay, which they feel to be the natural and appropriate language of those to whom has been given the privilege of calling themselves “sons of God.” That it should have been ever supposed susceptible of the interpretation which the authors I have named have put upon it, can be ascribed, I think, only to the disposition which all errorists display to catch at everything that can be constrained to give any countenance to their opinions, coupled with the melancholy fact, that the feelings of which this language is the natural exponent, are not those which Rationalism is designed or qualified to produce.

When we turn to the N. T. we find the divine unity very clearly and emphatically announced. God is addressed by our Saviour as *τον μονον αληθινον Θεον*, the only real God, all others being merely phenomenal; and the acknowledgment of Him as such is declared to be eternal life (John xvii. 3). “We know,” says Paul, “that there is none other God but one” (1 Cor. viii. 4); and again, “To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him” (1 Cor. viii. 6); “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. iv. 6); “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. ii. 5). In accordance

with this the Divine Being is always spoken of in the N. T. as one; and whilst His existence is affirmed as a positive and certain fact, and He is declared to be the *αληθινος Θεος*, the many gods of the heathen are presented as simply *λεγομενοι*, merely said to be mere legendary beings; and the idols which they worshipped are emphatically pronounced to be *ουδεν εν κοσμω*, nothing in the world, a mere nonentity, a mere conception or fancy of men, that had no objective existence.

But whilst the divine unity is thus pointedly and absolutely enunciated, there are passages in which it is stated in such a way as to intimate that in some sense this unity is also a plurality. When our Saviour, for instance, says, "I and the Father are one," we are irresistibly led to conclude that in some sense the unity of God is a composite unity, if we may so speak; that not only is there only one God, but that in this one God there is a union of diversities. So also in the announcement made to Israel, "Jehovah thy God is one Jehovah," there is a peculiarity which arrests attention and excites inquiry. These words announce rather the *unity* of the divine nature than the *soleity* of the Divine Being; they affirm not so much that there is but one God, as that the one God is also in essence and nature one. That such an announcement should have been deemed necessary must be allowed to be remarkable. Amidst abounding polytheism it is easy to see a reason for the repeated declaration that there is only one God Jehovah; but why it should have been necessary to add to this the announcement that Jehovah Himself is one, seems to furnish occasion for careful inquiry. A glance at the original of the passage will serve still further to quicken research. We there read, Hear, O Israel; Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah, יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד. The use of the plural Elohim here gives an appropriateness to the declaration which it is impossible to transfer with the same force to any other language. Plurality and unity are thus obviously affirmed as belonging to the same Person, to Jehovah: He is Elohim, and yet one Jehovah. The only expressible idea suggested by such a statement is that whilst there is but one God, and whilst that God is one in essence, there is nevertheless a distinction of some sort or other coexisting with this unity and soleity, and compatible with it.



When such a declaration is compared with the doctrine of the N. T. regarding the Godhead, we are naturally led to infer that in all probability it contains an intimation of that mysterious fact, the Trinity, which is so clearly set forth in the Christian Scriptures. To the consideration of this we have now to proceed.



## CHAPTER VI.

### GOD.

#### III. THE DIVINE SUBSISTENCE *continued.*

##### ii. *The Trinity.*

The doctrine or revealed truth we are now about to explore is usually designated the doctrine of the Trinity. This term does not occur in Scripture, nor is it used by any Christian writer before the beginning of the fourth century, if we except a passage assigned to Justin Martyr, but contained in a work which is now universally rejected as spurious.<sup>1</sup> But a doctrine may be taught in Scripture though the word used technically and for convenience' sake to express that doctrine be not found there; and there can be no doubt that, though the word *Τριάς*, or *Trinitas*, was not employed by the Christian writers to express this doctrine before the fourth century, the doctrine itself had been largely discussed and was fully developed in the Church long before this period. There is, however, this peculiarity about this doctrine, that it is more strictly than any other doctrine of the Christian theology a purely Church doctrine. Not only is the *word* not used in Scriptures, but the doctrine itself as a doctrine is not set forth there, *i.e.* we nowhere find a formal enunciation of it in the sacred writings. The only passage that has even the appearance of such an enunciation is the famous passage 1 John v. 7, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy

<sup>1</sup> See Suicer, *Thes. Eccles.*, s.v.

Ghost: and these three are one;" but this passage is now universally regarded by critics as spurious, and will in vain be sought for in any critical edition of the N. T.<sup>1</sup> But even were its genuineness admitted, it would be in appearance only that it enunciates the doctrine of the Trinity; for as the apostle is speaking of the *concurrent teaching* in favour of Christ Jesus, all that his words could be fairly held as declaring is not that the Father, Son, and Spirit are one in essence, but simply that they are one in witness, that they concur in the testimony they give. But though a truth be not formally enunciated in Scripture, it may be so implied in the statements of Scripture that it becomes the proper and necessary expression of these statements. In this case the doctrine is a conclusion drawn inductively from what Scripture announces, and so is as truly a doctrine of Scripture as any natural law—that of gravitation, *e.g.*—is a doctrine of nature. Whilst, then, we admit that the doctrine of the Trinity does not stand on exactly the same ground as the doctrines formally enunciated in Scripture, we claim for it an equal authority on the ground that it lies involved in the statements of Scripture, and is the proper evolution and expression of these. As a doctrine it is a human induction from the statements of Scripture; but the induction being fairly made, it is as much a part of God's teaching in His word as is any of those doctrines which He has formally enunciated there. The phenomena (to use the Baconian phraseology) with which we have here to deal are, on the one

<sup>1</sup> It not only is destitute of any valid critical authority (two MSS. of the fifteenth century cannot be held to be such), but we can with great probability show *how* it came into existence at all. Augustine, in a comment on the 6th verse, after his usual spiritualizing method, explains the water as meaning the Holy Spirit, the blood as meaning Jesus Christ, the Spirit as meaning the Father. Now, this indubitably shows that he knew nothing of ver. 7, for if it had existed in his copy he never would in this way have explained ver. 6. But his gloss became popular, and people wrote it on the margin of their copies of the Latin version, and so in the later MSS. of the Vulgate (it is not found in any of the earliest) it came, like many other glosses, to be incorporated with the text. Being thus introduced into the text authorized by papal edict, it became desirable that it should also appear in the Greek text; and so about the time of the revival of letters some one translated it from the Latin into Greek, and thus it found its way into two Greek copies of that date. This verse is therefore clearly apocryphal: we have no more authority for it than we have for the book of Tobit or the story of Bel and the Dragon.

hand, the clearly revealed fact that there is but one God; and, on the other, the no less clearly revealed fact that there are three to whom the attributes and qualities of Deity in the highest sense are ascribed, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Both these statements must be received by all who acknowledge the Scriptures as the rule of faith: the question is, How are they to be construed so as that, without doing injustice to either, a just and harmonious expression of the whole truth contained in them shall be obtained?

It is here assumed that Scripture teaches the Supreme Deity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Deity of the first has never been questioned; and the proof of the Deity of the other two will be given farther on in our course, when we come to treat of the Son and of the Spirit specially. To those who deny the Deity of the Son and of the Spirit, the question of the Trinity possesses no interest; for them, in fact, it does not exist. It is only where the phenomena to be accounted for are admitted to exist that the attempt to account for them can be rationally made; and therefore we may safely assume the phenomena in proceeding to account for them, inasmuch as only those who admit them will follow us in our inquiry.

(i.) There are two hypotheses which have been adopted with the view of harmonizing the two classes of statements above referred to. The one of these goes on the assumption that while the divine unity is essential, the distinctions of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are only *modal*; the other goes on the assumption that both the unity and the distinctions are essential, or in the divine essence. Of these two fundamental hypotheses there are various modifications. 1. Of the former the modification best known is that which passes under the name of Sabellianism, from Sabellius, a presbyter of Ptolemais, who flourished about the middle of the third century. He taught (as Epiphanius informs us, *Hær.* lxii. 1. 2) “that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one and the same; as it were three appellations (*ονομασίας*) in one hypostasis; or as in a man there is body and soul and spirit; and that the Father, so to speak, is the body, the Son the soul, and that the Holy Ghost is in the Godhead as the spirit is in man; or as the sun, which is in one hypostasis, has three energies, viz. luminosity, warmth,

and the form of its periphery, so the Spirit is that which warms, the Son that which enlightens, while the Father is Himself the form of the entire hypostasis ; and the Son being sent forth once in time, like a ray from the sun, and having accomplished all things pertaining to the economy of the gospel and the salvation of men, was again received up into heaven, as a ray sent forth by the sun and again recurring to the sun. The Holy Spirit also is sent into the world to revive, to quicken, to warm, to nourish each according to their need," etc. From this statement the doctrine of Sabellius does not appear to differ essentially from that of his predecessor Praxeas, against whom Tertullian writes, and who maintained that the Son was not essentially distinct from the Father, but that Father, Son, and Spirit were simply manifestations of the one God. There is reason, however, to doubt whether the above be a correct statement of the doctrine of Sabellius. From other sources it appears that he held the distinction between Father, Son, and Spirit to be something more than a mere nominal one, and that the Son and Spirit are not mere powers or influences sent forth as rays from the central Deity, but actual divine hypostases, though not distinct in the divine essence.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the more definite and correct statement of Sabellianism is that it asserts that God is essentially one ; and that Father, Son, and Spirit are simply forms or modes in which the One God reveals Himself as acting to or for His creatures, especially in the work of redemption. According to this doctrine, then, the distinction in the Godhead is not real or essential, but simply modal.

In recent times various attempts have been made by means of modalistic representations to preserve the *form* of Trinitarian doctrine in connection with such a view of the distinction in the Godhead as reason can comprehend. These have proceeded almost entirely from the busy brains of the Germans, and partake of the vague and misty character which is apt to belong to the speculations of that nation. Thus Meier<sup>2</sup> teaches that in the Godhead there are three Powers or Energies—the Power of Representation generally, the Power of clear or precise Representation, and the Power of Desire, to which the sum of

<sup>1</sup> See Mosheim, *De Rebus Christianis*, etc., p. 690.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Lehre von der Trinität*, etc.

all perfection attaches as an accident from eternity ; a piece of jargon which Seiler thinks is made more intelligible by saying that there are in God three eternal, intelligent, and free Powers, existing without space or time, but consisting with each other, and so combined that the one works through the other, and that in such a way as that they are powers of one substance and Godhead. Kant has adopted the modalistic view, but has presented it in a much distincter and more intelligible form. He regards God as the Father inasmuch as He is the benevolent Creator of the world ; as the Son inasmuch as He is the Upholder and Governor of the human race, in which He represents the archeal type of Man as conceived and loved by Him ; and as the Holy Ghost inasmuch as He suspends His complacency on the condition of man's accordance with His arrangement as moral Governor, with the condition on which alone He can delight in His creatures. Hegel's view is thus expressed:—"God as a living Spirit is this: To distinguish Himself from Himself, to posit another, and in this other to remain identical with Himself. This eternal idea is in the Christian religion expressed as Tri-unity. The kingdom of the Father is God in His eternal idea, of Himself and for Himself, so to speak, before and outside of the making of the world. The kingdom of the Son is the eternal idea of God in the elements of consciousness, or the difference [the positing of Himself by God as another]. This other left as independent is the world. The kingdom of the Spirit is the idea in the element of the Church. God is as Spirit, and this Spirit as existing is the Church."

These more recent forms of modalism cannot be regarded as making any pretensions to a just statement of the doctrine of Scripture on the subject of the Trinity ; they are mere utterances of philosophic speculation, clothed in language borrowed from theology, but having in themselves no element of theologic truth. We may therefore content ourselves with having glanced at them in passing.

2. Opposed to this modalistic hypothesis stands the Catholic doctrine that there is a threefold distinction in the essence of the one Godhead. This doctrine was first clearly enunciated as the doctrine of the Church by the Council of Nice in 325. Previous to this the writings of the Fathers indicate much of

fluctuation and unsettledness in the belief of the orthodox on this head. Whilst the Deity of the Son, or Logos, and of the Spirit was firmly held, it was not settled whether the Logos and Pneuma had existed eternally in the essence of the Father, and been temporally developed out of that essence either by emanation or by a direct action of the divine will, so that they are God only in a subordinate sense; or whether the Logos and the Pneuma existed eternally as distinct hypostases with the Father in the one Godhead. The appearance and labours of Arius brought these inquiries to an issue. He maintained that the Son is begotten of the Father in the sense of being created by Him, the alone God, before all ages; that He is not of the same essence with the Father; that He is not of the Father, but created by God, ἐξ οὐκ οὐτῶν, from things that are not; that, in short, He is a creature in the proper sense of the term, though the first and highest of creatures. In opposition to Arius, Athanasius, the champion of orthodoxy, maintained that the Son is truly and properly God, of the same essence with the Father; and on his opinions the Council of Nice set the stamp of its authority. The doctrine of the Trinity, as expressed by the Council in the creed which takes its name from their assembly, is enunciated thus: "We believe in one God, Father almighty, Maker of all things seen and unseen; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the essence of the Father, God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten not made, of one essence with the Father; by whom all things were made, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, etc., and in the Holy Ghost. Those that say that there was a time when He was not, and that He was not before He was begotten, and that He was made of things that are not; or say that He is of a different hypostasis or essence from the Father, or that the Son of God is created, nourished, and capable of being changed, the Catholic Church anathematizes." In this creed we have the germ of what has since been held as the Catholic doctrine on this subject. What is called (though improperly as respects its authorship) the Athanasian Creed may be regarded as enunciating in a fuller form what we have in the Nicene Creed in the germ: "The Catholic faith is that we venerate one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity, neither

confounding the Persons nor separating the substance. The Person of the Father is one, of the Son another, of the Holy Spirit another. But the Divinity of Father, Son, and Spirit is one, their glory equal, coeternal their majesty. . . . The Father is neither made, nor created, nor begotten : The Son is from the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten : The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. Therefore there is one Father, not three Fathers ; one Son, not three Sons ; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this Trinity there is nothing prior or posterior, nothing greater or less ; but all the three Persons are coeternal and coequal, so that in all things both a Trinity in unity and a unity in Trinity is to be worshipped."

This, though constituting the Catholic and orthodox belief, has not always been stated in the same way by those who have adhered to it. In the Confessions of the Churches of the Reformation, the phraseology of the earlier creeds is generally adopted. Thus the Scottish Confession of Faith on this head is, "In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity ; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost." In the Articles of the Church of England the doctrine is thus laid down : "In the unity of the divine nature there are three Persons : Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Similar is the language of the Augsburg Confession, that is, the Confession of the Lutheran Church : "The decree of the Nicene Synod is without dubitation to be believed, viz. that there is one Divine Essence which is and is called God, eternal, incorporeal, indivisible ; and yet there are three Persons of the same essence and power, and coeternal, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." But whilst the Confessions present this uniformity, in the writings of individuals we find considerable diversity of statement of what is professedly the same belief. A few of these statements it may be useful to cite for the purpose of comparison. I begin with Calvin ; in his *Institutes*, Bk. I. c. 13, § 2, he thus writes : "God predicates that He is unique (*unicum*), yet so as that He distinctly proposes to be considered in three persons ; which unless we hold, there will flutter in our brain only the bare and empty name of God without the true God. Moreover, lest any should dream

of a threefold God, or think that the simple essence of God is torn by three persons, we must seek a short and easy definition, which may free us from all error." He then goes on to defend the use of the word Person, which he contends is synonymous with the Greek *υποστασις*, a term used by the apostle in speaking of Christ (Heb. i. 3); after which he says, "But leaving disputes about words, let us come to the thing itself. I call a Person, then, a subsistence in the essence of God which in relation to others is distinguished by an incommunicable propriety. By the name of subsistence we would understand something else than essence. . . . Each of the three subsistences, I say, is, in relation to the others, distinguished by a propriety. Relation is here distinctly expressed; because where there is mention of God simple and indefinite, the name refers not less to the Son and Spirit than to the Father. As soon, however, as the Father is compared with the Son, each is by His own propriety discriminated from the other. In fine, I assert that whatever is proper to each is incommunicable, because what serves as a note of distinction to the Father cannot suit or be transferred to the Son. Nor am I unwilling to accept the definition of Tertullian, provided it be rightly taken, 'that there is in God a certain disposition or economy which does not in any way detract from the unity of essence.'" Gerhard: "The general theory is summed up in three heads:—(1) That of these three persons the essence is one, and undivided; (2) that these three persons are really and truly distinct from each other; (3) that they are distinguished by personal properties." Turretine: "In the alone and most simple essence of God there are three distinct Persons, which by communicable properties or modes of subsisting are distinguished from each other, so that the one is not the other, though by an ineffable *ἐμπεριχώρησις* they ever abide and exist in each other. . . . Whence it appears—(1) That the divine essence is distinguished from the Persons principally by this, that it is communicable, whilst the Persons are distinguished by incommunicable propriety; (2) that it differs from other singular natures in that whilst they are communicated to only one subject, and are terminated in a single subsistence, because they are finite, this, because it is



infinite, may admit more.”<sup>1</sup> Marckius: “To the knowledge of the Trinity go these things—(1) That the essence of God is alone and most simple, against the Tritheists and Triformians; (2) that there are three modes of the subsistence of this one essence relatively and terminatively distinct from the essence, not mere names, against the Sabellians and Patripassians; (3) that these Persons agree in this one essence, which the Nicenes expressed by *ὁμοουσιον*, in *ἰσοτητα* or equality of honour, and in *ἐμπεριχωρησια* or mutual inexistence, as when Christ says (John xiv. 11), ‘Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me;’ (4) that the Persons are distinguished from each other by *name* as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, by *order*, by *mode of operating*, by *works ad extra*, most of all by *personal properties* or *characters* which belong to the Persons in concrete, and are relative rather than absolute”<sup>2</sup> Sherlock: “It is plain the persons are perfectly distinct. A person is an intelligent being; and to say there are three divine persons and not three distinct infinite minds is both heresy and nonsense.”<sup>3</sup> This would seem to be an assertion of Tritheism; but Sherlock maintains that these three minds are inseparably one God. Whether this be not “both heresy and nonsense” may be fairly asked. Dr. Wardlaw has quoted some sentences from Swift, expressed with all the Dean’s usual clearness and vigour, in which he sums up the doctrine “as delivered in the Holy Scriptures,” thus: “God commands us to believe there is a union and there is a distinction; but what that union is or what that distinction is all mankind are equally ignorant; and must continue so, at least till the day of judgment, without some new revelation. Therefore I shall again repeat the doctrine of the Trinity as it is positively affirmed in Scripture: That God is there expressed in three different names as Father, as Son, and as Holy Ghost; that each of these is God, and that there is but one God. But this union and distinction are a mystery utterly unknown to mankind.”<sup>4</sup> This statement might admit of a modalistic explanation; but it is evident from the whole

<sup>1</sup> *Theol., loc. tert., qu. 25, § 1.*

<sup>2</sup> *Medulla*, v.

<sup>3</sup> *Vind. of the Trinity*, § 4, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted from Swift’s *Works*, vol. iii. p. 434, in Wardlaw’s *Syst. Theol.*, vol. ii. p. 4.

discourse that such was not the writer's intention. I add only the statement of the doctrine by Dr. Pye Smith: "In the absolute perfect unity of the Divine Essence there are three objects of our conception, or subjects known by different properties, which are in the Scriptures designated by the attribution of such appellations, pronouns, qualities, and acts as are proper to rational, intelligent, and distinct Persons. Instead of Persons the term subsistence is by many preferred. These three Divine Subsistences are not separate Essences (this notion would be Tritheism). Nor mere names, or properties, or modes of action (Modalism or Sabellianism); but this unity of Subsistences is an essential, necessary, and unchangeable property of the Divine Essence. There are Hypostatical Characters or Personal Properties which are distinctive of each Person, and which express the *relations* of each to the others." <sup>1</sup>

On reviewing these statements it will be seen that with varieties of phraseology, and more or less of fulness, they all enunciate substantially the same doctrine; with the exception of Sherlock, who, in his desire to make the doctrine more accordant with ordinary modes of thought, has stated it in such a way as to expose himself to the charge of Tritheism, or the assertion of the existence of three distinct Deities. For this he was severely called to account at the time his work was published, especially by the famous Dr. South, who brought all his powers of wit and reasoning to bear upon the object of his attack, but whose productions in the controversy are disfigured by coarse invective and angry sarcasm. It is somewhat remarkable that John Howe should have expressed a view very much like that of Sherlock. He, however, is somewhat more cautious than Sherlock; contenting himself with merely suggesting that as we find "two different natures continuing distinct but so united as to be one thing," in our selves, it is "more easily supposable of congenerous natures." He accordingly pleads for the possibility of three distinct Spirits being so united in the Deity as to be truly one thing; and maintains that this is not inconsistent with the divine simplicity. It is not very easy to see, however, how this can be. If two or more beings, whether congenerous or not, are

<sup>1</sup> *Theology*, p. 277.

united, there must be *composition*, and if there be composition there must be the possibility of dissolution; so that the quality of simplicity disappears. Besides, if this union was a composed or (as Howe himself phrases it) a “made union,” there must have been a time when the making of it took place, a time therefore antecedent to this when it did not exist; and this is incompatible with the absolute eternity of God. If Howe therefore avoids the charge of Tritheism by restricting Deity to the one God, he by representing that one God as a composite being, made up at some point of time, falls into a no less error by affirming of God what cannot be reconciled with His perfect simplicity and His absolute eternity.<sup>1</sup>

(ii.) The orthodox or catholic doctrine of the Trinity, as that appears in the Creeds and Confessions of the Church and in the writings of different divines of eminence, briefly stated, is this:—

One divine essence subsists in three persons; or God is one in essence but trine in persons, inasmuch as the one in essence has three hypostases or subsistences; or God is one Divine Being in three Divine Persons.

For the better understanding of the doctrine thus propounded, certain things have to be observed.

1. The unity of the divine essence must be distinguished from the simplicity of the divine essence. In affirming the former we affirm that there is absolutely only one divine essence or Being; in affirming the other we assert that God is not made up of parts, yet not in such sense as that no distinction of any kind can subsist in Him.

2. In this doctrine both the term *Essence* and the term *Person* are used in a technical and modified sense. By the former is intended what the schoolmen called the “quidditas Dei,” that by which God is what He is, or, as it may be more simply expressed, the spiritual self-existent nature of God. This belongs to the Godhead, and is common to the Three Persons. The term *Person*, again, is used, not in the sense of a distinct Being, but in the sense of a subsistence thought as having something proper and peculiar to itself by which it is distinguished from the others. There is to be

<sup>1</sup> See Howe’s *Calm Discourse of the Trinity*, etc.

noted here, however, that the word, as used by some divines, has a somewhat different meaning attached to it, viz. that of a concrete subsistence, living, intelligent, incommunicable, not sustained by another, and which is not part of another. The former of these usages seems on the whole to be preferred.

3. That as regards their unity in the Godhead the three Persons are consubstantial (*ομοουσιοι*), equal in power and glory, and inexistent; in opposition to those who say that they are only of like essence (*ομοιουσιοι*), that the Son is subordinate to the Father, and the Spirit to the Father and Son, and that the Father may be without the Son or the Son without the Father.

4. That as respects the distinction in the one Godhead it is real and eternal, and is marked by certain properties peculiar to each Person and not communicable. These properties are either *external* or *internal*; the latter relating to the modes of subsistence in the divine essence, the former to the mode of revelation in the world. The *notæ internæ* are personal *acts* and *notions*; the former being (1) That the Father generates the Son, etc., and breathes the Spirit; (2) That the Son is begotten of the Father, and with the Father breathes the Spirit; (3) That the Spirit proceedeth from the Father and the Son. The personal *notions* are (1) Unbegottenness and paternity as peculiar to the Father; (2) Spiration as belonging to the Father and Son; (3) Filiation as peculiar to the Son; (4) Procession (*spiratio passiva*) as peculiar to the Spirit. The *external notes* are (1) The *works* in the economy of redemption peculiar to each: the Father sends the Son to redeem and the Spirit to sanctify; the Son redeems mankind and sends the Spirit; the Spirit is sent into the minds of men and renders them partakers of Christ's salvation. (2) The attributive or appropriative works, *i.e.* those which, though common to the three Persons, are in Scripture usually ascribed to one of them, as universal creation, conservation, and gubernation to the Father through the Son; the creation of the world, raising of the dead, and the conduct of the last judgment, to the Son; the inspiration of the prophets, etc., to the Spirit.

(iii.) I have been the more anxious to place before you as fully and clearly as I can the so-called orthodox doctrine of

the Trinity, because I must now proceed to avow my inability to accept that doctrine in its entirety, and especially as respects the distinctions in the divine essence as stated in the Confessions and by the writers I have cited. My reasons for this are :—

1. That the doctrine as affirmed is to me unintelligible. After the most earnest endeavours I can make, I find myself unable to understand what it is I am asked or pledged by the doctrine to believe. To the assertion that there are three Divine Persons in the one Godhead, I can attach no idea whatever ; the assertion to me is simply a collection of words and nothing more. Now it is impossible for any rational being to accept a statement of doctrine which appears to him in this light. Other minds, differently constituted or more largely endowed, may understand the statement ; but to me it is not given to understand it, and I cannot honestly say I do understand it, which I must say if I profess to hold it. Observe, I do not rest my objection on my inability to understand *how* there can be three persons in the one Godhead ; this would be an altogether invalid objection, and would lead me to reject the doctrine of our Lord's true and proper Deity, the Deity of the Holy Spirit, and innumerable facts in both nature and religion, the *modus existendi* of which I can not explain or comprehend. It is not that I cannot explain the *mode* of the divine subsistence as asserted in this doctrine, but that I cannot understand the statement as a statement. There is with many a confusion of thought on this head which requires to be cleared away. To understand a proposition is one thing ; to understand the truth or fact asserted in that proposition is another thing. These two kinds of understanding may not only be distinguished in thought, but they are constantly distinguished in actual experience. Most of the great laws of nature, most of the ultimate facts we are acquainted with, are clear to our understandings as propositions, but they are utterly obscure and hid from us as they are in themselves as truths or facts. Every one, for instance, understands what is meant by the proposition which asserts the law of gravitation, but what gravitation itself is no one knows. When I assert that there is a close union between soul and body, I assert what every man understands ; but in

what that union consists, and how the two are united, it may be impossible to tell. So with the mysteries of Scripture. That God is, that Jesus Christ is God-man, that the Holy Spirit is a divine agent, are propositions perfectly intelligible; but what these facts are in themselves, or how they are to be explained, is utterly beyond our reach. Observe, then, the distinction between understanding the terms of a statement or proposition or dogma, and understanding the fact or truth which these terms enunciate.

Keeping this distinction in view, it is further to be observed that whilst it is incompetent for any to refuse a doctrine simply on the ground that they do not see *how* what it asserts can be, it is, on the other hand, utterly unreasonable to ask any to receive a statement which is, as a statement, unintelligible. To do this in reality is beyond the power of any man. A man may repeat certain words which are unintelligible, but to repeat words is not to receive or intelligently to assert a doctrine. This no man can do unless he understands both the words and the sense of the assertion. If the assertion, "And the Word was God," was to me as unintelligible as the words *καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος* are to a person who has never learned Greek, it would be absurd to say that in any sense I received that statement. I receive it because I perfectly understand it, and because it rests on the authority of God's word. The truth these words assert, however, is one utterly beyond my comprehension; but that does not prevent, and ought not to prevent, my receiving the doctrine.

My objection, then, to the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity is not that I cannot tell *how* there can be three persons in the one Godhead, but that I do not know what this assertion means; and as I can neither believe nor disbelieve what conveys to me no meaning, I am unable to accept this doctrine.

2. This doctrine seems to me in some parts of it to involve a direct contradiction in terms, and therefore to be incapable of acceptance. I do not here allude to the objection which has often been urged by Unitarians against the doctrine of the Trinity, viz. that it requires us to believe that three are one and one is three; for to this, which is a mere cavil, it is enough to reply that no Trinitarian ever pretended to assert

that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one and three in the *same* sense; what all agree in asserting is, that in one sense they are three, and in another they are one—a statement in which there is no contradiction. What I refer to is the doctrine of the generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Ghost. According to the Catholic doctrine, the Son as Son and the Spirit as Spirit are in the true and proper sense God, the equal of the Father, consubstantial and coeternal with Him; and yet the Son is begotten by the Father, and the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. These statements seem to me to contradict each other. If the Son is the same in substance and the equal in power and dignity with the Father, how can He be the Son? How can He be begotten? Must not He that begets be before Him who is begotten of Him? And if the Father is before the Son, how can they be coeternal and coequal? So, also, if the Spirit, as respects His essence, proceeds from the Father and the Son, then as he who proceeds must be posterior and inferior to him from whom he proceeds, as he who is sent must be inferior to him who sends, the Spirit cannot be in essence the equal of the Father and the Son. These contradictions no human ingenuity can reconcile; and as it is physically impossible for us to accept a contradiction,—as, to use the words of South, “for a man to assent to two contradictory propositions as true, while he perceives them to be contradictory, is the first-born of impossibilities,”<sup>1</sup>—there seems here an insuperable barrier to our acceptance of the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity as stated by the Nicenes.

You will find this subject carefully gone into by Dr. Wardlaw in his *Theology*, vol. ii. p. 33; by Dr. Payne in his *Theology*, vol. i. p. 239; and by Moses Stuart in his *Excursus I. to his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. The late Dr. William Cunningham has pronounced the objection a fallacy, and he has said that the fallacy “lies in this, that it [the argument] proceeds upon the assumption that generation, and what it involves or implies, when applied to the divine nature must be the same as when applied to men, and that the same or an analogous inference may be deduced from it in both cases.”<sup>2</sup> Now, with all deference, there is no such

<sup>1</sup> *Sermon*, xliii.

<sup>2</sup> *Historical Theology*, i. p. 298.

assumption as this made by those who advance the objection I have urged. All that we assume is, that the word "generation" means generation, and is used to convey the idea that in the relation of the Father to the Son there is something answering or analogous to the relation of Him who begets to Him who is begotten among men, something, in short, that justifies the use of that term. If those who side with Dr. Cunningham mean to say that there is *no* analogy between the two cases, why do they persist in using a word which asserts such an analogy? or if they use "generation" in a sense in which it does not mean what people usually understand by that term, let them define the sense in which they use it. We object that "eternally begotten" is a contradiction in terms. "So it is," replies Dr. Cunningham, "if you take begotten as meaning begotten; but it is a fallacy so to take it." How, then, *are* we to take it? I ask; or what is the position you really require us to believe? To this we find a reply farther on in Dr. Cunningham's book: "The eternal generation of the Son, then, just means the communication from eternity, in some ineffable and mysterious way, of the divine nature and essence by the first to the second person of the Godhead, in virtue of which the relation of proper paternity and proper sonship subsists between them, and is accordingly set before us in Scripture in the only way in which it could be unfolded in language applicable to a human relation which is in some respects, though not in all, analogous to it."<sup>1</sup> What the language of Scripture teaches on the subject we shall examine presently; what we have at present to consider is the explanation given in the sentence I have quoted of what is meant by eternal generation. This, to my mind, only plunges the whole matter in deeper darkness and more hopeless confusion. First of all, Dr Cunningham tells us that the relation between the first and second person of the Godhead is that "of *proper* paternity and *proper* sonship;" and yet it is just because we propose to take these terms in their proper sense that he charges us with using a fallacy in our argument. Then, whilst implicitly admitting that "eternal generation" in the proper sense of the terms would be a contradiction in terms, he thinks he

<sup>1</sup> *Historical Theology*, etc., vol. i. p. 301.



clears it from this fatal objection by saying it means "a communication from eternity of the divine nature and essence from the first to the second person in the Godhead." And with this I find Dr. Pye Smith agrees. "The expression," he says, "used by many of the old divines appears to me to be unexceptionable, and to convey the truth reverentially and scripturally: *Communicatio totius Essentiæ Divinæ*"<sup>1</sup> Does this mend the matter or resolve the difficulty? Is "communication from eternity" less a contradiction in terms than "eternal generation"? That which is communicated must come from one being to another, and when a *nature* is communicated it must be from one who possesses that nature to one not previously possessing it, *i.e.* not previously existing in that nature; so that the statement which Dr. Cunningham puts forth is virtually that the Son has eternally existed, and yet at some time did not exist; which is as palpable a contradiction in terms as could well be uttered. It is well enough to say that such a communication that never had a beginning of a nature that, seeing it existed eternally, did not need to be communicated, must have taken place "in an ineffable way;" but I cannot help thinking that such doctrines themselves had much better not be put in words.

On the grounds I have stated, then, I feel it to be impossible for me to accept or teach the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity. Do I, then, renounce all belief in a trinal distinction in the one Godhead? By no means. I cannot read the Scriptures without having this belief forced on me, though it be nowhere, as I have said, formally enunciated. But the *form* in which the Bible presents the subject to me is not that embodied in the creeds of Nicea and Athanasius. What I gather from it is, that there are three manifestations of God in relation to the created universe and the work of human redemption, described severally as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that these three manifestations of God correspond to distinctions in the Godhead for which we have no names, and of the nature of which nothing has been revealed to us; of which, in fact, beyond the simple fact of their existence, we know nothing. What is very plainly made known to us is the *economical* distinction between

<sup>1</sup> *Theology*, p. 279.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,—a distinction that may be stated in the most intelligible form, and made clear by a reference to the works ascribed in Scripture to these three respectively; and to this we are led to believe that a distinction of some sort in the divine nature corresponds, but of *what* sort we do not know, and therefore do not pretend to say. This way of stating the doctrine has the advantage of avoiding modalism on the one hand by asserting a real distinction in the divine nature, while on the other it keeps clear of the unintelligible and self-contradictory statements of the Catholic doctrine by simply asserting the fact of a distinction in the divine nature without pronouncing upon the *kind* of distinction as personal or capable of being described by any term, direct or analogical, in use among men, and by confining the distinction expressed by the words Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to the economical distinctions in the divine manifestations in relation to creation and redemption. We thus identify the Son of God with Jesus Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh, and we regard the Holy Spirit as God working in the creation of the universe, the regeneration of men, and the sanctification of believers, and for this latter end sent forth by the Father and the Son. All that we venture to affirm beyond this is that in the divine nature there are distinctions corresponding to these; but wherein these distinctions in the divine essence consist, or how they are to be designated, we cannot tell, and therefore cannot pretend to believe.

Having stated the doctrine of the Trinity, we now proceed to inquire whether in Scripture any intimations of this doctrine are to be found. We have already admitted that it is nowhere formally enunciated. But though not formally enunciated, it may be so *involved* in the statements of Scripture that we cannot give them their fair and just meaning without admitting it. The evidence thus furnished I would now adduce.

The main argument for this belief, and indeed the only one that can be called direct and positive, is that furnished by the facts alluded to in the first part of this chapter, viz. that whilst Scripture most emphatically affirms the unity of God, it at the same time most clearly teaches that the Father is

God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. These distinctions, we admit, are economic ; they are made known to us in connection with the work of Redemption. But that they are not mere distinctions, not mere designations of different manifestations of the one God, but point back to a real distinction in the Godhead, is taught us by such a statement as that the Son as Logos was not only God, but from all eternity *with* God (*προς τον Θεον*, John i. 1), that is, near to, close by God, and that not by any mere proximity of position (*παρα τω Θεω*), but by intimacy of connection and intercourse,—a statement which conveys at once the idea of most intimate union and yet of real distinction. This is taught us also by the declaration of the Son, that He had glory with the Father, in His presence as distinct from Him yet equally sharing His glory, before the world (the *κοσμος* or ordered universe) was ; by the statement that the Son came forth from the bosom of the Father and was sent by Him into the world ; and by the statement that the Holy Spirit proceedeth or goeth forth (*πορευεται*) from the Father, is held by and sent forth by the Son. Such statements point back to a distinction in the Godhead itself, to which the economical and manifested distinctions of Father, Son, and Spirit correspond. They do not tell us, however, what that distinction is, what is its nature, or what its peculiarities. Obligated, therefore, to hold that there is but one God, and yet that there is a threefold distinction in the one Godhead corresponding to the manifested or economical distinction of Father, Son, and Spirit, we devoutly recognise the fact of such distinction without presuming to say in what it consists, or in any way to explain it.

Now, if this be a truth, we may presume that though not formally announced in Scripture it will be found so alluded to, and so involved in what is said there concerning the Divine Being, that it is only by recognising it that we can adequately explain or satisfactorily account for the language used.

## CHAPTER VII.

## GOD.

III. THE DIVINE SUBSISTENCE *continued.*ii. *The Trinity.*—(iv.) *Proofs from Scripture.*

1. We shall first examine the intimations of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament.

Attention has already been called to the remarkable announcement made by God to the Israelites, "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah thy Elohim is one Jehovah," in which it is announced that the one God is not only numerically one, but in essence and intrinsically one, and this by the use of a plural noun to designate God=*Jehovah Dei tui est unus Jehovah.* (See pp. 34 ff. and 92 ff.) On this, therefore, I need not again dwell. Passing to other announcements in the Old Testament, I notice:—

(1.) It must be admitted by every candid inquirer as a circumstance not a little remarkable, that the sacred writers should have selected a *plural term* as that by which they usually designate the Supreme Being. Writing at a time when Polytheism abounded on every side, and to a people who showed themselves but too prone to take every occasion of forsaking the exclusive worship of the true God, it is natural to conclude that, commissioned as they were to teach the Divine Unity, they would have avoided every term or phrase which might seem to afford the slightest encouragement to set aside that doctrine. Instead of this, however, they freely and continually apply to the Deity terms indicative of plurality; and that without any necessity as respects the language in which they wrote, for, as their own practice shows, the Hebrew affords an equal facility for the use of the singular number with reference to the Deity. Some weighty reason, we may rest assured, gave rise to a usage in itself so anomalous, and in its possible results so dangerous to a doctrine which the inspired penmen were especially anxious to impress upon the minds of all to whom they wrote. No reason can be suggested so likely, as that they were

guided to use such forms because of their appropriateness as designations of Him whose nature displayed a mysterious combination of unity in one sense, with diversity in another.

To weaken the force of this conclusion, it has been objected that the plural form Elohim is applied in Scripture to idols, and as these must be conceived of as single, it will follow that nothing can be argued in favour of a plurality in the Divine Unity, from the application to the Almighty of a plural appellative. On this I remark, first, That whether we can explain the application of the term Elohim to idols or not, it is obvious that this does not in any degree help us to account for the application of the term to Jehovah. The question to be settled is not, Whether a term primarily used of the Almighty may be also used of false deities? but, How came this term to be applied to God at all? How is the fact, that the inspired messengers of the one living and true God spoke of Him almost invariably in the plural, to be accounted for? To this question it is obviously no answer to say, that the same form of speech is used of idol-deities; for this goes no farther than to show, that after the use of the plural form became common, it was extended to false deities as well as the true. The question still remains, How came this usage into existence among the sacred writers at all? and, as it is only upon the Trinitarian hypothesis that this can be answered with any degree of probability, we are entitled to assume for that hypothesis all the advantage which arises from the explanation of the phenomenon. But, secondly, There appears no difficulty in accounting for this application of the term Elohim to single idols, even upon the assumption that it is properly applicable only to the Triune God. As has been justly observed by Dr. Wardlaw, “there is nothing more wonderful in the name being so used *in the plural form* than in its being so used *at all*.”<sup>1</sup> If, without impropriety, the terms applicable to the Supreme Being might be used to designate those idols which human ignorance and depravity had put in His place, then surely the *form* in which these terms were usually applied to the one, might, without impropriety, be used when they were applied to the other. It does not necessarily follow from such

<sup>1</sup> *Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 490, 4th ed.

an application, that *all* the ideas attached to the word in its *primary* application are carried with it into its *subordinate* usages. Nothing is more common in all languages, than for words which in the first instance are appropriate to particular objects, because embracing a certain range of ideas, to become, in the course of time, by dropping one or more of these ideas, capable of being applied to other objects. So it appears to have been in the case before us. The plural form of the words applicable to the Deity came first into use as appropriately expressive of the plurality in the one Godhead, and having thus grown into established use, as Dr. Smith observes, "it came to be transferred to those secondary applications which in time arose, regarding *only* the ideas of sovereignty and supremacy, and dropping that of plurality."<sup>1</sup>

(2.) The conclusion above announced is confirmed by another remarkable anomaly in the language used by the Old Testament writers when speaking of God, viz. the combination of these plural appellatives with singular verbs, pronouns, and adjectives. To this usage, only a few exceptions are found in the Hebrew Scriptures from among hundreds of cases in which the plural appellative is used,—a circumstance which, whilst it shows that this was the regular usage of the sacred writers, at the same time proves that it would have been equally consistent with the idiom of the language to have followed the ordinary rule of grammar applying to such cases. For this anomaly the Trinitarian hypothesis suggests a natural and easy solution. Assuming the fact of a plurality as existing in the Divine Unity, there appears nothing strange in supposing that the sacred writers might be directed by this to such a usage as that in question. So remarkable a departure from the ordinary construction would naturally attract the attention of the reader, and lead him to search after further information, if previously ignorant of the mysterious fact involved; and if aware of that fact, would continually remind him of it as often as his attention was directed by the sacred writer to the being and works of God. Apart from this hypothesis, however, no explanation of this usage can be furnished; and it must remain as one of the most unaccountable and capricious departures from one of

<sup>1</sup> *Scripture Testimony*, vol. i. p. 510, 2nd ed.

the fundamental laws of human speech of which we have an instance in the literature of any nation.

An attempt, it is true, has been made to account for this anomaly by a rule of Hebrew grammar, expressly contrived to meet this particular case. Words expressing dignity, dominion, majesty, or honour, we are told, are commonly put in the plural, even when they denote a singular object, and are coupled with singular adjuncts. Of this *pro re nata* rule, I judge it enough at present to say that its advocates have never been able to substantiate its existence by any *decisive* instances, and that it has been consequently rejected by several of the ablest writers upon Hebrew grammar, even where the author's theological leanings might have induced him to retain it, had he felt that to be practicable.<sup>1</sup>

For this fictitious rule I would venture to substitute one which, if I do not greatly mistake, will be found to express a real idiom of the Hebrew language. It is this: *Substantives in the plural are commonly construed with singular adjuncts, when they describe objects in which the qualities of plurality and unity are combined.* In support of this rule, I would adduce the following instances: Jer. li. 58, הַמִּוֹת בְּבֶל הַרְחִיבָה עֲרֻרָהּ, "The broad wall of Babylon shall be utterly overthrown" (the one wall consisting of many separate pieces of masonry), *Maenia Babylonis lata* (fem. sing.) *penitus evertetur*; Ps. lxxviii. 15, תַּחֲמוֹת רַבָּה, "a great sea" (composed of many

<sup>1</sup> Professor Ewald, whom no one will accuse either of ignorance of Hebrew or of inordinate zeal for the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, declares that "it is a great error to suppose that the Hebrew language, as we find it, has any feeling for a so-called *plur. majesticus*." *Grammar of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, translated by Nicholson. Lond. 1836, p. 231. Some vestiges of this usage, at a period antecedent to the composition of any of the books of the Bible, he thinks remain in the words for *Lord* and *Master*, which are always used in the plural; but of this, as Dr. Smith and Dr. Wardlaw have shown, there is very great reason to doubt. See Smith's *Script. Test.*, vol. i. p. 508 ff., and Wardlaw's *Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 448. Of *Elohim*, Ewald says that it "appears to have remained always in the *pl.*, in prose, from the earliest time;" and in another place he says that it is "designedly construed with the plural, where polytheism or idolatry is intended (Ex. xxxiii. 4, 8), or where the angels may be understood at the same time (Gen. xxxv. 7); otherwise, in accordance to the Mosaic monotheism, it is almost without exception (2 Sam. vii. 23) construed with the *sing.* of the predicate, and rarely also with the *pl.* in apposition (Josh. xxiv. 19; 1 Sam. xvii. 26)." — P. 354.

floods); Ps. xviii. 15, בְּרָקִים רַב, "much lightning" (many flashes of lightning); Ps. cxxiv. 5, עָבַר וַיָּמִים, "The waters (the body of water) has gone over me;" Isa. xvi. 8, שָׂדֵמֹת אִמָּלֵךְ, "The fields (the glebe comprising several fields) languishes;" comp. Hab. iii. 17. To the same rule may be referred the following instances: Joel i. 20, where בְּהֵמֹת is "*the animal creation*;"<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xiv. 1, where אֲנָשִׁים is "*the body of men*" who waited on the prophet; Isa. lix. 12, where חַטֹּאותֵינוּ is "*our guilt*" (consisting of many sins), etc. Of such usages, the account given in grammars and commentaries is exceedingly unsatisfactory. Many of them are treated as mere anomalies, and the student who seeks an explanation is put off with some such piece of information as the following: "Constructio est, qua nomen plur. fem. junctum sibi habet verbum sing. masc."<sup>2</sup>—which leaves the matter exactly where it was. Others of them are treated as coming under the head of verbs used impersonally, which assuredly is not the case; and others as belonging to the rule for nouns used distributively, which is just as far from the fact. I cannot help thinking that the rule above proposed supplies the simplest and most probable mode of accounting for such usages. That rule is only a counterpart of the rule regarding collectives in the singular being construed with plural adjuncts, and the one is not less natural than the other.<sup>3</sup> If the rule be admitted, the use of Elohim and other appellations of Deity with singular verbs and adjectives will, upon the Trinitarian hypothesis, fall naturally under it: if that hypothesis be rejected, this usage is and remains an anomaly.

(3.) In perfect keeping with the peculiar phraseology already noticed, is that occasionally ascribed to the Divine Being when speaking of or to Himself. In the cases here referred to, Jehovah makes use of the first person plural, as in

<sup>1</sup> As they say in Scotland, "the bestial."

<sup>2</sup> Rosenmüller's *Schol.* in Hab. iii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Upon this principle the learned and philosophic Kuehner proposes to account for the well-known usage in the Greek classics of neuter plurals with singular verbs. "This construction," says he, "rests upon a deep and just sense of language (*Sprachgefühl*). The multitude of impersonal objects denoted by the neuter plural was regarded by the Greeks as one object, *en masse* as it were, in which all individuality was disregarded, as a simple heap."—*Ausführliche Grammatik d. Griech. Sprache*, 11ter. Th. s. 49. Hanover, 1835.



Gen. i. 26 : " And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, according to *our* likeness." So also in chap. iii. 22 : " And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as *one of us*" etc.; chap. xi. 7, " Go to, *let us go down*, and there (let us) confound their language," etc.; and Isa. vi. 9, " And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for *us*?" etc. These passages present a peculiarity which is well deserving of notice, and for which no satisfactory reason has been given by those who would banish from the Old Testament all traces of the plurality of persons in the one Godhead. The supposition that God uses this language with reference to the angels whom He had taken into His counsel; or, that He spoke to the earth when about to create man; or, that He uses this style to commend humility to men, seeing that He hereby speaks as if He took counsel with inferiors, which are the opinions of different Rabbins, may all be safely left to that neglect which is unhappily due to the great mass of modern Jewish interpretations of the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup> As for the notion that God here uses the language appropriate to a sovereign, it yet remains to be shown that the use of the plural number by sovereigns was customary among the Jews, or was known at all at the early period when the Mosaic writings were penned; and, moreover, even could this be shown, it would still remain to be proved that any analogy whatever exists between the style of the passages above quoted and that in which sovereigns usually speak when they use the plural number. The most natural, and, at the same time, satisfactory account of the usage in question is, that it contains an implied reference to a plurality in the divine nature.<sup>2</sup>

(4.) The instances hitherto adduced can only be regarded as affording certain dim intimations of this great truth; I have

<sup>1</sup> It is a fact not unworthy of notice, that the two former of these interpretations are indignantly rejected by the Rabbins themselves. Thus Abarbanel : " The Blessed Himself created all these, without any other thing, by His own infinite power;" and Kimchi : " None of the angels, much less any of mankind, directed His Spirit, or suggested counsel to Him when He was creating the world." Apud Witsii *Judæus Christianizans circa Principia Fidei*, etc. Ultrajecti, 1661, p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> See Smith's *Script. Test.*, vol. i. p. 524 ff., and Wardlaw's *Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 42 ff.

now to call your attention to one of a more direct and palpable kind. I refer to the distinction which is made in many parts of the Old Testament between Jehovah as invisible and Jehovah as manifested to men,—a distinction which is so expressed, that we are constrained to come to the conclusion that in the one Jehovah there is a mysterious plurality of persons. The facts of the case are briefly these: In many narratives of the Old Testament, an exalted being is introduced bearing the appellation of “The Angel or Messenger of God or of Jehovah” (מַלְאֲכֵי יְהוָה, מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים), who appears as the commissioned agent of the Almighty, who speaks of Himself as, in one sense, distinct from the unseen and eternal Jehovah, but who, at the same time, is styled *God* and *Jehovah*, and assumes to Himself the honours and the works of the Supreme. The only hypothesis upon which these facts can be reconciled and explained seems to be that which regards this Angel of Jehovah as a properly divine being identical with God, but with a difference of some sort, who for the accomplishment of certain great purposes of their common counsel assumed the human form, appeared to men as the Sent-of-God, had intercourse in this capacity with men, performed certain works on earth, and was known and worshipped by pious persons as manifested Deity (see Gen. xvi. 7–13, xviii. 19–28, xxi. 17–19, xxxi. 11–13, xxxii. 24–30; Ex. iii. 2, 4, 15, xiv. 19; Num. xxii. 22–25; Judg. xiii. 3–23; Zech. i. 12, 16, iii. 1, etc.; Mal. iii. 1).

(5.) The language used in predicting the Messiah is often such as to require a belief in the doctrine of the Trinity to make it intelligible or justifiable. Thus eternal existence is ascribed to Him (Micah v. 1); He is called the mighty God, the Father of the everlasting age (*i.e.* its master, possessor, ruler, Isa. ix. 6); His advent is spoken of as the arising of Jehovah and of His glory on Zion (Isa. lx. 1, 2); He is identified even as the suffering Messiah with Jehovah (Zech. xii. 9, 10); He is represented as elevated to Jehovah’s right hand, and as God reigning over all (Ps. cx. 1, xlv. 6, 7); He as the messenger of the covenant is identified with the Lord, the divine King of Israel, to whom belonged the temple as His palace (Mal. iii. 1). Such utterances can hardly fail to suggest that in some sense the Messiah though sent forth by God was one

with Him. But such a suggestion waits for the revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity to make it plain and intelligible, and so involves that doctrine.

(6.) In many passages of the Old Testament the phrase "The Spirit of God," or "of Jehovah," occurs in conjunction with certain attributes, qualities, and acts which lead to the conclusion that by that phrase is designated a divine being. Thus we are told that the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters,—the Spirit of the Lord inspired the prophets, and through them, by His Spirit, Jehovah of Hosts sent His words to men,—the good Spirit of God is given to instruct,—the Holy Spirit is vexed by rebellion,—the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against the enemy—remains with the people of God—and in answer to prayer is not taken away from them. These and many similar passages would seem to conduct to the inference, that by this "Spirit of Jehovah" was intended, as by the phrase already examined, "Angel of Jehovah," a divine person in some sense distinct from, and yet, in another sense, one with the invisible Jehovah. To avoid this conclusion, two hypothetical interpretations have been advanced.

*a.* The one is, that the phrase is only a periphrasis for Jehovah, and that nothing more is implied in it than if the word "God" alone had been used. On this I remark—

First, that this hypothesis is in itself gratuitous and improbable. The phrase in question, by its very grammatical constitution, conveys to the mind the idea of something which Jehovah may be said to *possess*. We have analogous cases (grammatically, I mean) in such phrases as "the hand of Jehovah," "the eye of Jehovah," etc., which, as every person perceives, at once convey the idea of something *belonging to* Jehovah. So with the phrase before us. An attribute of God it may express, but God Himself it does not. The Spirit of God is *HIS*, not *HE*.

Secondly, though this interpretation, if admissible, would suit some of the passages in which the phrase in question is used, there are others by which it is plainly repudiated. Such are all those in which Jehovah and the Spirit are represented as distinct, and the latter as being sent by the former. Unless we would render the language of such

passages altogether meaningless, we must understand the Spirit of Jehovah as something distinguishable from Jehovah simply so designated. When, *e.g.*, God is said to have testified against the Israelites by His Spirit in (or through) His prophets (Neh. ix. 30), it would be as reasonable to argue that the prophets of God mean Himself, as that His Spirit means nothing more.

*b.* The other hypothesis is, that by the phrase "Spirit of Jehovah," is intended some *attribute* of the Deity, such as *power, wisdom*, etc. That such *may* be the meaning of the phrase has been already conceded; but it needs only a slight glance at the passages in which it is used to satisfy us that this interpretation will not suit *all* of them. What, for instance, could David mean, upon this hypothesis, by the following prayer: "Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy holy Spirit from me"? (Ps. li. 11). This language evidently implies that the Psalmist *had* God's holy Spirit; consequently, upon this hypothesis, that he possessed *a divine attribute*,—which is absurd. Again, in another passage, the prophet declares, respecting the Messiah, that "the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Isa. xi. 2). Now we have only to apply the interpretation under consideration to this passage, to make the language of the prophet that of absolute absurdity. Let us take any of the divine attributes,—that of *power*, for instance,—and how will the passage read? "The power of God shall rest upon him, the power of God of wisdom and understanding, the power of God of counsel and might, *i.e.* power, the power of God of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Can any intelligible idea be gathered from this confused jargon of words? Or can we suppose for a moment that such was the style of men who wrote by inspiration of God?

It is obvious that neither of these hypotheses will suffice to explain the phenomena. Our only consistent course, therefore, is to set them aside, and adopt that which will, *viz.* that by the Spirit of Jehovah is intended that divine subsistence to whom a similar appellation is given in the New Testament, and who there appears as the equal of the Father and the Son, the third person in the undivided Trinity. On

this hypothesis all the passages in question admit of an easy and harmonious explanation; so that, even though we were unwilling to adopt it, no other course would seem to be open to us on the principles of sound inductive reasoning.<sup>1</sup>

(7.) Besides the passages already adduced as containing intimations of a plurality of persons in the one Godhead, there are one or two others which it is important to notice, chiefly because they seem to convey that intimation in connection with an allusion to the *threefold extent* of that plurality as more clearly revealed in the New Testament. I pass over such passages as Num. vi. 22–27 and Isa. vi. 1–5, where the whole amount of evidence bearing upon this question resolves itself into this, that in the former the name of Jehovah, and in the latter the ascription to Him of holiness, is *thrice* repeated. On this I humbly apprehend no argument of any kind can be built, in the face of the obvious fact that the threefold repetition of a word or phrase is a common Biblical mode of adding force and vehemence to an affirmation. Thus Jeremiah represents the Jews as saying, “The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we;” and the same prophet himself commences one of his oracles with the exclamation, “O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord.”<sup>2</sup> In fact, the number *three* appears to have been very generally regarded as carrying with it the idea of *completeness* and *magnitude*; of which we have illustrations, not only in the Greek and Latin classics, but also in the languages, traditions, and proverbs of many nations.<sup>3</sup> If any shall insist

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. J. Pye Smith’s *Discourse on the Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit*. Lond. 1831.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. vii. 4, xxii. 29. Comp. also Ezek. xxi. 32, and 2 Sam. xviii. 33. So also in the New Testament the judgments of God upon His enemies are announced by an angel saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of earth,” etc. (Rev. viii. 13).

<sup>3</sup> Compare such phrases and sayings as the following:—“*Felices ter et amplius quos*,” etc., Hor. *Carm.* I. xiii. 17. “*Ter si resurgat murus . . . ter pereat*,” etc., *Carm.* III. iii. 65. “*Ille æs triplex circa pectus erat*,” etc., *Carm.* I. iii. 10. “*Κακῶν τριχυμία*, the greatest of evils,” Æsch. *Prom.* V. 1051 (cf. Blomfield, *Gloss. in loc. et in Agam.* 237). “*Τριταλαιναί κοραι*,” Eurip. *Hippol.* 739–40. “*Τρισμακαρες σοίγες κασίγνητοι*,” Hom. *Od.* vi. 155. “*Ἐν τρισὶν ωραίοθην κ.τ.λ. Τρία δ’ εἶδη ἐμίσησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου, κ.τ.λ.*,” *Sap. Sirac.* xxv. 1, 2; cf. xxvi. 5. “By three things the world stands, the Law, Religion, Beneficence,” Simon the Just. “Have these three things always in mind, and

that, at the basis and origin of this widespread notion there lies an obscure reminiscence of primitive tradition regarding the threefold perfection of the divine nature, I shall not certainly dispute the assertion; at the same time, this will furnish no good reason for our considering any passage of Scripture in which the linguistic usage arising from this notion is exemplified as affording a direct allusion to the Trinity. The same objection, however, does not apply to such a passage as the following: "In all their afflictions there was no affliction, but the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and grace He redeemed them, and bare them, and carried them from the beginning. But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit, so that He was turned to be their enemy, and Himself fought against them" (Isa. lxiii. 9, 10).<sup>1</sup> In this passage mention is made not only of Jehovah as such, but of the Angel of His Presence and His Holy Spirit, phrases which we have already seen to designate divine persons, and which are used in this passage with the same mingling of the ideas of identity and diversity between them and Jehovah which we have seen in other passages. Upon the strength of our previous observations, therefore, we are justified in adducing this as a remarkable intimation of the doctrine of the Trinity; in which light it has been regarded by many very able scholars.<sup>2</sup>

Another passage to the same effect occurs, Isa. xlviii. 16,

thou shalt not sin, viz. that above thee there is an eye which sees thee, an ear which hears thee, and a book in which all thy deeds and words are written," Ribbi. "In three things is a man known,—in a cup, in a purse, and in wrath," *Auct. incert. Rabbin.* etc.

<sup>1</sup> Of the initiatory clause of this passage various interpretations have been given. Our common version, following the K'ri (לו, *to him*, for אל, *not*), renders it, "in all their affliction He was afflicted;" and so Vitringa, De Dieu, and others. The source of the K'ri here, however, is, in all probability, the difficulty of the text; at any rate the latter, being the more difficult reading, is to be preserved. It is also the reading of all the old versions and of the Targum. Cocceius proposed the rendering: "In omni angustia eorum non oppugnabat [quisquam illos], et angelus faciei ejus salvavit ipsos;" and explains it as meaning, that, no sooner did any one assail them, than the Angel saved them. This rendering of ו—אל is supported by 2 Kings xx. 4, and by the analogy of ו—בב, Isa. xl. 24. In following this rendering, I have preferred viewing אל as a noun, for the sake of the antithesis to צרה in the former member.

<sup>2</sup> Among the rest by Michaelis, *Bib. Heb., in loc.*

“Approach unto me, hear this; from the beginning have I not spoken occultly; from the time when it was I was there, and now the Lord hath sent me and His Spirit.” The speaker here is the same who in ver. 12 calls himself “the First and the Last,” and in ver. 13 claims to himself the work of creation.<sup>1</sup> The speaker, therefore, must be regarded as *divine*. But in the verse before us this divine being speaks of himself as distinct from the Lord God, and as sent by Him. He describes himself also as the author of communications to men from the first, and declares that from the time when this, which he was about to announce, existed (for I take *וַאֲנִי* to be the subject of the fem. verb *הָיְתָה*), *i.e.* as Michaelis and others explain it, when the divine purpose conveyed in the following verses was formed,—in other words, from all eternity,—he was. Such a Being can be none other than the Second Person in the Trinity, the revealer of God to man, at once the equal and the messenger of the Father; and so the passage has been viewed by the great body of interpreters, ancient and modern. The only objection to this view, according to Doederlein (*in loc.*),<sup>2</sup> is, that in no other place is the Messiah said to have been sent by the Spirit; but, on the contrary, that the Spirit is rather said to have been sent by Him, as well as by the Father. But Doederlein himself admits in a previous part of his note that the word *וַאֲנִי* may be rendered as in the accusative here, *et spiritum ejus*, which would not only obviate his objection, but make the verse utter a still more decided testimony in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity than it does in the Authorized Version. To this rendering, I believe, no objection can be offered, either from the genius of the language or the usage of the prophet; and, as Dr. Smith has justly observed (*Script. Test.* i. 532), it is the rendering which the position of the word at the close of the sentence properly and naturally requires. We have here, then, a clear recognition of that personal distinction in the one Godhead which, in the

<sup>1</sup> The supposition that the speaker here is the prophet himself is so harsh, and introduces such confusion into the passage, that nothing but the absolute impossibility of finding another interpretation could justify its adoption.

<sup>2</sup> *Esaias ex recens. Textus Heb. ad fidem Codd. MSS. et Verss. Antiqq. Latine vertit*, etc., J. Ch. Doederlein. Ed. 3tia, Norimberg, 1788.

fuller revelations of the New Testament, we are taught to express by the words Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Such is a brief outline of the evidence in favour of the position that, while the Unity of the divine existence and nature was emphatically taught to the Jews in their Scriptures, this was combined with numerous intimations of the existence of a plurality in that Unity, compatible with it and inseparable from it. That such intimations are otherwise than obscure when compared with those of the New Testament is not affirmed; but this is admitting nothing more than that they were appropriate to that dispensation which enjoyed only "a shadow of good things to come." Be it observed, however, that as the doctrine of the Trinity appears to have been revealed with an especial—we might say exclusive—reference to the Person and work of the Messiah, it is only after the intimations concerning Him have been considered that the full evidence in favour of this doctrine has been collected. As this yet remains to be done by us, in relation to the present inquiry, we must consequently suspend our final opinion until the full merits of the case are submitted to our scrutiny. The argument is cumulative, and it is only when it rises to its full height that we can estimate aright its weight and worth.

(8.) In the meantime, it may be observed that the conclusion at which we have arrived is not a little confirmed by the fact, that among the Jews the doctrine of a manifested Deity, distinct from and yet one with Jehovah, and even some traces of the doctrine of a Trinity, have been found to prevail from a very early period. The evidence of this is supplied by the statements of Philo respecting "the Logos," by the use of the phrase "the Word of Jehovah" by the Targumists, by the Rabbinical doctrines regarding the Metatron, and by certain statements in the Cabbalistic writings. The most natural way of accounting for the rise of such opinions among the Jews is by tracing them, as many of the Jewish writers themselves trace them, to those intimations in the Old Testament Scriptures which we have been considering in this lecture.<sup>1</sup>

There may be some who shall be disposed to regard the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Witsii *Jud. Christ.*, p. 301 ff.



reasonings contained, and the hypothesis advocated, in the preceding pages as fanciful and unsound. To such objectors I shall content myself with replying in the words of Archbishop Whately, used with reference to another subject,<sup>1</sup> "They cannot deny that the *phenomena exist*, and must have *some cause*; and the fairest and most decisive objection to any proposed solution is *to offer a better*"

2. What we have thus found adumbrated or alluded to in the O. T. we find more distinctly intimated in the New. There, not only is the true and proper Deity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit clearly affirmed, but the allusions to such a fact in the divine nature as that expressed by the doctrine of the Trinity are proportionately distinct and unmistakable.

(1.) In John i. 1 the apostle says, "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God."<sup>2</sup> Assuming that this refers to Jesus Christ the Son of God in His pre-existent state (it can refer to none else), it distinctly attributes to Him eternal existence,—for He who at the beginning of time already was must have existed from eternity,—affirms His true Deity, and, at the same time, intimates a distinction, without saying wherein that consists, between God as God and the Logos. It seems safe from such a statement to conclude that there is a real and essential distinction in the Godhead corresponding to that which was manifested when the Logos became flesh and dwelt on earth, though it would not be safe or competent for us to derive from this any conclusion as to the *nature* of that distinction, or the properties characteristic of those thus represented as distinct.

(2.) When we consider the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning Himself, we find Him asserting not only His pre-existence, and that He came forth from God, but also His unity with God (John x. 30), His participation in the divine counsels (John v. 20), His right to equal honour with God the Father (ver. 23), His having life in Himself as the Father has life in Himself (ver. 26), His community

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion*, p. 34, note.

<sup>2</sup> [The doctrine of the Logos is fully discussed in Part III.—CHRISTOLOGY.—ED.]

of Being with the Father, so that the Father is in Him and He in the Father (John x. 38), and that in such a way as that the Father did the works which Christ did (xiv. 10); His being so identified with the Father that he who had seen Him had seen the Father (ver. 7); His sending forth the Spirit of truth from the Father (xv. 26), and other similar declarations. Such utterances do not in so many words affirm the doctrine of the Trinity, but it is impossible to give them their fair and full meaning without the admission in substance of this doctrine.

The same may be said of such a declaration as that of John: "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 i. 18). The language here used is very remarkable. Not only is the Son declared to be the revealer of the Father, but this revelation is made not by communication to Him from God of what He is to reveal to men, but from His own personal knowledge of God derived from closest intimacy with Him. Further, it is intimated that this intimacy is from a present and abiding proximity to the Father. The Son is in the bosom of the Father. This is His abiding-place, so that He speaks forth to men from the very bosom of God. Closely akin to this is our Lord's own language to Nicodemus when He says, "No man hath ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven" (John iii. 13). Here our Lord, on earth sitting conversing with a ruler of the Jews, speaks of Himself as even then in heaven. In the background of all such representations lies the fact of the Trinity as that by which alone they can be understood or justified.

In our Lord's Intercessory Prayer He speaks of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. With this we may compare the statement of St. Paul, that previous to His appearance on earth our Lord had existed *ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ*, in the form or image of God, that He counted it not robbery to be equal with God, or that He counted not equality with God a thing to be caught at, but emptied Himself, etc. (Phil. ii. 6-8). There are difficulties connected with the interpretation of this passage; but into these we need not enter here; for on any interpretation this much is evident,

that the apostle ascribes to our Lord in His pre-existent state equality with God, an existence in the form or image or glory of God, and a laying aside of this so as to appear in a humble condition, a partaker of our nature, and in the form of a servant. The explanation which De Wette gives of the passage may be accepted by us as sufficient for our present purpose. "The thought of the apostle," he says, "is this: Christ had, when He entered on His Messianic career, the divine glory potentially in Himself, and He might have given it to Himself, could have manifested it in His life. But as it did not fall in with the design of the work of redemption that He should from the beginning receive divine glory, it would have been a robbery, an usurpation had He assumed it." It may be doubted whether this is a correct explanation of the concluding part of the apostle's statement. But the general purport of the whole is justly given, and with this we shall for the present content ourselves. It is plain that such a statement points to an essential relation of Him who became manifest as Jesus Christ, the Saviour, to God, which receives its adequate explanation only from such a doctrine as that of the Trinity.<sup>1</sup>

(3.) In fine, I refer to those passages in which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are associated on terms of equality. They are so by our Lord Himself in the commission He gave to His apostles (Matt. xxviii. 19). The Apostle Paul also associates them as the sole object of prayer (2 Cor. xiii. 14). Now, in such a collocation three things are certified to us: *a.* That Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are beings personally distinct, and not mere manifestations of the one Being. *b.* That all being placed thus on an equality as sources of religious authority, objects of religious belief and prayer, all must be divine. *c.* As Deity cannot consist merely in manifestation, but must exist also in essence, these three distinct divine manifestations point back to a threefold distinction of some sort in the one Godhead. It is obvious that the doctrine of the Trinity, as we have stated it, supplies the only adequate expression of such a representation.

<sup>1</sup> "Though *μορφή* is not the same as *φύσις* or *οὐσία*, yet the possession of the *morphe* involves participation in the *ousia* also, for *morphe* implies not the external accidents, but the essential attributes."—Lightfoot.

By this induction of particulars I hope I have made it apparent that the doctrine of the Trinity, though nowhere formally stated in the Bible, in reality *pervades* that book, so that many of its statements become intelligible throughout only on the assumption that this doctrine is true. The principle on which I have proceeded is one the legitimacy of which none can question. It is the principle, in fact, which all scientific inquirers hold to be the only sound principle of investigation, where our object is from sensible phenomena to arrive at a conclusion as to the law or general or higher truth which they involve, and in which they find their explanation. The principle is, that the hypothesis which accounts for the phenomena, and which alone accounts for them, is the true one. This is a principle continually acted on in scientific research, and to the successful application of which the world is indebted for the brilliant generalizations and valuable discoveries of modern science. This principle I have applied to the subject before us. The sensible phenomena here are the statements of Scripture, and of these I have adduced a copious series for the purpose of showing that the hypothesis of the Trinity, as I have enunciated it, adequately and alone accounts for such statements. If, then, my induction has been fairly and truly conducted, it will follow that that hypothesis is scientifically established as true.

(4.) But whilst we are taught by such statements as those we have been considering that in the one Godhead there is a plurality, and a distinction which is threefold, it will be observed that no information is given as to the nature of that distinction or as to the relation essentially of the beings distinguished to each other. There is nothing said or intimated which should lead us to conclude that the distinction is personal; nor is anything either directly or by implication advanced concerning paternity and sonship, eternal generation, eternal procession, spiration active or passive, and such like. These phrases are purely ecclesiastical, and express theories which have been formed by speculative thinkers to explain what Scripture leaves unexplained. Where any reference is in Scripture to the sonship of the Christ, it is to Jesus as begotten in time and appearing in our world as the Word which, essentially divine, became flesh and dwelt among

men for a season, and having been in a powerful manner declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead, is now in heaven seated at the right hand of God, and in human nature wielding the power of God, and receiving the homage due only to God. So with the Spirit: it is of Him as sent forth by and proceeding from the Father and Son to carry on the work of redemption in our world, that Scripture represents Him as distinct from the Father and the Son.

(5.) And as it is in connection with the work of redemption that the economical distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is most distinctly presented to us, and that the fact of a distinctive plurality in the divine essence is made known to us, so it is chiefly for its bearing on the work of redemption that this subject is brought before us in Scripture. Men have made the doctrine of the Trinity a purely speculative dogma, but it is not so that it is presented to us in the Bible. There it is for its practical bearings upon us and our salvation that it is chiefly presented to us. It is not so much to tell us something about God in Himself that it is revealed to us, as to tell us something about God in His relation to us. As to the relation of the so-called Persons in the one God head to each other, it tells us nothing; as to the relation of these as manifested in the economy of grace, it tells us much. It unfolds to us the wondrous fact that God redeems fallen man to Himself by Himself through Himself. Of Him and to Him and through Him are all things, who hath reconciled us unto Himself by His Son, and brings us to Himself by His Spirit. It is when thus viewed that the doctrine becomes profitable to us for our spiritual life; and it is under this aspect that the doctrine should be presented by us in our preaching to others. It will do no good, and may do much harm, to puzzle men's minds with speculations on subjects too high for the human intellect to grasp. It can only do good to speak to men of what is plainly intelligible, clearly taught in Scriptures, and having a practical bearing on the spiritual interests of men. That God the Father purposed the redemption of our fallen race, that He formed the plan by which that was to be attained, that He sent His Son into the world to carry out that plan and make it effectual,

and that He sends His Spirit to give effect in men to that plan, are propositions which all can understand, and which all can apply for their own advantage.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### GOD.

#### IV. DIVINE WORKS.

We now proceed to consider the manifestations of God in Creation and Providence.

##### i. *Creation.*

That God is the Cause of all existence beside His own, the Creator of all things that are, whether subject to our senses or not, is a truth again and again enunciated in Scripture. The announcement of it stands at the very threshold of Scripture in the emphatic words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," where "the heavens and the earth" stand for the universe as distinct from God. In this short sentence the Bible places itself in antagonism to a whole phalanx of opinions taught in ancient schools of philosophy or incorporated with ancient systems of religion. This sentence is a denial of the Greek doctrine of the eternity of matter, of the Epicurean doctrine of a fortuitous concourse of atoms, as that out of which the Kosmos arose, of the Stoic doctrine of an all-compelling fate, of the Pantheistic doctrine of the identity of God with the universe, of the Polytheistic doctrine of a plurality of gods, and of the dualistic doctrine of a good and a bad principle dividing the formation and the rule of the world between them. Whether it is also opposed to the modern development-hypothesis or not depends on how that hypothesis is stated, whether as superseding a Creator, or only as describing a method by which the Creator works. Supposing that all existing objects in the universe around us are the result of a process of evolution carried on through long ages from a

primary germ or protoplasm, the question will still remain, Whence the original germ, the protoplasm itself? And if it be replied that it was formed by God and placed by Him so as in obedience to laws appointed also by Him to work out the processes which have resulted in the existing universe, then the fact of a creation and of a Creator is as much admitted as when it is asserted that the universe as it now appears came into being at His fiat. And that that is what the advocates of the development or evolution theory intend to assert, may be fairly argued from their selecting of the word *protoplasm* as the designation of what they regard as the primary element; for that word, compounded from *πρωτον*, “first,” and *πλασμα*, “anything moulded,” means “the thing first moulded;” and as a thing cannot be moulded without a moulder, they by the use of this term implicitly admit that the world came in the first instance from a Maker.

In seeking to determine the teaching of Scripture on this subject it is not necessary that we should lay much stress on the use of the word *בָּרָא* in the verse I have cited and elsewhere in the O. T., or on the use of the word *κτιζειν* in the N. T., to denote the act of God in the formation of the world. Both these words properly convey the idea of *creation*; and they are the only words used where creation is unquestionably intended; but as they are sometimes used also in the sense of *making*, where the adjustment of already existing materials is alone intended, it is better not to lay too much stress upon them as proving the creation of the world by God. It is, however, to be noted that *בָּרָא* and *κτιζειν* are used in Scripture only where God is the Agent, and are never employed when the act of man is to be described. I must also call attention to the remarkable expression in Gen. ii. 3, where the historian, speaking of the consecration of the seventh day, says, “because that in it He [God] rested from all His work which God created for making (אֲשֶׁר-בָּרָא לַעֲשׂוֹת).” In whatever way this last clause is taken, whether we render *לַעֲשׂוֹת* as a gerund *faciendo*, “by making,” *i.e.* by an energetic process; or (which seems preferable) as a future participle, “in order to make,” *i.e.* that having created it He might make it and give it such form as He saw meet; or, as in the A. V., “created and made,” the dis-

inction between the creating and the making, between the primary calling into being and the disposing, ordering, and arranging of the material so called into being, is made manifest, and must not be overlooked by us. It is also worthy of notice that as בָּרָא is nowhere used except of a creating by God, it would seem to indicate that it expresses a peculiarly divine act, and is not synonymous with mere *making*, such as may proceed from a creature.

In Scripture creation is invariably represented as the effect of the divine will, as resulting from the simple utterance of the divine *fiat*. “By the word of Jehovah,” says the Psalmist, “were the heavens made ; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea together as an heap ; He laid up the depth in store houses. Let all the earth fear Jehovah : let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spake, and it was done ; He commanded, and it stood fast ” (Ps. xxxiii. 6–9). “Let them,” cries another Psalmist after summoning all creatures to praise the Lord, “let them praise the name of Jehovah : for He commanded, and they were created ” (Ps. cxlviii. 5). “Through faith,” says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, “we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear ” (Heb. xi. 3). St. Peter also censures those who “are willingly ignorant of this, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water ” (2 Pet. iii. 5), *i.e.* in the chaotic state. To these Biblical utterances we may add two from the Apocrypha to show how the fact thus announced was commonly accepted amongst the Jews. In the Wisdom of Solomon we read, in an address to the divine Wisdom, “For Thy almighty hand that made the world of matter without form (*αμορφου υλης*) ” (Wisd. xi. 18) ; and in the Second Book of Maccabees the mother of seven sons, whom the tyrant Antiochus had doomed to death, exhorting the youngest of them to constancy, says, “I beseech thee, my son, look upon the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, and consider that God made them of things that were not ; and so was mankind made likewise ” (2 Macc. vii. 28).



In this last passage the creation of the world is described as a making of the heaven and earth and all things therein out of things that were not. This is not an unusual way of describing creation. In answer to the question, What is it to create? nothing is more common than to say, "It is to bring something out of nothing." A little reflection, however, may suffice to show that such a statement is utterly absurd. If anything is brought out of another thing, that other thing must contain it before it is brought out of it. But in nothing there are no contents; nothing in utter emptiness, mere vacuity; and hence to speak of bringing something out of nothing is a contradiction in terms. The old maxim holds universally true, "*Ex nihilo nihil fit.*" It is wrong, therefore, to say that God made the world out of nothing. It is not thus that the Bible describes creation or the creative act. It tells us that God *made* the world and all things in it, that He *formed* the earth and the heavens, that He spake and they were made, He commanded and they were created; that He calleth things that are not as though they were, and that of Him and through Him and to Him are all things. But nowhere do we find any such expression that He made all things out of things that were not, or that the universe was created out of nothing.

Martensen represents creation as the calling into actual realization of the eternal possibilities of the divine will.<sup>1</sup> More clearly Sir W. Hamilton<sup>2</sup> has set forth the same idea. In answer to the question, What is our thought of creation? he says, "It is not a thought of the mere springing of nothing into something. On the contrary, creation is conceived and is by us conceivable only as the evolution of existence from possibility into actuality by the fiat of the Deity. . . . The divine fiat was the prominent cause of the creation; and thus Deity containing the cause, contained potentially the effect." This is the proper statement of the subject. All things are of God; and creation is simply the bringing into actual existence by His will of what existed from all eternity potentially in Him. In this, however, there is simply the correct statement of the fact; we have here no explanation of it. This is beyond our reach. We

<sup>1</sup> *Christliche Dogmatik*, § 61.

<sup>2</sup> *Discussions*, p. 620.

must be content to receive the fact on competent evidence without comprehending it. Our highest science here but proclaims our nescience, and bids us be humble and adore.

## ii. *Providence.*

Besides the work of Creation, God reveals Himself to men in the work of Providence. He is not one who, having constructed a work, leaves it to itself without any further superintendence of it or care for it. On the contrary, He has constant regard to the work of His hands, and He shows that regard by His Providence.

The word "Providence" simply means *foresight* (from the Latin *provideo*); but as with a wise being foresight leads to the use of means adjusted to meet what is foreseen, the word commonly denotes not so much the mere foreseeing as the adoption of means proper to what is foreseen. In this sense it might be used to indicate that prudent care which a man takes for the future by arranging affairs so as to avoid loss or injury, and to secure advantage to himself and others. In this sense it is used by Tertullus in reference to the Governor Felix; and we speak of a "provident man;" and when a man thus acts we say that he "provides" for the future. Usage, however, has restricted the application of the term to the divine arrangements for the ordering of creature existences so as to accomplish the divine purposes. As these constitute the highest and most momentous of arrangements dictated by foresight, it is to them that by way of emphasis the term is almost exclusively applied.

Thus restricted, Providence means the agency of God in the universe of creatures, whereby the purposes of His will in relation to it and them are accomplished. Or it may be defined as "the exercise of the perfections of God in the preservation and direction of the universe in all its parts by the wisest means and to the best ends."<sup>1</sup> Or "that most potent acting of God by which He provides for His creatures already existing in all things, and governs them according to the counsel of His own will."<sup>2</sup> Or "that affection of the divine will from which it comes to pass that both the matter

<sup>1</sup> J. Pye Smith, *Theol.* p. 360.

<sup>2</sup> Burmann, *Synopsis*, i. 319.

and form of the universe continue to be, and that the changes in created things happen in accordance with the supreme will of the Creator.”<sup>1</sup>

The general idea of Providence has been by divines analysed into (1) An intellectual act, prævision, *προγνωσις*; (2) An act of will, decree, or purpose, *προθεσις*. (3) An act of operation, the execution of the decree, the fulfilment of the purpose in the actual sustentation and government of the world, *διοίκησις*. This last is Providence properly so called, and is to be regarded as the work of the Three-One God.

In this sense the word Providence does not occur in the Bible. We have it, as already observed, in Acts xxiv. 3, in relation to human precautions and arrangements; and the same word, *προνοια*, which is there translated “Providence,” in the A. V. occurs in Rom. xiii. 14, where it is rendered by “provision;” and in the Apocryphal book, the Wisdom of Solomon, it is twice used in relation to God (xiv. 3, xvii. 2); but in the canonical Scriptures it nowhere occurs in this relation. Though the *word* is not used, however, the truth it embodies when spoken of God is amply attested, as we shall presently see, by the inspired writers.

The Providence of God displays itself (i.) in the conservation of all things in order and utility, and (ii.) the governing of all things so as to secure purposed results. To these some add a third, which they denominate *Concursus Dei*, or God’s concurrence in events. But this seems superfluous, as God’s co-operation with any of His creatures is always conservative of the order He has established, and promotive of His own purposes, and is not really distinct from the other two.

#### (i.) *Conservation.*

The Providence of God, though distinguishable in thought from His Omniscience, cannot in reality be separated from it. As omniscient, God knows from all eternity everything that is to happen to any of His creatures in the universe; and what He thus knows to be He purposes to be; for, as He has power to prevent its being, if He wills not to exert this power He wills or purposes that the thing shall be. It does

<sup>1</sup> Wegscheider, *Instt.* p. 347.

not follow from this that God decrees all things that happen, or that all things are the effect of His direct agency. God decrees what He Himself does, and He does what He decrees. But many things happen which are not directly caused by God. These things, therefore, He has not decreed. But as He knew they would happen, He has purposed they shall happen. else He would have prevented them. They are thus parts in that great scheme on which He has willed that the universe should be regulated. He will therefore see to it that they happen as He has purposed. And this is His Providence.

A distinction is sometimes made between the *general* providence of God and the *special* providence of God ; by the former of which is understood the divine control and management of the universe as a whole or in its larger masses, and by the latter the divine control and management of specific individual objects, especially such as are small and apparently trifling. But the Scriptures recognise no such distinction ; nor on the ground of reason can it be accepted ; for when it is of *perfect* and *universal* control that we speak, it is impossible to conceive how that can be exercised in the whole without being exercised in each special part of the whole. If the universe is to be preserved in order and utility, no part of it, however minute, can be overlooked ; for, just as a particle of sand may impede the action and destroy the utility of some frail and delicate machine, so might what appears to us a small or trifling object, if allowed to fall out of its proper place or to depart from its proper acting in the universe, be the source of great and lasting disorder and evil to the whole ; and if the universe is to be made subservient to the perfect carrying out of the divine purposes, then must all its parts conspire to this, else might some counteract others, and so the result come short of being perfect.

1. The providence of God in the sense explained is a doctrine of natural as well as of Scripture theology. The old Greeks knew and recognised it, as may be gathered from Homer's

Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή.<sup>1</sup>

Ἄλλ' ἤτοι μὲν ταῦτα θεῶν ἐν γούνασι κεῖται.

ἦσα γὰρ καὶ ἐγώ· τὰ δὲ κεν Διὶ πάντα μελήσει.<sup>2</sup>

Socrates taught it to his disciples : “ Know,” said he, “ that the

<sup>1</sup> *Il.* i. 5 ; *Od.* xi. 265.

<sup>2</sup> *Il.* xvii. 514, 515.

Deity is such and so great that He at once sees all, and hears all, and is present everywhere, and has a care of all things.”<sup>1</sup> Plato, after his sublime fashion, argues at length, that unless we are to impute indolence or imbecility to the Deity, we must believe that He sees all things and understands all things; nor can we suppose that He is indifferent to the most minute; and as physicians and artificers know that the safety of the great often depends much upon the small, and consequently are careful about the latter, it is absurd to suppose that the gods are less wise in this respect than they.<sup>2</sup> Cicero speaks of a “mind in the world, whether it be rightly called prudence or providence (for in Greek it is called *προνοια*), which provides chiefly for this, and is principally occupied with this; first, that the world should be fitted for continuance; next, that it should be in want of nothing; but most of all, that the utmost beauty and order should be in it.”<sup>3</sup> Seneca has written an entire treatise, entitled *De Providentia*, to defend the doctrine of a Divine Providence from objection arising from the unequal distribution of good and evil in life, and in this he sets out with asserting that he deems it superfluous to prove that this vast universe cannot subsist without a guard and ruler; this he assumes the more especially that the friend for whose instruction he wrote was not in doubt concerning providence, but only wished a difficulty removed out of his way in believing in it. In fact all the ancient philosophers who were not Atheists held the doctrine of a Divine Providence, with the exception of the Epicureans, who maintained that the gods took no care of human affairs, that the Deity did nothing, was involved in no complication of thoughts, planned no works, who stigmatized the god of the theist as “*laboriosissimum*,” whilst they proclaimed their own “*beatum*,” and whose assertion of this constituted the principal peculiarity of their system.

(1.) That this should be the case is not surprising, when we consider the natural grounds on which this doctrine rests. If we believe that God exists, and that the world is His creation, we must needs also believe in His providential care

<sup>1</sup> Xenoph., *Mem.* I. iv. 18.

<sup>2</sup> See the whole passage in the *De Legibus*, Bk. x., p. 899 D-905 C.

<sup>3</sup> *De Nat. Deor.* ii. 22.

of that world. "Si Deus est, utique providens est ut Deus, nec aliter ei potest Divinitas attribui nisi et præterita teneat, et præsentia sciat, et futura prospiciat," says Lactantius,<sup>1</sup> and from this he shuts up Epicurus in the dilemma, either of implicitly conceding Providence in admitting the divine existence, or of denying that existence in denying Providence, and so ranking with the Atheists in spite of his assertion to the contrary. As the world has come into existence by the divine volition, and continues in existence by the divine volition, its conservation is virtually a continuous creation, so that there is the same reason for believing that God providentially cares for the world as for believing that He created it at first. Nor can we conceive that a being of perfect wisdom, power, and goodness will for a moment intermit this care of the world He has made; for His doing so would be the result either of ignorance or impotence or indifference, none of which can be attributed to such a being without a contradiction in terms.

(2.) Further, as God could not create the universe without having an end or design in so doing, we cannot conceive that He would cease to watch over the universe in all its parts so as to prevent that end being frustrated or come short of. Whether we regard God's end in creation to be the welfare of the creature or the manifestation of His own glory, we must alike conclude that at no time and in no part of it can it be left without His watchful and superintending care; for who can tell what dishonour might be done to Him, and what widespread mischief to His creatures might accrue from one solitary disorder being suffered unnoticed and uncared for to exist and operate? More especially does this conclusion press upon us when we remember that a large portion of God's creatures are intelligent agents, with minds and wills of their own, and that of these a very important part are under the influence of evil, by which their free agency is biassed towards disorder and opposition to the mind and purpose of God. From neither the holy nor the fallen among His intelligent creatures can God for a moment withdraw His superintending control; for as the latter perversely seek to frustrate His purposes and introduce disorder into His universe, and

<sup>1</sup> *De Ira Dei*, c. 6.

the former, though devoted to His service and zealous for His glory, are yet, through the limitation of their faculties, incapable of infallibly determining the course alone adapted to this end, it is needful that both should be so in God's hand as that the perversity of the former should be overruled, and the latter should be guided so as to secure what they seek. The agency of one wicked man left to operate without control or check might throw the whole universe into confusion; and, on the other hand, "the consequences of actions are at times so greatly beyond the calculation of created intellect, the paths which lead ultimately to that blessed point to which all the actions of moral agents should tend are at times so divergent, that even the highest archangel might occasionally err and fail in the great purposes of His being, if all worlds, and all creatures, and all the actions of creatures were not under the superintendence of Divine Providence."<sup>1</sup>

(3.) The same conclusion is pressed upon us if we start from the contemplation of the conditions of created existence. All such existence must of necessity be dependent existence. None but a being who exists by necessity of nature can be independent. That which began to be, through the power of another, can no more subsist of itself than it could exist of itself; and so long as it lasts it must own its continuance to the energy by which it was created. The universe, therefore, as God's creature, must depend on Him for its existence; and were He to withdraw for a moment His superintending care from it, or from any part of it, instant annihilation to that from which it was withdrawn would be the result. To suppose otherwise would be to attribute to the universe an independent and absolute existence. But this would be to make the universe God; for that which is absolutely independent must be uncaused, eternal, infinite, and therefore divine. It is only in the gulf of an utter and hopeless Pantheism that the doctrine of Providence can be submerged.

(4.) Again, when we see the universe not only continuing to exist, but to exist in order, and to fulfil from generation to generation its great purposes, we cannot resist the conclusion that a superintending mind and controlling hand presides

<sup>1</sup> Payne, *Theology*, ii. 264.

over it. By what power is it that this order and utility is secured and perpetuated? There are but two suppositions that can be made here. The one is that the universe is a mere piece of dead mechanism, which fulfils its purpose in obedience to purely mechanical laws, or that the successions of phenomena in the universe are under the superintendence of mind and will. But the former hypothesis is utterly incompatible with the most obvious facts,—incompatible with the fact of free motion in space, with the fact of attraction between bodies, with the fact of life, with the fact of thought and will, — none of which can be ascribed to any mere mechanical impulse or agency. It only remains that we recognise in the continued order and harmony of the universe the presence of a superintending mind, *i.e.* of Providence. Whether this mind acts immediately and directly in *producing* every change that takes place, or simply continues to creatures powers impressed upon them at their creation, and regulates the operation of these, it does not concern our present object to inquire. In either case it is the Providence of God which secures the order and harmony of the universe,—in the one case, immediately and directly, in the other, instrumentally, or through the agency of means.

(5.) Passing from these more abstruse themes, and coming down to the natural *experience* of men, whether as individuals or as nations, we encounter facts which have tended to carry the conviction of a special providence to the minds of thoughtful men in all ages. How often, *e.g.*, do we see a person, by the most unexpected concurrence or succession of circumstances, brought into the position which his natural faculties and previous training have fitted him to occupy! How often do we find, when great emergencies occur, that the man by whom alone they can be successfully met is one who unconsciously, or perhaps against his will, has been undergoing a process of training which has marvellously fitted him for such an enterprise! How often do we see events which we would have shunned if we could, and over the occurrence of which we mourned, turn out to be the proper and necessary steps towards results that fill us with joy and grateful wonder! How often does history show us that occurrences apparently very trivial have formed indispensable links in the



chain of events out of which great and lasting world-results have issued! How often does a mere apparent accident supply the occasion, without which some great result would not have taken place—some great crime detected, some mighty wrong redressed, some terrible danger averted! Of such instances history is full, and thoughtful men have been so struck by them that the conviction has grown on them that history is never rightly viewed unless it is viewed as a revelation of God.

2. Such are the grounds on which natural reason may build up for itself a demonstration of Divine Providence. When from this we turn to the Scriptures, we find the truth asserted there in the fullest and firmest manner. Not only are we told in general that the Lord reigneth, that He doeth His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, that He preserveth man and beast, that by Him all things consist, but statements of the most specific kind pervade Scripture as to God's providential care and government of the universe. (1) He reigns in *the kingdom of inanimate nature*. Fire and hail, snow and vapours, obey Him, and the stormy wind fulfils His word; behold, He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up; also He sendeth them out, and they cover the earth: He left not Himself without witness in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (Ps. cxlviii. 8; Job xii. 15; Acts xiv. 17). (2) He reigns in *the world of event*. Even the minutest particulars here are under His control, not a sparrow can fall to the ground without Him. He hath numbered the very hairs of our heads; and He will make all things work together for good to them that love Him. With Him is strength and wisdom, the deceiver and the deceived are His; He leadeth away counsellors spoiled, and maketh the judges fools; He looseth the bonds of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle; by Him kings reign and princes decree justice; He setteth up one and putteth down another; none can stay His hand from working, or say unto Him, What doest Thou? (Job xii. 16, 17, 18; Prov. viii. 15; Ps. lxxv. 7; Dan. iv. 35; Matt. x. 29; Rom. viii. 28). (3) He reigns in *the world of life*. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. In His hand is the soul of every living thing and the breath of

all mankind; from Him the young lions seek their meat; to Him the young ravens cry, and He feedeth them; it is He who appoints the bounds of our habitation, and determines the duration of our life; His eyes are open on the ways of the sons of men; in His hand our breath is, and His are all our ways; it is as He wills, as He permits, that any purpose of ours can be successful (Acts xvii. 28; Job xii. 10; Ps. xxxiv. 10, cxlvii. 9; Acts xvii. 26; Job xxxiv. 21; Dan. v. 23). (4) He reigns in *the world of mind*. It is He that of His good pleasure worketh in us both to will and to do; it is His Spirit that worketh all in all; it is He that giveth counsel and wisdom; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but He will guide His people by His counsel, and incline their hearts to keep His law (Phil. ii. 13; 1 Cor. xii. 6; Dan. ii. 21; Jer. x. 23; Ps. lxxiii. 24; 1 Kings viii. 58).

These are but a very few of the passages in Scripture which assert the overruling and preserving providence of God. To quote all the passages which bear on this subject would be to cite no inconsiderable portion of the whole book; for, as Hollazius truly says, “Tota S. Scriptura nihil aliud est, quam pellucidum speculum, e quo quocumque te vertas, promicat pervigil ille oculus providæ directionis.”

It may be added here that to each Person in the Trinity is the providential act ascribed—to the Father, as in John v. 17, where our Lord says, “My Father worketh hitherto and I work;” to the Son, as by our Lord Himself in this passage, and by the apostle in Col. i. 17, where he says of the Son, “By Him all things consist,” *i.e.* are held together in order and utility; and by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who describes the Son as “upholding all things by the word of His power” (i. 3); and to the Holy Spirit, to whom not only creation is attributed, but also the ordering of the ways of those that are God’s children, and the disposing of events so as to secure the welfare of the Church.

A doctrine thus taught by reason and authorized by Scripture it behoves us to accept without hesitation, and to use for those practical ends it is fitted to promote. This wide universe in all its parts and in all its changes is under the constant inspection, care, and control of the Almighty. All

things, animate or inanimate, high or low, large or small, good or bad, spiritual or material, are subject to this unlimited and unerring providence. Nothing happens but with God's foreknowledge, permission, or appointment. The changes of the seasons, the variations of climate, the fates of nations, the experience and course of individuals, are all alike in the hand of Him who doeth all things according to the counsel of His own will, and for whose pleasure all things are and were created.

3. Some of the ancients who held by the belief in a Divine Providence yet restricted this to the care and management of great events, and denied it in respect of those they deemed small. Thus Cicero says, "*Magna dii curant, parva negligunt*;"<sup>1</sup> and Pliny asks, "*Anne tam tristi ac multiplici ministerio non pollui credamus?*"<sup>2</sup> The sentiment has been adopted by many in recent times, who, whilst professing to admit God's general providential government of the universe, deny or question His control over the minuter affairs of individuals or the smaller events in nature. But the distinction cannot be maintained, nor can Providence be thus restricted. It is only our ignorance and narrow vision which creates the distinction between great and small in the things that happen. As relating to the great end for which things exist and happen, nothing is great and nothing is small; all are alike essential to that end, and all must therefore be equally under the provision and control of God. Doubtless in the things themselves as compared with each other there are great, it may be immense differences; but as has been well remarked, "in every case the attention, presidency, direction, and effectuating power are *perfect*,—perfectly adapted to the nature of the case; and a thing or an event which to our extremely limited view may appear quite inconsiderable is a necessary link in the last chain, and even specifically the greatest events may be dependent upon it."<sup>3</sup>

But though all things must be regarded as under the providential rule of God, there is a sense in which some are more specially the objects of His care than others. Whilst His dominion extendeth over all, and whilst He giveth the beast

<sup>1</sup> *De Nat. Deor.*, ii. 66. Comp. also iii. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Nat.*, ii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Pye Smith, *Theology*, p. 172.

His food, and to the young ravens when they cry, we are bound to believe that man especially engages His regards and is cared for by Him, not the race merely as such, but each individual of it. In Him we live and move and have our being; He hath appointed the bounds of the habitation of all nations; our days are determined, the number of our months are with Him; He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. But whilst He thus cares for all men, there is a sense in which some are the objects of His most special care. Whilst He is the Saviour of all men, He is so specially of those that believe. "We know," says the apostle, "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Acts xvii. 28, xvii. 26; Job xiv. 5; Matt. v. 45; 1 Tim. iv. 10; Rom. viii. 28). It is to His own people that God says, "Because thou hast made the Lord, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (Ps. xci. 10). Nor is this special regard of God for His own people other than what reason justifies. For the holy and ever-blessed God cannot but stand in a different relation to the good and pious on the one hand, and the ungodly and wicked on the other; and when He has graciously brought men into a relation of sonship with Himself, it would be unreasonable to suppose that those thus privileged are no more the objects of His care than are those who are alienated from Him and enemies to Him.

4. As to the *manner* in which the Divine Providence operates, it seems to me best not to say anything positively. All we are safe in affirming is that God operates in providence without suspending any of the laws of nature, without interrupting the course of nature, and without interfering with the moral freedom of man. The theories which have been framed as to the manner of the divine operation in providence are beset with serious difficulties, and are not satisfactory. The Deistic or Mechanical theory, which is as old at least as the time of Augustine, for he expressly repudiates it in the words, "*neque enim sicut structor ædium si fabricaverit abscedit, atque illo cessante et abscedente stat opus ejus,*"

cannot be accepted by any one who takes his conception of God from the Bible ; for it imputes to Him an Epicurean indifference in relation to the world, and a want of freedom of action in His own universe, which are wholly incompatible with what the Bible teaches us concerning Him. Nor does Des Cartes' doctrine of occasional causes help us over the difficulty ; for to say that God is the immediate and only cause of all changes, and that the so-called secondary or mediate causes simply furnish the occasion of His acting, is to annihilate human liberty, to make God the author of sin, and, as Leibnitz remarks, "to convert the universe into a perpetual miracle, and explain the natural by a supernatural order." By many divines the doctrine of *co-operation* has been advocated, according to which God is supposed to work along with His creatures, to act in common with secondary causes, and, as Quenstedt expresses it, sweetly influence them by Himself according to the exigency of each. But it is difficult to form any correct and clear conception of this ; in the attempt to lay hold of it, it either wholly eludes our grasp, or we apprehend nothing more than that God works and secondary causes work, which is simply to state the problem, not to solve it. To assert that God in providence works along with natural laws and secondary causes, is merely to state the fact of a providential rule, not in the least to elucidate the manner of it. We conclude, therefore, that it is best to leave this subject untouched, and to admit that as we cannot explain the mode of the divine nature, neither can we explain the manner of the divine operation. As His being is unsearchable, so are His ways "past finding out."

(ii.) *Moral Government.*

In treating of the Divine Providence, we have been considering the government of God over the universe as exercised in the conservation and directing of all things He has made so as to secure the end for which they have been made. There is another aspect, however, under which the government of God as exercised over intelligent creatures may be viewed. As His creatures, such are under His omnipotent control, and He can do with them and to them what He sees meet. But

as intelligent their conduct is determined by motives; they act as they are moved by considerations which they apprehend by intelligence, and which their judgment approves. They act not as machines act, and in obedience to an external pressure to which they are obliged to yield; they act from internal impulses, from volitions, and these volitions are determined by what they judge to be desirable and right. Over man thus intelligent and free the government of God extends; and this, as distinguished from His physical control over His creatures, is God's Moral Government.

What is the just idea of moral government? On this point many fall into a serious mistake by imagining that moral government means government by moral as opposed to physical or outward means. Hence they are led to the conclusion that as God is a moral governor, He rules only by purely moral constraints, only by persuasion and entreaty, only by appeals to the reason, the gratitude, and love of His intelligent creatures; and from this they naturally pass to the further conclusion, that under a moral government penal sanctions have no place, and punishment of transgression is excluded. But such a conception of moral government is wholly erroneous, and as held in relation to the divine government sets aside all just views of God's *authority* over His creatures, and indeed virtually denies their being under government at all; for to persuade by argument and appeal is not to govern. Moral government properly means government for moral *ends*—government of moral beings which makes their happiness depend on their obedience to a law which is just and good, and which, for this purpose, employs any means that are adapted to secure this end. Hence *punishments* may find place under a moral government if these shall be found conducive to the promotion of that obedience on the part of the subjects by which alone their happiness can be secured. God has placed His intelligent creatures under moral law, and He may sanction that law by attaching penalties to the breach of it; and these may be of any kind, provided they be such as are fitted to move those placed under the law to observe it. Such is really the constitution under which God has placed us His creatures here. Just as in His physical government He has attached penalties to the

violation of natural laws, so has He attached penalties to the infraction of moral law. The man who transgresses a natural law suffers as an unavoidable consequence; and in like manner there is suffering consequent on the transgression of moral law. In the moral sphere God rules men to the practice of virtue by making that the road to happiness, while vice tends to misery. This is the order under which we are placed here; and there is every reason to believe that what we find to be the order of things here and now will *continue* to be the order of things hereafter in another state.

Such is the general idea of God's moral government. It may be of advantage to analyze somewhat more minutely this idea so as to arrive at a just and adequate conception of the whole subject. Let us take, then, the two terms of this expression, and consider their proper import. The object of inquiry is 1. Government; 2. Moral Government.

1. Butler in his *Analogy* has been at pains to explain what he calls "the proper formal notion of government." It is, says he, "the annexing pleasure to some actions and pain to others in our power to do or forbear, and the giving notice of this beforehand to those whom it concerns."<sup>1</sup> This is sufficiently formal and abstract, but it gives in few words the true idea of government. More briefly still, but less abstractly, the author of the article "Government" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, defines government in the general as "the administration of rule, law, and direction;" and more fully he says, "The system of rules regulating a society may be termed in general, *law*, and the fact and form of administering the rules is *government*." Both definitions are substantially to the same purport; and both presume that men living in society require to have their conduct directed by rule, and both imply that there must be a power by which obedience to rule is to be enforced. We may therefore at once conclude that in every system of government there are involved three things: (1) *Law*, either explicitly announced or so implicated in the course of things that it cannot but be recognised by intelligent beings; (2) *Authority*, by which the law is upheld and enforced; and (3) *Free activity*, which it is the design of the law to regulate and control. When these three elements are

<sup>1</sup> *Analogy*, Part II. c. ii.

united in full measure and in due relation, then a perfect government is exhibited.

(1.) Under a perfect government, then, there must be *Law*. Our English word "law," from the Anglo-Saxon *laga*, signifies primarily something laid down or posited. Hence it may be used of a simple proposition in which some general truth or principle is enunciated; but there always lies the subaudition along with this of something *prescriptive* in the enunciation. "That," says Hooker, "which doth assign unto each thing the kind, that which doth moderate the force and power, that which doth appoint the form and measure of working, the same we term a law."<sup>1</sup> In law also there lies the concept of event, of something consequent on something supposed. A law is properly predictive; it is the affirmation of a certainty as consequent on a contingency. "The very idea of a law," says Sir John Herschell, "includes that of contingency. *Si quis mala carmina condidisset fuste perito*; if such a case arise, such a course shall be followed; if the match be applied to the gunpowder it will explode. Every law is a provision for cases that may occur."<sup>2</sup> Every law, therefore, begins virtually with an "if" and proceeds with a "shall;" and it is essential to the validity of the law that when the supposed contingency happens the affirmed consequence shall certainly follow.

In the universe all things are under law. "Of Law," says Hooker, "there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world: all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempt from her power: both men and angels, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy."<sup>3</sup>

When men unite in society, it is only as they are under law that they can be preserved from anarchy, confusion, and strife. Where men are a law to themselves, where every man is free to do that which is right in his own eyes, where no rule is prescribed for the regulation of conduct, where no restraint from without is imposed on men's liberty of action,

<sup>1</sup> *Eccles. Pol.*, i. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Discourse on Nat. Phil.*, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *Eccles. Pol.*, i., *sub fin.*



and no penal consequences deter men from crime, society cannot exist; the social bond is dissolved; and men subsist as mere unconnected units. Even the family union cannot exist without law, expressed or understood. If the relations of the members of a household are not determined by rule, if it is not at least understood that certain things are to be done and certain other things are not to be done by the individuals composing the household in their respective positions in relation to each other, and where it is not understood that consequences of a painful kind will certainly follow on the violation of any of these rules, implied or expressed, the family union exists only in name, and waits only some accident to be utterly destroyed.

Wherever there is society, then, there must be law; and where there is law, there must be government; for the law, to be effective, must be administered, and the administration of law is government. Government is, according to its proper notion, the exercise of authority through means of law; and the perfection of a government is where a law perfectly just and good is administered with unerring rectitude and unwavering certainty.

(2.) The law under which the subjects of a government are placed is not a mere accident, nor is it something that arises from natural necessity; it is the utterance of *authority*, the prescription of one who has a right to command and the power to enforce obedience. It may be a single person who wields this authority, as in the case of a pure monarchy; or it may be in the hands of a select number, presumed to be the best men in the community, as in the case of an aristocracy or oligarchy; or it may be vested in a senate of men reputed for wisdom in the management of affairs; or it may rest with the whole body of the people, as in a pure democracy. But authority there must be somewhere, authority both to make laws and to enforce them, else there can be no government. If a parent or civil ruler be without that right to command which imposes an obligation to obey, and without that power to enforce obedience which alone can make that obligation imperative, he cannot be regarded as possessing authority, nor does he govern except in name. He may advise, he may counsel, he may direct or persuade, but he cannot be said to govern. On the other hand, wherever this right exists and

this power is exercised, there is government, whatever be the form which that government assumes. Authority to rule, the right to make laws, and the power to enforce them, constitute the essence of government. A ruler who should neglect to make laws for his subjects, or fail to enforce those already made, would virtually abnegate his office, and deserve to be driven from it with contempt.

(3.) The laws which a government makes and enforces are intended to regulate the activity of those subject to it, so as to secure the end for which society exists and government is designed, viz. the production of the well-being and happiness of the community at large. Now the activity which has thus to be regulated must be *a. Intelligent*, i.e. it must be conducted under an apprehension of the meaning of the law and a view of the consequences, apprehended beforehand, of obedience or disobedience; it is not mere blind force acting fortuitously without purpose or aim; it is the action of an intelligent being who sees the path he has to follow and is aware of the consequences of deserting it. *b. This activity must be free*, i.e. it must be really activity and not passivity, the activity of one who is free to do as he wills uncontrolled by any external force, and is therefore justly responsible for his conduct. And *c. it must be elective*, i.e. not the result of a mere constitutional impulse, like the circulation of the blood or the action of the stomach, but the effect of choice, of *ορεξις βουλευτικη*, the habit of which Aristotle pronounces ethical virtue.<sup>1</sup> Where these conditions are not complied with, there can be no government worthy of the name: men may be controlled as brutes or trampled on as slaves, but they are not governed; their conduct is not regulated by authority exercised through the medium of law.

2. Such are the elemental notions involved in our being under government: we have only to combine them with the idea of the end of government being *moral*, i.e. the production of goodness and the prevention of vice and moral evil, to arrive at a just conception of moral government.

(1.) Here we have (*a*) Law inculcating moral goodness and threatening penalties if vice or immorality be indulged in; (*b*) Authority enacting moral law, assuring all placed under it of its

<sup>1</sup> *Nicom. Eth.*, vi. 2.

permanency, and enforcing obedience by the infliction of the penalties incurred by disobedience; and (c) Activity on the part of the subjects who are capable of choosing between one course of action and another, who can know what is the course prescribed and the penalty of turning from it, and who are free from any extrinsic power that would prevent their following that course.

On these principles the moral government of God proceeds. As supreme Ruler, He has enacted a law under which all His intelligent creatures are placed. This law is holy, just, and good, the expression of His own holy and righteous nature, and its tendency is to sustain and advance goodness, and to suppress evil in those subject to it. It is a law which expresses the Author's approbation of what is morally good, His disapprobation of evil in all its forms, and His determination to uphold good and suppress evil in His domain. It is given by Him to His subjects as a decisive rule of action to them, inflexible in its requirements and clear in its directions.

(2.) This law, issued by authority, is enforced by sanctions. A law implies a lawgiver who has the right to impose laws on others, and power to enforce obedience to the laws he has made. Moral government implies a moral Governor who aims at the production of moral results, and the promotion of moral effects as the end of His administration. His influence is the influence of authority for moral results. Hence the law which He promulgates must have sanctions, *i.e.* must have attached to it natural good as the reward of obedience, and natural evil as the penalty of disobedience. Such sanctions indicate and establish the authority of the Governor by whom the law is appointed and enforced; and they are the only things which are or can be sanctions of law. A ruler may lay down for his subjects the best rule of action, and he may commend this to them by counsel and by the perfect accordance with it of his own conduct; but unless he make natural good to follow on obedience, and natural evil on disobedience, on their part, his law will have no adequate sanction, and his authority will be set aside. Natural good and evil as legal sanctions furnish decisive evidence of the Governor's authority. The law He enacts reveals His moral character, and the sanctions He annexes to it manifest His essential

regard to what is good and right, and His abhorrence of what is evil and wrong. They show the full strength of His will fixed on securing, as far as may be, the best end by the surest means, and for preventing, as far as may be, by legitimate means all evil ends. They remove all doubt and uncertainty as to the intention of the Ruler in appointing the law ; they proclaim His authority, and certify not only that it is *desirable* that His subjects should render obedience to His injunctions, but that an *obligation* rests on them to this ; and thus they tend to secure the confidential homage and unqualified submission of the subjects, and with these the felicity and glory of His kingdom.

In the kingdom of God law is sanctioned by the rewards which are attached to obedience, and the punishments which follow on disobedience. It is by means of these that the influence of the divine authority is brought to bear on those who are His subjects, so as to induce them to the pursuit and practice of virtue and the avoidance of evil. It is not necessary that the rewards and punishments should be external and physical ; all that is required is that pleasure or happiness should attend on obedience, and pain and misery be the consequent of disobedience. Without inducements of this kind it is not easy to see how intelligent and free agents could be ruled into goodness and virtue. No doubt if the will were always under a constraining bias to goodness, if there were no motives inducing to evil, or if the habit of virtue were so formed that it had become a second nature, there might be moral government without the use of rewards and punishments ; and probably there are spheres of God's dominion where this state of things exists, and creatures to whom He manifests Himself only under the character of infinite benevolence. But the character under which He appears to us, and under which we have to do with Him, is that of a righteous Governor ; and as a Governor it is by rewards and punishments that His government is administered. The use of rewards is to stimulate to obedience ; the use of punishments is to deter from disobedience. Neither of them can directly produce goodness or make a being virtuous ; they can only induce to goodness and deter from evil. Some, indeed, seem to have the notion that men may be made good by chastisement ; that if the chastisement be sufficiently severe

and long continued, the evil will be purged out of the man, and goodness will come in its place. This is a flagrant mistake. Suffering is natural evil, and natural evil can never produce moral good. Chastisement inflicted on a culprit may deter him from repeating his offence, but it can never directly reform him and make him good. "We punish the transgressor," says Plato, "that he may not again transgress, neither he himself nor any other who witnesses his being punished."<sup>1</sup> This is the true theory of punishment. And so, on the other hand, of rewards. Men are not made good by rewarding them for good actions; this can only induce them to adhere to the good course, and encourage others to adopt and pursue it. And as this is the end of government, it is by rewards and punishments that all government is to be carried on.

(3.) But if government is to be administered by a distribution of rewards and punishments, it is necessary, as required by equity, that the subjects of the government should be made aware beforehand both of what they are required to do, and of the consequences of obedience on the one hand, and disobedience on the other. Where no law is enacted and promulgated, and where no notice is given beforehand to the subjects of the consequences to them of obedience or disobedience, the government becomes a tyranny, and the subjects of it are reduced from the position of free moral agents to that of mere passive subjects of caprice and physical force. Where no law is promulgated there can be no obedience, and where the subjects are left in ignorance of what will ensue to them in case of compliance on the one hand with any law, and of transgression on the other, the proper motives to obedience are withheld, and in this case there is no moral government, no government of moral agents to a moral end.

Now God as Moral Governor has made known to His subjects the law which is to regulate their conduct, and has clearly intimated to them the consequences that will ensue on their obedience or their disobedience to its injunctions. Not only by formal proclamation, but by what the apostle calls the law written in their hearts, the law of conscience, that law which, as Cicero says, is above all laws, He has

<sup>1</sup> *Protag.*, 324.

taught men what is required of them; and not by formal promises and denunciations only, but also by the whole course of His dealings with men, and especially by connecting happiness with virtue, and suffering with vice. He has given men warning beforehand of what will ensue on the keeping, and what will ensue on the neglect or the transgression of His law. "In the present state," as Butler remarks, "all which we enjoy, and a great part of what we suffer, is put in our own power. For pleasure and pain are the consequences of our actions; and we are endued by the Author of our nature with capacities of foreseeing their consequences. . . . I know not," he continues, "that we have any one kind or degree of enjoyment but by means of our own actions. And by prudence and care we may for the most part pass our days in tolerable ease and quiet; or, on the contrary, we may by rashness, ungoverned passion, wilfulness, or even by negligence, make ourselves as miserable as ever we please. And many do please to make themselves extremely miserable, *i.e.* to do what they know beforehand will render them so. They follow those ways, the fruit of which they know by instruction, example, experience, will be disgrace, and poverty, and sickness, and untimely death. This every one observes to be the general course of things."<sup>1</sup> God has thus, even in the course of nature, taught men that His law cannot be transgressed with impunity; and as vice is punished as vice by being followed by suffering, and virtue rewarded as virtue by being productive of happiness, His government is sure to be a moral government—a government directed to the securing of moral ends by the motive-influence of authority over free moral agents who have the keeping of their own welfare very much in their own power. That whilst he that doth these things which the Law prescribes shall live in them, they that transgress receive in themselves that recompense of their error which is meet, are principles not only enunciated in the Bible, but proclaimed by the whole experience of our race as under the government of Him who loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity, and will by no means clear the guilty.

(4.) From what has been advanced it will be seen that to be under God's moral government, and to be in a state of

<sup>1</sup> *Analogy*, Part I., ch. ii.

probation before Him, are almost equivalent statements. They have even been represented as identical. Strictly speaking, however, they are not so ; there is between them this difference, that probation implies exposure to difficulties and temptations in the way of obedience, whilst moral government may be sustained where none such exist. In the heavenly state God's moral government subsists in absolute perfection ; over all its blessed occupants His law reigns, and they serve Him with a service that is never interrupted or impaired. But they serve Him without fear. No temptation threatens their fidelity ; no obstacle impedes their service. It is otherwise with man in the present state. Here our state is one of trial. We are subjects of a great experiment. We are under probation. And for us practically this is identical with being under moral government.

(5.) Where government is conducted by law it is essential to the preservation of order and the maintenance of rule that, where the penalty of the law has been incurred by disobedience, it shall be certainly inflicted. On this all writers on jurisprudence are agreed, and some have even maintained that certainty of punishment is more effectual for this end than severity of punishment. And with justice ; for, however severe be the penalty denounced, if there is any considerable probability that it may be escaped, the threatening of it will have little effect in deterring from transgression. But though the sequence of punishment on transgression be made certain, it is not necessary that it should be immediate ; there may be reasons rendering it expedient to delay for a season the infliction of a penalty that has been incurred ; and from such delay no harm will accrue to the government provided it remain certain that in due time the penalty shall be inflicted. It is also compatible with good and stable government that on a certain condition the penalty may be wholly remitted, and the offender be pardoned. That one condition is the rendering of an adequate compensation to the law for the violation of it which has occurred. If the transgressor himself, or some other for him, can by some means—say the payment of a fine or the rendering of some important service to the State—so make up to the law, as it were, what it has lost by the transgression of the offender, that its authority

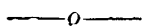
shall be recognised and upheld, then with perfect safety may the offence be remitted, and the transgressor be forgiven. But it is of necessity that some such satisfaction must be made ere transgression can be forgiven. Where forgiveness is extended to the transgressor without this, the government ceases to be government by law. A mob may rescue a criminal from punishment, or an autocrat may extend his protection to some favourite who has transgressed, or under some sudden impulse may avert the blow which ought to descend on the transgressor ; but this is government by physical force, or arbitrary power, or individual caprice, not government by law. Where law reigns and government is administered by law, the only possible means by which a transgressor can obtain pardon and escape punishment is by the offering for him, either by himself or by another, of such a compensation or atonement as will uphold the authority of the law and the dignity of the government under which the transgression has been committed.

These principles are fully recognised and acted on in the moral government of God, which is, as we have seen, government by law. There the punishment of sin, which is a transgression of law, is certain. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," is God's own solemn assurance that there is no impunity for the sinner ; and though sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, men are warned that their sin shall certainly find them out, and the penalty they have incurred by their sin shall certainly be endured unless their sin be forgiven by God. And that there may be forgiveness for the transgressor, the one condition without which there can be no forgiveness, viz. the offering of an atonement for transgression, has been provided for. On this it is unnecessary here to enlarge. The Son of God has made propitiation for the sins of the world, and on the ground of His propitiation God forgives sin in perfect consistency with the claims of His government and law. How propitiation could be made for sin, man, antecedent to the revelation of the divine plan, could not have discovered ; but now that it is made known, we can see how entirely it is in accordance with a system of righteous moral government.



# PART II.

## ANTHROPOLOGY.



### CHAPTER I.

#### FIRST DIVISION.—ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN

##### I. CREATION OF MAN.

WE now enter upon the second of the main divisions of our subject, ANTHROPOLOGY, or THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING MAN.

Man is the creature of God ; and the Bible not only affirms this, but in its earlier chapters gives a detailed account of the original formation of man, and the condition in which he was placed when he entered on the stage of being. Having first arranged the earth, and called into being the various plants and animals which occupy its surface, and having prepared for man a fitting and pleasant habitation, God brought man into existence. In doing this He proceeded with more of form and solemnity than He had used in the preceding steps of His work. Instead of merely giving the command to exist, instead of merely summoning into being by an almighty fiat, or calling on the earth to bring forth the creature He was about to frame, God, as if to mark the singular importance of the act He was about to perform, stirs up Himself, as it were, to a higher exercise of His creative energy, and marks this as in a peculiar sense the work of His hands. “And God said,” we read, “Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness” (Gen. i. 26) ; and in a subsequent record we are told that “God *formed* man,”—that is, shaped, fashioned, elaborated him with care, as a potter does a vessel, or an

artist a statue, the verb used being יָצַק, which is the word used of the working of the potter (Isa. lxiv. 7) and of the artist (Isa. xlv. 9, 12, liv. 17). The material of which man was thus formed is described as “of the dust of the earth;” and when thus formed, God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Gen. ii. 7). All this indicates deliberation and care on the part of the Creator in the formation of man, as if He gave special consideration to this, and took special pains to make His work perfect, doing it with His own hand, and proceeding in it step by step until it was complete.

i. When it is said that God formed man from the dust of the earth, it is not necessarily implied that the Creator took of the moistened dust or clay of the earth and formed out of it a statue in the form of man. This may have been; but all that the words oblige us to believe is that the body of man is composed of the same elements as the dust of the ground. Man’s body is thus, as the apostle expresses it, “of the earth earthy” (1 Cor. xv. 47). The constituent elements of the human body are the four principal gases, with lime, potash, and a little iron, sodium, and phosphorus, the commonest elements in the inorganic kingdom. As respects his body, man is thus part and parcel of the material creation, differing from the lower animals and the vegetable world only in form, position, and capacity. The material of his body is not different in kind nor finer in nature than that of theirs. The same structure of bone and tissue and nerve which anatomy discloses in man it unfolds in the lower animals: the different processes by which the animal body is preserved, and by which it decays, are the same in both; and with an almost endless diversity of outward form, there is yet such an analogy between the parts of the bodily frame in man and in the lower animals, that we are conducted by an exact process of observation and induction to the conclusion that all animal forms are but variations of one primitive type, from which the Creator has in each instance departed only in so far as was necessary to fit the animal for the place it had to occupy and the functions it had to discharge,—a generalization which has been proclaimed as one of the achievements of modern science, but which was not unknown to the ancients, as the following

sentence of Augustine shows: "Nullum est creaturæ genus quod non in homine possit agnosci."<sup>1</sup>

But though man is thus associated by his material structure with the lower animals, he is yet, even in respect of this part of his nature, the greatest of God's terrestrial works. In the erectness of his posture, in the sublimity of his look, in the symmetry of his form, in the delicacy of his organs, in the beauty of his complexion, in the refinement of his senses, and in the sensibility which is diffused over his whole frame, he possesses advantages to which none of the lower animals can lay claim. Nor are these advantages the result of culture and progressive development. Even those who would trace man back to the ape are compelled to admit that the oldest specimens of human beings which have been discovered not only exhibit no approach to the ape type, but are physically as perfect as any which the most advanced age of civilisation can furnish. Even Mr. Huxley says of one of the oldest fossil skeletons that has been brought to light, that the brain might have been that of a philosopher; and Professor Dana, an eminent American geologist, says: "No remains of fossil man bear evidence to less perfect erectness of structure than in civilised man, or to any nearer approach to the man-ape in essential characteristics. The existing man-apes," he continues, "belong to lines that reached up to them as their ultimatum; but of that time which is supposed to have reached upward to man, not the first link below the lowest level of existing man has been found."<sup>2</sup> The absence of all intermediate links between the anthropoid ape and the lowest type of man is pronounced by Mr. Darwin to be amazing; and doubtless it is to him and his fellow-evolutionists as perplexing as it is amazing, for it is fatal to their whole theory of the origin of man.

ii. After the formation of man from the dust of the earth, the next step in the creation process was the infusing into his frame of life: "The Lord God," we are told, "formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7). By some this last expression has been taken to mean that

<sup>1</sup> *Ad Oros.*, quoted by Klee, *Katholische Dogmatik*, ii. 282.

<sup>2</sup> *Geology*, p. 603, 2nd ed. quoted by Rev. Joseph Cook in *Monday Lectures*, ii. 5.

man was then endowed with his highest and most distinctive quality, that of mind or spirit. The phrase, however, נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה, cannot be taken as referring to the mind or spiritual part of man. It is the same phrase which in Gen. i. 20 is rendered "the creature that hath life;" in ver. 24, and ii. 19, ix. 12, 15, 16, "living creature;" and i. 30, "the breath of life," in all which passages it is used of the lower animals, or of the animal creation as such in the general. "The expression, therefore," to use the words of Dr. Pye Smith, "sets before us the organic life of the animal frame, that mysterious something which man cannot create nor restore, which baffles the most acute philosophers to search out its nature, and which reason combines with Scripture to refer to the immediate agency of the Almighty." It is thus something common to man and the lower animals. There is, however, this to be noted, that whilst the lower animals had their life, like the plants, from the earth by the divine word of power (Gen. i. 20), the life of man was conveyed into him by a special act of the divine inbreathing. Life in man is thus something higher than life in the lower animals; it is something divine, and is given to and sustained in man by the direct agency of God: "in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts xvii. 28).

It is further to be noted here that life is something distinct from organization—something that is neither identical with it nor flows directly out of it. When God had formed man, his organization was perfect; nothing more needed to be added to it; nothing more was added to it. But there his body lay inert, senseless, motionless, in nothing differing from the inorganic masses around it save in its greater symmetry. Something more was required ere that body could live; and that was supplied by God when He breathed into that senseless organism the breath of life. Life, therefore, is the immediate gift of God, a boon which He bestows, withholds, or resumes as He sees meet.

iii. When God purposed to create man, He purposed to form him in His own image—according to His likeness: "Let us make man," said He, "in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. i. 26), and accordingly in the image of God man was created. This is what constitutes man's supreme dignity, gives him his chief worth, and raises him far above all the rest of the animal

creation. This is affirmed of man alone of all God's creatures. The physical universe is spoken of as God's thought (Ps. xcii. 7), as founded by His wisdom (Prov. iii. 19), as illustrating His perfections and declaring His glory (Ps. viii., xix. 1-5), and as evidencing to the intelligent mind of man the invisible things of God (*τα αορατα αυτου*), "even His eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. i. 20). We find the sun also set forth as the emblem of God, and light as the emblem of His intelligence, purity, and glory (Ps. lxxxiv. 11, civ. 2; 1 Tim. vi. 16; 1 John i. 5); but the sun is nowhere said to have been formed in His image, nor is His likeness to be found in the light. It is not even of angels said that they have been formed in the image and likeness of God; though, as they are called "sons of God," they must to a certain extent at least bear the image and likeness of Him whose sons they are. The special ascription of this to man may indicate that in him the divine image, and by consequence the divine sonship, inheres in a higher degree than even in angels; and this falls in with what other intimations lead us to conclude that man, as respects his original constitution, possesses a nature higher than the angelic, even as in his regenerated and glorified state he is destined to a higher position and dignity than theirs. This much at any rate we are justified in drawing from this consideration, that in the possession by man in his creation of God's image and likeness lies his supreme distinction and glory.

Man, it is said, was made in the image of God. But when God purposed to create him, He said, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness," *בצלמנו כדמותנו*. A twofold model was thus proposed for man's formation. There is a distinction here which it is important to observe. The distinction lies not in the nouns *צלם* and *דמות*, for these two are quite synonymous; it lies in the prepositions prefixed to them, the one of which indicates that there is a certain form in which man was actually made, the other that there is a model or norm according to which he was made. The latter expression is not merely, as Oehler suggests, intended "to fix and strengthen the meaning" of the former, nor merely to "express that the divine image which man bears is really one corresponding to the original pattern."<sup>1</sup> It rather, as Dorner

<sup>1</sup> *Theology of the Old Testament*, i. 211.

remarks, "points to the future"—to what man was *destined* to become in the full development of his higher nature. "In reference to what he possesses already" (to quote again from Dorner), "he is created in the divine image as his model; but in reference to the chief matter—his destination—he has in God a norm and ideal."<sup>1</sup>

Keeping this in view, we can understand how man, even after the fall, is described as being in the image of God, as he is in Gen. ix. 6. Notwithstanding his sin and fall, man still retained that *in* which he had been formed, though he had fallen away from that normal perfection for which he was originally destined. We can see also why nowhere in Scripture is the state in which Adam was in Paradise presented as that to which man is to aspire, and to which redeemed man shall be raised. Adam never attained to that likeness after which he was created. In Christ alone, the second Adam, was the perfect image of God realized; and it is to Christ, therefore, we are taught to look as the realized ideal of perfect humanity, and to conformity to Him that we are called to aspire. When Adam begat a son, he begat him in his own image and likeness; and so all men, descended from him, who was of the earth earthy, bear the image of the earthy. Only through Christ can we be brought to bear the image of the heavenly; only through Him can we attain to God-likeness, and so reach the grand end for which man was originally destined.

The divine image in which and after which man was formed was thus, as Dorner remarks, "partly original *endowment*, partly *destination*."<sup>2</sup> But let us now inquire more particularly what is to be understood by the divine image in which man was made? It may help us to a satisfactory decision on this point if we look at the way in which the word "image" is used in the Bible. In the Hebrew Scriptures the word so rendered is צֶלְמִי, and in the Greek of the N. T. it is εἰκών. Both are generally used in the sense of a representation of some object by means of that which resembles it, or is supposed to resemble it; but both also occur in the sense of a model or archetype according to which something else is formed. Thus Adam is said to have begotten "a son in his

<sup>1</sup> *System of Christian Doctrine*, ii. 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

own likeness, after his image" (בְּדִמְיוֹתָיו בְּעֶלְמוֹ, Gen. v. 3), that is, according to the model of himself. So the apostle speaks of believers being "conformed to the image" of the Son of God (Rom. viii. 9), *i.e.* to Him as the model of all excellence; of their beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, and being changed into the same image (2 Cor. iii. 18), and of the new man which believers are to put on as being renewed after the image of Him that created him (Col. iii. 10). This last passage indicates the sense in which the word "image" is used when man is said to have been created in the image of God; in God Himself was found the model or archetype after which man was formed. Man is not the image of God in the sense in which Jesus Christ is who is "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person" (Heb. i. 3); but being made *after* or *according to* God's image, man is in a sense the image of God, and is called by the apostle His image and glory (1 Cor. xi. 7).

But it still remains to inquire, In what sense was man formed after the model of God? In other words, what was that archetype of which man was made to be the ectype or representation? Now, there are three ways in which one intelligent being may be the model of another: he may be so as respects substance or nature; he may be so by analogy of constitution; he may be so by moral resemblance. Of these the first is excluded in the case before us by the nature of the case; no mere creature ever can be either consubstantial with God or of like substance with Him; this belongs only to a Being who could say, as Christ says, "I and the Father are one" (John x. 30). But neither of the other two is incompatible with the conditions of creature-being; and it is in the combination of them that we find the just and full explanation of the statement we are considering. Man was made after the image of God, inasmuch as in constitution he was made analogous to God, and as in character he resembled God.

"God is a Spirit." This is our highest conception of God, so far at least as He may be conceived by us. Positively we may not be able to say what spirit properly and absolutely is; but negatively and by way of comparison we can arrive at a just and clear thought on this point, and hence may form a representation in our minds of the Most High. We are

taught, moreover, to regard Him as possessing certain attributes, both intellectual and moral, and, further, as a Being who has revealed Himself to us we ascribe to Him a certain character, and think of Him as exhibiting certain qualities appropriate to a perfect moral and spiritual nature. This is the representation we form of God when we think of Him aright, and after this, as a model and archetype, man was originally formed. He was constituted an intelligent and moral agent, possessing a spiritual nature distinct from his material organization analogous to the spirituality of God, and exhibiting a character, mental and moral, resembling that of God. Man received from his Maker a spiritual nature which constitutes properly himself—his proper personality; he was endowed with capacities of intelligence and moral judgment; his mind was pure and his affections holy; and his character was wholly in accordance with that of God. God made man upright. There was no flaw, no defect, no blot on any part of his nature. As he stood before his Creator, perfect in every limb, fair in every feature, with the light of intelligence beaming from his countenance, and the beauty of perfect innocence and the crown of unsullied purity shining upon him, the eye of God rested on him with complacency, and the voice of God pronounced him “good.”

By some of the ancient Fathers it was held that by man's being made after the image of God nothing more is meant than that as God is over all, so man is like Him set over all things here below; as God is the Lord of the universe, so man is the lord of that part of the universe in which he has been placed; and this view has been adopted by not a few in more recent times. But in the narrative of Moses the placing of man over the lower creation is represented as a *different* thing from his being made in the image of God; the one is the consequent of the other; man has authority over the creatures around him, *because* he was made after the image of God. To make these two identical is to confound man's title to sovereignty with the grounds on which it rests.

Others of the Fathers took the more comprehensive view of the import of this phrase; they place the divine image in which man was created in the intelligent and self-governing nature with which man has been endowed (το νοερόν καὶ



*αυτεξοισιον*), as comprehending, therefore, intelligence as well as moral purity. It has been too common with evangelical divines to restrict it to the latter of these. That conformity to the divine character and holiness forms an essential part of that image in which man was formed, cannot be doubted. The Apostle Paul, in describing the restoration of man as fallen to the image of God, describes it as a being created anew in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. iv. 24). But to restrict the phrase to this meaning is a mistake. The apostle in another passage speaks of the new man in believers being renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him (Col. iii. 10), so that he regarded intelligence as well as moral purity as included in the image of God in which man was framed. And as Scripture continues to speak of man as still retaining the divine image after the fall, as when, for instance, murder is forbidden on the ground that man is in the image of God, and calumny is on the same ground denounced as a heinous sin, and man is on this ground represented as still holding dominion over the lower creation; and as we know that by the fall man lost his moral resemblance to God,—we can understand such statements only by regarding the image of God after which man was formed as relating to both moral character and mental constitution. The former of these man lost by the fall; the latter he retains, and with it his authority over the lower creation and all the responsibility which such an endowment entails. Sin, indeed, has tarnished and enfeebled this part of man's nature also, but not to such an extent as to require his being created anew before this part of the divine image is restored to him.

(i.) Man being thus formed after the image and in the likeness of God, has in him the element and principle of an endless life. "Since life in fellowship with God is by its nature an imperishable and eternal life, and since man was formed for this, and this was from the beginning fundamentally existent in him, it follows that immortality is something belonging to the original nature of man. It is true that it is said that God alone hath immortality (1 Tim. vi. 16); but this does not contradict the above. For though God alone bears in Himself the power of endless life, He yet

bestows this on man inasmuch as He originally communicated to man the basis of immortality, and made him for an endless life. Hence we may truly say that immortality belongs to the nature of man.”<sup>1</sup> Man has not immortality absolutely as his; but he has it so in the constitution God has given him that it is against his nature to cease to be.

(ii.) Man being made after the image and likeness of God, it is not surprising that God, in revealing Himself to him, should represent Himself anthropomorphically. It is not merely in accommodation to human modes of thought that God thus represents Himself. This may be the case with such representations as ascribe to God parts and passions, or as present Him as sitting on a throne, or walking, or handling, and such like. But it is not so with those representations which ascribe to Him the acts and affections of our spiritual nature. These are not mere figures. There is a sense in which God does think and feel; not, indeed, exactly as we do, but in a manner analogous to ours. As thought is to us, so is what is called thought in God to Him; and so of anger, joy, love, and other mental affections ascribed to Him; these all indicate something in Him analogous to, though not identical with, what they are in us. Now, this analogy rests for its basis on the fact that man was made, as respects his spiritual nature, in the likeness and after the image of God. The analogy holds good,—is a reality and not a mere rhetorical figure,—because in God Himself is that according to which man was originally made. God speaks to us of Himself after the manner of man, because man was originally made after the manner of God.

(iii.) Man being made originally after the image of God, has in him the natural fitness to become a son of God. So Adam is called in Scripture (Luke iii. 38) in virtue of his creation; and correspondent to this God, because He has created man, stands to him in the relation of a Father (Mal. ii. 10; comp. Acts xvii. 28). This relation has been put in abeyance by man’s sin. But it has not been annihilated. Man still retains the natural capacity to become a child of God; he has but to return to his allegiance and be at peace with God to find himself restored to his primordial place among

<sup>1</sup> Hahn, *Theol. d. N. T.*, p. 389.

the sons of God. When by faith in Christ he becomes united to Him, he enters with and through Him into a state of sonship: to as many as receive Him, God gives the right (*ἐξουσία*, that which *ἐξέσται*, is allowed, permitted, authorized) or privilege to become the sons of God (John i. 12). No new faculties, no new capacities, are given to them; they are simply restored to their proper place by that which deprived them of their privileges and that which hindered their return to God being taken away.

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## CHAPTER II.

### ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN.

#### II. THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

In reading Scripture it may be held by us as a safe general rule, that beyond the sphere which limits the special objects for which Scripture, as a revelation from God, was given to men, we are not to expect infallible instruction, nor to be surprised or disturbed should we find statements which we are compelled to regard as not in exact accordance with a more advanced state of knowledge than that attained by the society in the midst of which the sacred writers moved and for which they wrote. In all matters pertaining to religion, whether dogmatical statements of divine truth or practical instruction respecting worship and moral conduct, or the record of the fates and progress of the Church of God on earth, we may expect to find the most perfect accuracy, for these are points on which it is the professed design of the Bible to give infallible direction. But on points on which the sacred writers touch only incidentally, or to which they refer only as casually lying in their way as they pass on to their peculiar theme, we have no reason to expect that equal care will be shown to avoid mistaken or partial statements. It was no part of the design of the sacred writers to give the world instruction on these points, and we should not deal with them as if this formed part of their design. Of this

sort are their references in Scripture to natural phenomena or questions of philosophic speculation. To set the world right on such points formed no part of the direct design of Holy Scripture. Hence the writers of Scripture spoke on such points as the people around them spoke, often with very imperfect knowledge, sometimes even erroneously. This should not disturb us, and we should as little labour to force the statements of Scripture into accordance with the doctrines of the advanced science of modern times, as we should allow ourselves to be troubled by the invidious zeal of the enemy of revelation in collecting and pointing out the deficiencies, in a scientific point of view, of the sacred writers. These statements have an archæological interest as indicating the amount and kind of knowledge possessed by the ancient Hebrews regarding natural phenomena and subjects of scientific speculation; and it is interesting to observe how even here the Bible maintains its superiority over all works of contemporary authorship, the cosmology and natural science of the Bible being almost as far superior to what we find in the traditions of other nations as it falls below the discoveries of modern times. Even here we may directly recognise an indication of the superintending hand of God in the composition of this book; for it is certainly very remarkable that the sacred writers whilst, on the one hand, not going beyond the intelligence of the men of their own day by anticipating the scientific discoveries of a later age, should invariably express themselves in a way which commits them to none of those gross physiological and cosmological errors and absurdities with which heathen writers, when they touch on such points, abound. To keep men from making gross blunders on subjects of which they are ignorant, as much demands the agency of a supernatural power as to guide them to state truth in words they were unable to understand. And in a series of writings, the design of which is to teach religious truth, not to anticipate scientific discovery, this is all we have any right to expect, even though the whole series and every word of it be given by inspiration of God.

There is one department, however, of philosophic research so closely connected with the main purport of the Bible that we may expect to find the sacred writers to do more than

incidentally touch upon it, and may anticipate that what they say on it will bear the test of scientific scrutiny. I refer to the natural constitution of man as God's creature. By the constitution God has given him man is fitted for the purposes God designs him to serve, for being acted upon by that discipline through which it is God's will he should pass, and for being profited by that provision which God has made for his spiritual and eternal welfare; and as these are matters pertaining to the very substance of religion, we expect that the Bible will have something to *teach* us concerning man's constitution as a being capable of religious relations and of being affected by religious interests.

We have already considered the account which Moses gives of the creation of man, and of the endowment he received at the hand of his Creator when he came forth at His command. In what was said regarding the creation of man, our view was chiefly historical and simply expository. I propose to follow up that summary by an attempt at a more scientific analysis and compend of what Scripture teaches generally concerning the nature and constitution of man.

The most general statement which the Bible gives concerning man's nature is that he is a being consisting of body and spirit. For body ( $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ ) we sometimes have flesh ( $\text{בָּשָׂר}$ ,  $\sigma\alpha\rho\chi$ ), and for spirit ( $\pi\nu\epsilon\nu\mu\alpha$ ) we sometimes have soul ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ), and sometimes we have the combination body, soul, and spirit. All are agreed that "body" and "flesh" are synonymous terms, the former describing the material part of man in its organic totality, the latter describing it with reference to its constitutive substance or its characteristic affections. But opinions differ as to the terms used to designate the immaterial part of man, some regarding soul and spirit as essentially distinct, others viewing them as designations of the same object viewed under different aspects and relations. Hence has arisen the question: Does the Bible represent the nature of man as consisting of *two* parts or of *three*? or, as it is sometimes expressed, Is the Biblical analysis of man's nature a *Dichotomy* or a *Trichotomy*?

i. This question can be answered only by attending to the usage of the words translated "soul" and "spirit" in Scripture. If we find them used interchangeably or synonymously,

we shall then conclude that the Scripture doctrine of man's nature is a dichotomy; and if, on the other hand, we find them used so distinctively as to indicate that the sacred writers regarded the soul as a different part of man's nature from the spirit, we shall then be constrained to regard their doctrine as a trichotomy.

It is impossible for us here to examine in detail all the passages of Scripture in which these words occur in reference to man. Nor is this necessary. It is enough if we can adduce crucial instances on either side—that is to say, instances which agree with the one hypothesis, but are utterly irreconcilable with the other. By such instances the hypothesis with which they are irreconcilable is thereby excluded.

Now, we find that the terms soul and spirit are constantly used so as to exclude the supposition that they denote essentially different parts of man's nature.

(i.) In the first place, we find soul and spirit used indifferently as the antithesis to body or flesh. Thus (Rom. viii. 10) the apostle says, "The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness;" in 1 Cor. v. 3 he speaks of being "absent in body but present in spirit;" in 1 Cor. vi. 20 he exhorts believers to glorify God "in their body and in their spirit;" comp. also vii. 34; Eph. iv. 4; Jas. ii. 26. In all these passages spirit evidently denotes simply the higher, the immaterial part of man as distinguished from the lower, the material. But we find "soul" used in the very same way. Thus our Lord says, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Matt. x. 28); of the Messiah it is predicted that His soul should not be left in Sheol or Hades, neither should His flesh see corruption (Ps. xvi. 10; Acts ii. 31); and in 1 Pet. ii. 11 the apostle contrasts the soul with those fleshly lusts which war against it. In these passages soul evidently denotes, not a particular part of man's inner nature, but that nature itself, and as such, just as in the former spirit is used. But had there been an essential distinction between soul and spirit, they would not have been used thus indifferently to denote the same object.

(ii.) Soul and spirit are used as parallel with each other. Thus Mary in her song says: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke

i. 47). As this song is constructed on the principle of the Hebrew parallelism, we must regard soul and spirit here as synonymous, different names of the same thing.

(iii.) The same qualities, acts, and emotions are ascribed to the soul and to the spirit. Thus, Jesus is said to have sighed deeply in His spirit (Mark viii. 12), to have groaned in His spirit and been troubled (John xi. 33), to be troubled in His spirit (xiii. 21); and so also we read that His soul was exceeding sorrowful (Matt. xxvi. 38), that His soul was troubled (John xii. 27); and we read elsewhere of the spirit being refreshed and of the soul being in prosperity, etc. (2 Cor. vii. 13; 3 John 2). We have also the apostle speaking of his spirit being refreshed (1 Cor. xvi. 18, etc.), and in Matt. xi. 29 the same expression is used of the soul. Again, what in one place is called "filthiness of the spirit" (2 Cor. vii. 1), is in another described as lusts that war against the soul (1 Pet. ii. 11). Objects to which the same qualities and susceptibilities are thus ascribed cannot with any propriety be regarded as specifically distinct and different.

(iv.) In reference to salvation we have the phrase "to save the soul," and the phrase "to save the spirit," both used without any perceptible difference of meaning (comp. 1 Thess. v. 23; Heb. x. 39; Jas. v. 20, with 1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Pet. iv. 5); and so, on the other side, we read of perdition as a killing of the soul, a losing of the soul, whilst salvation is set forth as living according to God in the spirit (1 Pet. iv. 6). It is evidently of one and the same object that these things are said.

(v.) The departed are spoken of sometimes as souls and sometimes as spirits. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades" (Ps. xvi. 10; Acts ii. 27, 31); John saw under the altar the souls of those that had been slain for the word of God (Rev. vi. 9), and the souls of them that had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus (xx. 4). On the other hand, when the disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea they thought they had seen a spirit (Luke xxiv. 37, 39); the Sadducees say that there is neither angel nor spirit (Acts xxiii. 8); believers are come to the spirits of just men made perfect (Heb. xii. 23); Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison (1 Pet. iii. 18). It is evident from these instances that the im-

material and immortal part of man may be designated either soul or spirit.

(vi.) Death is sometimes called a giving up of the spirit and sometimes a giving up of the soul, as restored life is spoken of as a returning of the soul, or the soul being still in a man (comp. Matt. xxvii. 50 ; John xix. 30 ; Acts vii. 59, with John x. 17 ; Acts xx. 10 ; Gen. xxxv. 18 ; 1 Kings xvii. 21).

(vii.) God, who is emphatically a "Spirit" (comp. John iv. 24, and this frequently-recurring phrase "Spirit of God," or "God the Spirit"), speaks also of Himself as a soul (Matt. xii. 18 ; Heb. x. 3).

(viii.) In fine, as men when they agree are said to be of "one soul" (Acts iv. 32 ; Phil. i. 27), so the believer in union with the Lord is said to be joined to Him in "one spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17) ; and believers who are exhorted to stand "in one spirit," are in the same connection admonished to strive together "in one soul" (Phil. i. 17).

With these instances before us of the free interchange and synonymous usage of the words soul and spirit in Scripture, it is vain to attempt to maintain that they designate radically distinct parts of human nature ; in other words, that soul is different from the spirit, in the same sense as the body is different from both. We must therefore hold by a dichotomy as the scriptural view of man's constitution : he consists of body and soul, or of body and spirit.<sup>1</sup>

ii. But whilst we cannot regard the soul and the spirit of man as numerically different, it would be an error on the other side were we to maintain that they are in no sense whatever to be distinguished from each other. As we have already seen that the material part of man may be indifferently called "body" or "flesh," and yet that these terms present that one object under different aspects, so in regard to the immaterial part of man, it may be called either soul or spirit, and yet in strict propriety these terms designate that object under different aspects, or in respect of different characteristics.

Every one must feel that there are certain connections in which it is more proper to use the one term rather than the

<sup>1</sup> "Impossibile est in uno homine esse plures animas per essentiam differentes, sed una tantum est anima intellectiva, quæ vegetativæ, et sensitivæ, et intellectivæ officiis fungitur." Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, P. i. qu. 76, a 3.



other. For instance, when the apostle says, "I serve God in the spirit," or when he speaks of praying in the spirit, or of the Divine Spirit witnessing with our spirit, etc., we feel that it would not be proper in such passages to substitute soul for spirit. Again, when our Lord speaks of a man losing his soul, or when we read of the redemption of the soul, we feel that it would quite alter the meaning were we to substitute spirit for soul. We find also the sacred writers sometimes using soul and spirit as distinct from each other, as, *e.g.*, when the word of God is said to divide soul and spirit (Heb. iv. 12), or when the apostle prays God to sanctify believers, body and soul and spirit. It is evident, then, that in some sense there is a difference between soul and spirit. In *what* this difference consists, however, it is by no means easy to say. If from nothing else, this is evident from the variety of answers which have been given to the question.

Thus Tholuck says on Heb. iv. 12, "According to our view  $\eta$  here denotes the faculty that goes out upon the sensible, the faculty that is directed to the non-sensible;" and he regards this as the general though the invariable usage of these words as well as the corresponding Hebrew נֶפֶשׁ and רוּחַ. He would thus make the Biblical analysis of our mental constitution very much the same as that proposed by Locke, who ranks all mental phenomena under the two heads of sensation and reflection.

Delitzsch distinguishes them thus: " $\piνευμα$  is the creative life-principle in man as an immaterial agent,  $\psiυχη$  is the same as an agent bound to matter; the latter has the idea of body inseparable from it, it is the *soul*, *i.e.* the spirit organically united to body;" and he adds, "The human soul stands related to the human spirit as the divine  $\deltaοξα$  to the triune divine essence." So also, in reference to the Hebrew words, Oehler says: "רוּחַ is the name given to man's soul from its *substance*, which is the fountain of the body's life itself separate from the earthly material of the body; it is called נֶפֶשׁ, from the life which it has or had in the body and conjoined with the body; רוּחַ is that in the living being from which and by which it lives; נֶפֶשׁ is the being itself which lives."<sup>1</sup>

Nitzsch says: "The soul is the unity of spirit and body,

<sup>1</sup> *De V. T. Sentent. de rebus post mortem futuris*, p. 15.

the individual life, the finitude of the spirit. The concept of the individual, with its relation to spirituality and consequently to real personality, is afforded by the soul alone. It is the Ego construed in its universal first self-consciousness, in its universal definitiveness. But as human, not brutal, the soul is also spiritual, rational, capable of self-determination, and made and designed for this, in the concreated consciousness of dependence on God and freedom in God to go in and out as the sensuous emotion may give occasion."

These extracts, if they do not throw very much light on the subject, yet serve to show how difficult it is to enunciate in any clear and distinct manner the difference between the soul and the spirit of man. Perhaps all that can be safely said on the subject is that the spirit has primary and chief reference to that part of our inner nature which has to do with thought as thought, while the soul has respect rather to that part of our nature which occupies the ground common to body and mind, the region of sensation, appetite, and sensuous emotion.

iii. I proceed to make a few remarks on this inner nature of man, whether called soul or spirit, in order to bring out what the Bible teaches concerning it.

(i.) Various names are given to the inner nature of man viewed under different aspects. Thus it is called *vous* in regard to its being the seat of knowledge and will (Rom. xiv. 5; Eph. iv. 23; Phil. iv. 7; 2 Thess. ii. 2); *διάνοια*, *εννοια*, *νοηματα*, and such like, with the same reference; and *καρδιά* as the personal seat and collocation of the entire mental energies and susceptibilities, whether of sensation, thought, or emotion (Matt. xii. 34, 35; Rom. viii. 27, ix. 2, x. 10; 1 Cor. iv. 5, xiv. 25; Eph. v. 19, etc.).

(ii.) In the soul or spirit lies the proper personality of each man. Each man has his own soul or spirit; to speak more exactly, *is* his own soul or spirit. The body is *his*, not *he*. Hence the Scriptures speak not only of the spirit as *within* the body, subsisting there as a distinct substance, but they identify the soul or spirit with the man himself. Thus St. Paul when he says, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord;" and again, "We are willing rather to

be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 6, 8), evidently identifies himself with his soul as separate from his body; the soul is the *we* that are to be present with the Lord after its present home in the body is broken up; that which thinks, wills, and feels within us constitutes, according to the apostle, the real Ego, that which makes the proper being of the man.

(iii.) This soul or spirit is immortal,—not indeed essentially and by its own original propriety, for God alone hath immortality, and that which has begun to be can never absolutely and in itself rise above the possibility of ceasing to be; but by the divine grace and decree, *χαριτι τῆς του λόγου μετουσίᾱς*, as Athanasius expresses it. "God," says the book of the Wisdom of Solomon, "created man to be immortal; and made him to be an image of His own eternity" (ii. 23). This truth, indicated with varying degrees of clearness in many parts of the O. T., is enunciated with unqualified distinctness in the New. Comp. Matt. x. 28, xx. 32; John xii. 25; 1 Cor. xv. 32; 2 Cor. v. 1, etc.

Whilst, however, it is maintained that the soul is not necessarily and in itself immortal, but has received this from God, and holds it by His will and ordinance, it has, on the other hand, to be maintained that the soul has not in itself any principle of dissolution or cause of decay; so that it can cease to exist only by a special act of the divine power. This must ever present a serious objection to the doctrine of annihilation; for unless proof can be adduced that God directly puts forth His power to destroy the soul He has put into man, the presumption is that it continues to exist though separated from the body at death. "It is probable had man not fallen, that after a continuance in the earthly state for a period of probation adapted to effect the best and most useful exercise of all His physical, intellectual, and moral faculties, each individual would have been translated (as Enoch?) to an eternal confirmation of holiness and happiness, in a higher condition of existence."<sup>1</sup>

iv. A question has been raised as to the way in which the succession of souls is kept up; and at one time this furnished occasion for keen discussion among theologians. Three different views have been advanced on this point.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. J. Pye Smith, *Theology*, p. 357.

(i.) That each soul descends from a *pre-existent* state and enters into the body, which, by natural processes, has been prepared for it. This doctrine, which seems to have been honoured from Plato's idea of an *ανάμνησις*, was held by the Jewish writer Philo, and, among the Christian Fathers, by Origen. It was condemned by the Council of Constantinople in A.D. 543. Strange to say, it has found in recent times an advocate in Kant, who, in order to account for the radical evil which he was obliged to admit is to be found in man, adduces the fact of a pre-existent state in which man was evil, and from which the soul came bearing the taint of its former state. Other German writers have espoused this idea, and even Julius Müller seems to favour it in order to account for original sin. A strenuous advocate of it has appeared in Mr. Beecher, an American divine; and something like it seems to have been in the mind of Wordsworth, though he presents it under a different aspect and with an opposite intent when, in his famous ode on "Intimations of Immortality," he wrote,—

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :  
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,  
Hath elsewhere had its setting,  
And cometh from afar ;  
Not in entire forgetfulness  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God who is our home."

The opinion, however, is one not only wholly unsupported by Scripture, but directly opposed to some of its clearest statements; as, for instance, the account of the Fall in Gen. iii., and the apostle's declaration that "by one man sin entered the world," which could not be did each man derive his sinfulness from his pre-existent state.

(ii.) *Creationism*. According to this view each soul is created directly by God and placed by Him in the body. Jerome says this is the orthodox view; and certainly it is the one supported by most of the Fathers, who believed, as Clement of Alexandria expresses it, that *ουρανοθεν πεμπεται η ψυχη*. It was also held by many of the schoolmen; and it is the view generally held by divines of the Romish Church, as well as by many evangelical theologians. It is supposed to find support

from such passages as Isa. lvii. 16; Zech. xii. 1; Acts xvii. 24; Heb. xii. 9. But these prove nothing more than that God is the former of man's spirit no less than of his body; and say nothing as to the place where or the time when the spirit is formed, or as to the manner of its union with the body. Of those who hold this view some regard the soul as coming pure from the hand of God, and as becoming corrupt through connection with the body; which involves the heathen and Gnostic notion of the inherent vileness of matter.

(iii.) *Traducianism*. Those who hold this view deny that each soul is created immediately by God, and maintain that it is derived by traduction from the parents just as the body is. The whole man, body and soul, they regard as begotten and derived. Some hold this view in connection with a materialistic view of the soul, and some have even gone the length of asserting that the soul is divisible, and that a portion of the soul of the parents is communicated to the child. By those who hold this view, whether in its extreme or its more moderate form, reference is made in support of it to Gen. v. 3, where, in announcing the birth of Seth, it is said that Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." An appeal is also made to our Lord's words, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." But these passages really prove nothing as to the point in question; the former only asserts that Seth was wholly like his father, and the latter that like produces like. It is urged also by Traducianists that only on this hypothesis can we account for the transmission of a sinful nature from parent to child. But this assumes that a sinful nature is actually transmitted from parent to child, an assumption which many who hold that all mankind are involved in Adam's guilt refuse to accept. At any rate, it is hardly competent to bring in one hypothesis to support another.

On the whole, I cannot help thinking that the safest course is to hold none of these views, but to leave the subject in that obscurity in which it seems to be left by God in the Bible. "De re obscurissima," says Augustine, "disputatur non adjuvantibus divinarum Scripturarum certis clarisque documentis." If, however, one of these views must be adopted, I think the second, that of Creationism, is on the

whole the one least burdened with difficulties, and most in accordance with the general representation of Scripture and with the nature of the soul as immaterial and indivisible.

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## CHAPTER III.

### ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN.

#### III. PRIMITIVE MAN.

Having taken this survey of man in his origin and natural constitution, we may endeavour to realize him in thought as he was in the first stage of his existence on earth, as he was when he came forth, as Scripture relates, from the hand of his Creator.

Now, in respect of this I cannot but believe that we often impose upon ourselves, and cherish a picture which is not consonant with the reality, and foster an illusion which is not a little heightened and strengthened by the strong language commonly used in speaking or writing of man's condition in Paradise as one of absolute perfection. From such language we are apt to carry away the notion that Adam was a being not only physically complete and perfect, but also a being whose intellectual and moral nature was in its highest degree developed,—a being, in short, to whom nothing needed to be added to render him perfect in all his parts. Along with this, we are apt to fancy that his condition in Paradise was one of the most perfect felicity which the human nature is capable of enjoying.

Now, that this is an illusive view of man's primitive condition will, I think, appear from the following considerations:—

i. On a mere general survey, and looking at man simply in his physical and intellectual aspect, it must strike one that the highest state of man is not and cannot be that of a naked animal, with nothing to do but to keep a garden, already richly furnished with all that is “pleasant to the eye and

good for food." Viewing man, even in the lowest state in which we find him now, we feel that he must have been made for higher ends and worthier pursuits and nobler enjoyments than this. It is inconceivable that with capacities for thought and work, such as man even in the lowest state of civilisation is seen to possess, the perfection of his nature and his supreme felicity can have been realized in a state of such simplicity and in a sphere so limited as that which Paradise afforded to our first parents.

ii. It must also, I think, strike one that if Adam was the perfect being intellectually and morally he is often represented as having been, it is inconceivable that he should have fallen before so slight a temptation, or yielded to so trifling an impulse as that by which he was led to transgress the divine prohibition. Eve was seduced as a little child might be by a mere trifle—by talk insidious, indeed, and subtle, but by which a being of high intelligence and firmly established moral character could not have been led astray ; such an one would at once have seen through the artifice, detected its falsehood, and spurned its impiety. As respects Adam, he, the apostle tells us, was not deceived ; he so far surpassed his wife in intelligence that he saw through Satan's device ; he saw that what he was invited to do was wrong ; but what shall we say of his moral faculty or of his mental strength when we see him, for what reason we know not, but apparently from mere softness and desire to please his wife, knowingly transgressing the express command of God, a command which he had been so solemnly enjoined to keep ? To me it appears incredible that any being of high moral capacity and mental vigour—a being approximating even remotely to the perfection of manhood—could have allowed himself to be drawn so easily to do what he knew to be wrong, and what he had been forewarned would bring such terrible consequences.

iii. The law of man's nature is that he reaches perfection only by a slow process of growth and gradual development, secured through the due exercise of his faculties. This is inseparable from his constitution as a free intelligent agent. That God could create an intelligent being from the first absolutely perfect, so that he neither needed to become nor could become more complete either intellectually or morally

than he was at the moment of his creation, is not to be denied, for with God all things are possible. But such a being would not be like any of those whom God has formed. Such a “*monstrum perfectionis*” would be an anomaly in God’s universe—a piece of strange symmetrical spiritual mechanism (if that be not a contradiction in terms), in whom thinking would be a sort of clock-work, and in whom there could be neither goodness nor badness morally. It was not so that God made man. Man, as he came from the hand of his Maker, was a free, intelligent, self-governing agent, capable of development, and needing experience, trial, and use in order to attain both the proper growth of his physical and mental faculties and the strengthening, maturing, and perfecting of his moral nature. Of every such being it is in a very important sense true that he is his own maker. From God he receives the faculties and capacities by which he is to be enabled to fulfil the functions of his position; but he must himself use these, and use them wisely and well, if he is really to advance in culture and rise towards the perfection of his being. “Mankind,” as Bishop Butler remarks, “is left by nature an unformed, unfinished creature, utterly deficient and unqualified, before the acquirement of knowledge, experience, and habits for that mature state of life which was the end of his creation.”<sup>1</sup> This is the law under which man, as he exists now, is placed; he becomes strong bodily, mentally, and morally, not all at once, nor by mere mechanical processes, nor by natural instinct, but by the free and voluntary use of the capacities God has given him amid the varied experiences of life. “Nature,” to quote again from Butler, “does in nowise qualify us wholly, much less at once for this mature state of life. Even maturity of understanding and bodily strength are not only arrived to gradually, but are also very much owing to the continued exercise of our powers of body and mind from infancy.”<sup>2</sup> Butler even goes the length of maintaining that a person brought into the world with all his powers in full maturity would at first be “as unqualified for the human life of mature age as an idiot,” and he questions “whether the natural

<sup>1</sup> *Analogy*, Part I. ch. v. p. 146 (Bohn’s edition).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 145.



information of his sight and hearing would be of any manner of use at all to him in acting before experience." Be this, however, as it may, there can be no doubt that it is only by experience that man in his present state advances to maturity. Now, we have no reason to believe that it was otherwise with our first parents. Their nature was the same as ours, and it is to be presumed that the same law applied to them in this respect as to us. They could reach perfection only by the continuous use of the faculties they possessed. It would seem even that their moral perception needed the discipline of evil before it could be fully developed; for it was after they had sinned that God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil," *i.e.* to make moral distinctions, to discern between good and evil (Gen. iii. 22). Not that they needed personally to sin in order to attain to this, but that it was only by experience that they could arrive at an apprehension of the distinction between good and evil. And as it was only by experience that their moral nature could be fully matured, so we may safely affirm of their whole nature that it could reach perfection only by the free and intelligent use of those faculties, physical, intellectual, and moral, with which God had endowed them.

"God created man as little as possible," is the dictum of a recent writer, "meaning thereby that we were endowed with the germ and crude capacity of that state for which we were intended, but that the exercise of our freedom was necessary to raise us up to the positive attainment of the dignity and bliss of perfect moral being." "Mere animal natures are finished from the first; God took everything that concerned them upon Himself, and left them nothing to do. But it was His will that man should be His fellow-worker in the great feat of his own creation, and thereby in the completion of all creation; the Father left the mighty work unfinished, so to speak, until the child should set his seal on it."<sup>1</sup>

We must think of man, then, in his first estate, as he came from the hand of his Creator, not as a perfect, fully-matured being, but rather as a man-child,—a man with noble capacities,

<sup>1</sup> Monsell, *Religion of Redemption*, p. 10.

but these as yet undeveloped, and with everything to learn,—an innocent, pure, guileless being, with no bias to evil, without any knowledge of evil, with affections tending naturally to good, and with a soul capable of rising to a freedom like that of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold sin, and who cannot be tempted of evil. Adam was placed in Paradise as in a school, a training-place suited to a beginner, and where the lessons and the discipline were such as his almost infantile condition required. As one of the schoolmen<sup>1</sup> expresses it: “Paradisus est locus inchoantium, et in melius proficiscentium; et ideo ibi *solum* bonum esse debuit, quia creatura a malo non initianda fuit non tamen *summum*.”

“The *actual constitution* of the first man,” says Dorner, “must not be so conceived as to imply that he was spared all labour and the conquest of the world intellectual and real, just as little as he was spared spontaneous moral effort. . . . It is of no dogmatical importance how high the prerogatives of the first man are placed, provided only two limits are observed—1. That God is not made the author of evil; 2. That man is not precluded from a course of ethical development by a too much or too little. Both are observed by regarding the first man as created with a pure, innocent nature, with a natural bias to good or a natural love for God. Beside this, there was in him, along with consciousness of self and the world, a natural bias to self and the world. These qualities cannot be antagonistic to each other. As they came from the Creator’s hand they existed in immediate, good, though still not perfect and indissoluble unity. On the other hand, this unity needed to be ratified by the will, by the good use of freedom. Actual living relation to God, because depending on the use made of freedom, cannot be perfect in the beginning, but must be the outcome of several divine acts.”<sup>2</sup>

I have referred to the descriptions which are often given, both in discourse and in writing, of man’s estate in Paradise as fostering a delusive conception of his actual condition and attainments in the first stages of his existence. The poets are here chiefly in fault. Take, for instance, the following lines from Montgomery’s exquisite poem, “The World before

<sup>1</sup> Hugo de St. Victor.

<sup>2</sup> *System of Christian Doctrine*, vol. ii. p. 82.

the Flood," in which a descendant of Adam describes his great progenitor,—

“ With him his noblest sons might not compare  
In Godlike feature and majestic air ;  
Not out of weakness rose his gradual frame ;  
Perfect from his Creator's hand he came ;  
And as in form excelling, so in mind  
The Sire of men transcended all mankind.  
A soul was in his eye, and in his speech  
A dialect of heav'n no art could reach :  
For oft of old to him the evening breeze  
Had borne the voice of God among the trees ;  
Angels were wont their songs with his to blend,  
And talk with him as their familiar friend.”

This is very beautiful, but it is poetry, not history. That man was created in this state of consummate perfection, transcending in intelligence as in form all mankind, is a vision of the imagination, not an expression of actual fact. That Adam was no imbecile, that his original state was not that of a savage, that he from the first possessed intelligence as well as a capacity of growth in mental power and attainment, and that he was not only absolutely sinless, but positively good, the Scripture distinctly leads us to conclude. But beyond this we have no right to go. All that we really know is that he was made good in every respect, and that he was placed in a sphere which was a training-place for the whole man, fitted for the development of all his powers.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN.

#### IV. PROBATION, TEMPTATION, AND FALL OF MAN.

Our first parents were placed in Paradise as in a school and in a sanctuary. They were surrounded by all that was necessary for their comfort and well-being, and they were brought into contact with what was calculated to develop the faculties with which they had been endowed, and fit them for

the high ends for which they were originally designed. They had to keep the garden and they had to keep themselves. They had to unite wholesome and moderate labour with the exercise of their mental powers, and the discharge of those moral and religious duties imposed upon them by the relations they sustained to each other, to animate creation around them, and to their Creator and Benefactor in heaven. They were thus in a state of training as well as of enjoyment; there was something they had to become as well as something they had to possess and use. But there was a peculiarity, in a moral respect, in their position beyond this. By the appointment of God they were not only under training, but under probation. There were not only certain results to be developed by natural process, not only certain ends to be secured by appropriate means, but certain mighty issues were suspended upon certain contingencies in their conduct. They were put upon their trial as free agents, and their final happiness was made to depend on the issues of that trial. By their own conduct was to be determined whether they should continue to enjoy blessing or be brought under a penalty. They were thus taught from the first that they were not only the objects of the divine beneficence, but the subjects of the divine government; "the proper formal notion of government," as a great thinker has observed, being "the annexing of pleasure to some actions and pain to others, in our power to do or forbear, and giving notice of this appointment beforehand to those whom it concerns."<sup>1</sup> Such was the constitution and order of things under which our first parents were placed. They were surrounded with blessing, but they were at the same time under law; and the test of their obedience was to be at the same time the criterion of their felicity.

In considering this part of man's primal history, we shall take up in order the following points:—1. The probation under which our first parents were placed; 2. The temptation by which they were assailed; and 3. The success of that temptation.

#### i. *The Probation.*

(i.) This assumed the form of a restriction upon their

<sup>1</sup> Butler, *Analogy*, Part i. ch. 2.

absolute right to do as they would with the place in which God had placed them. That garden was given to them as their own to use it as they pleased, with one limitation,—of all the trees of the garden they might freely eat, excepting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This they were peremptorily forbidden even so much as to touch; and on the day they ate of it they were assured that they should surely die. On their conformity, then, with this restriction depended their enjoyment of life and all the blessings of their favoured condition; and the probation under which they were placed had for its design to test how far they were willing to submit to the will and authority of God as their Ruler and Law-giver.

It is essential to the idea of probation that certain conditions should be fulfilled in respect of the parties who are the subjects of it. First, they should clearly understand what is required of them; what they are to do or to refrain from doing; second, they should be perfectly free to do or to refrain from doing as required; and thirdly, that they should distinctly understand what will be the consequences of their failing of what is thus required of them. In the case of our first parents, all these conditions were complied with. They were placed under a single and most intelligible prohibition, respecting which there could be no possibility of mistake or uncertainty on their part; there was no power constraining them to do what they were thus positively forbidden to do; and they had clearly before them the consequences to which they exposed themselves by a transgression of the divine prohibition under which they were placed in that terrible threatening of death, which was announced by God as the certain and immediate penalty of disobedience. Whether they understood *all* the consequences which such conduct would involve may be doubted. It may be doubted even whether they fully comprehended any of them. But this at least they knew, that all that then constituted *life* to them in the fullest and highest sense of that term would be forfeited by disobedience, and that all that was terrible in *death*—not the less terrible because practically as yet unknown—would thereby be incurred.

(ii.) To some it has appeared as if there was something

in this arrangement unworthy of the dignity of the parties involved in it, or unbecoming the wisdom and beneficence of Him to whom it is ascribed ; and hence doubts have been cast on the historical integrity of this part of the Mosaic narrative. Why, it has been asked, make the fate of men depend on anything so trivial as the eating, or abstaining from eating, of the fruit of a particular tree ? Would it not have been more becoming, more wise, more satisfactory, better in every way, if there was to be a probation at all, to have made it turn on obedience to some great moral principle, or the carrying out of some system of moral acting, such as was worthy of a being of intelligence and moral power like man,—a being so highly endowed in these respects that he is said to have been made in the image and likeness of God ?

An objection of this sort it will not do to attempt to foreclose by the brief and objurgatory demand, “Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God ?” for those who advance such objections are precisely those who are least disposed to admit that it is God who has spoken here. We must therefore take up the objection on its merits, and obviate it by showing that the positions on which it rests are untenable.

In the outset I have to observe that the objection is not the same with all by whom it is advanced. To refute it satisfactorily, therefore, it will be necessary to take it up under different aspects, these being determined by the feature of the arrangement which has appeared to different parties the offensive one.

1. And, first, there are some who seem to stumble at the *littleness* of the trial to which man was thus exposed, and on which such mighty results were made to depend. Had some great thing been required of our first parents as the test of their obedience, these objectors would have been better pleased ; but to make all depend on so small a matter as the eating of one kind of fruit rather than another, is to them offensive, and in their judgment unreasonable and absurd. Now, let us understand those who urge the objection under this aspect. What is it exactly in the littleness of this test by which they are offended ? Do they object to the making of great results flow from apparently little and trivial causes ?

If so, they must be prepared to object to one of the most manifest of those laws under which this world is administered ; for nothing can be more obvious and certain than that the mightiest and most permanent effects are constantly resulting from the most apparently trivial and transient causes. Or do they object to so feeble a test of man's obedience being imposed ? If this be their meaning, it is obvious to reply that so much the more was the arrangement favourable to man, and therefore beneficent and gracious. The more insignificant the self-denial required in order to obedience, the easier the obedience and the more probable the success of the probationer. In appointing so easy a test, God dealt with man as one who was in many respects but a grown child ; one who had no experience, however great his faculties ; and one on whom, therefore, it was only some simple test like this that could have been laid so as to gain its end. Never, we may say, was a moral experiment conducted under circumstances more favourable to the subject of it. It was an experiment, if we may so speak, as nearly *in vacuo* as the necessary conditions of it would admit. If man could not abide a test so simple and so easy as this, we may safely rest assured that under one more difficult and severe his failure would have been only more prompt and perspicuous.

2. As others advance this objection, it assumes the shape of a protest against the dishonour which it is alleged is done to God by the representation of Him as a being who would make a condition of spiritual advantage dependent on an external act. But those who urge this objection seem to have forgotten altogether the real circumstances of the case. By an external act they obviously mean the physical process of taking and eating the forbidden fruit. Is there any one, however, who for a moment dreams of putting that forward as the essential and qualifying element in the test to which man was subjected in the garden of Eden ? A mere physical act as such has no moral character at all ; and though it may be the index of a man's moral state or tendencies, it is not, nor ever can be, an adequate test of them. The test to which Adam and Eve were subjected was not so much whether they would eat or not eat this particular fruit, but whether they would respect and obey or neglect and transgress God's pro-

hibition. In itself the fruit of the forbidden tree may or may not have been noxious. This is of no importance as respects the probatory use to which it was put by God ; it is the fact that as soon as God forbade our first parents to eat of it, their doing so became *sin*, which made it a fitting criterion of man's spiritual destinies. It was not, therefore, on any mere external act that man's fate depended ; it was on such an act as connected with, flowing from, and giving evidence of a particular state of mind. The hinge in Adam's testing turned really not so much on his eating or abstaining from this fruit or that, but on his obeying or transgressing God's commandment. Was such a test unfair to man ? Was it unworthy of God ?

3. Another form in which the objection to the Mosaic account of the trial of our first parents is presented is that in which stress is laid on the purely positive and apparently arbitrary character of the test by which their obedience was to be tried. Why, it has been asked, should a duty which became such only because it was enjoined have been prescribed, instead of one of those duties which flow out of man's position and relations as an intelligent and moral being ? Now, to this it may be replied, on the one hand, that the appointment of a positive rather than a moral test was the only arrangement possible in the case ; and, on the other hand, that supposing another arrangement possible, this was the more favourable and advantageous to man. This was the only arrangement possible ; for how *is* the virtue of a sinless being to be tested but by means of some positive precept ? In such a being moral truth is so perfectly a part of the inner life, that it is only when a positive duty is enjoined that the mind comes to a consciousness of objective law and extrinsic government so as to render obedience. Morality, in short, is for such a life, and not a law ; it is part and parcel of themselves, and not something laid upon them by authority ; and continuance in it, therefore, can no more afford a test of their obedience to God as a governor than the regular performance of the animal functions would be a test of a man's loyalty or good citizenship. The necessity of the case, then, rendered the appointment of a positive test indispensable, if there was to be any real test at all. But even supposing a moral test could have been proposed, was it not much more in Adam's



favour that his obedience should have been tested by a positive enactment? What God required of him was thus clearly and unmistakably brought before him. There was no room left for doubt as to what was incumbent on him, and what he consequently had to do or to refrain from doing. One plain, positive law, simple in its enunciation, definite in its requirements, and easy of obedience, was all that was laid upon him as the test of his loyalty to his Sovereign and Lord. He had but to hear to understand: he had but to obey to live. The very simplicity of the constitution under which he was placed was an evidence of the divine benevolence towards him. While the test was fully sufficient for the end it was designed to answer, it afforded man, so to speak, the best possible chance of success in the probation under which he was placed.

4. Some profound thinkers have started the doubt whether it be possible for a limited intelligence, left to the freedom of its own will, to avoid transgressing the boundaries of duty, and so falling into sin. Without entering at present into so difficult a speculation, we may admit that a limited intelligence is, from the very fact of its limitation, very likely to be exposed to a strong inducement from mere curiosity, not to speak of other motives, to pass beyond the limits within which it may be confined. What lies on the other side of this barrier which I am forbidden to pass? Why am I forbidden to pass it? What will be the result to me if I do pass it? These and such like questionings, working in the mind, are very likely to result in a daring attempt to remove the barrier, or to overleap it, and thereby, if it be a moral barrier, to plunge into sin. Obviously, therefore, the kindest and best arrangement for man in his state of primeval probation was one which should reduce the action of such provocative curiosity to the lowest possible form, which should hem him in by no vague, mystic, uncertain prohibition, but by one perfectly single and intelligible, and which should leave him in no doubt as to the certain misery into which he would bring himself if he suffered any motive to carry him beyond the limits which that prohibition prescribed. Such an arrangement the wisdom and the goodness of God instituted for our first parents in their probationary state; their continuance in happiness was made to depend on their

submission to one simple and most intelligible restriction ; they had but to refrain from the fruit of one tree, while of all the others they might freely eat ; and they knew beforehand what the consequences would be of their violating this restriction. Life and death were thus set before them,—which they would choose ; and whilst everything around them and belonging to them furnished them with inducements to pursue the course by which they would secure the former, the motives that might work in them towards what would entail on them the latter were reduced to the lowest possible degree. Who shall say that in such an arrangement we have not an illustration at once of the beneficence and the wisdom of God ?

How long our first parents continued in the state in which they were created by respecting the divine prohibition, we are not informed, and it is idle to conjecture. We may presume, however, that it was long enough to enable them fully to prove the fitness for them of the place which God had prepared for their habitation, and to make some advances in that process of culture and development of which it was adapted to be the sphere. We have now to turn to the contemplation of the circumstances which led to their fall from their original felicity and their banishment from that garden of delights which God had given them to enjoy.

## ii. *The Temptation.*

In considering the Temptation by which our first parents were seduced from their obedience, we shall notice, first, the Tempter, and then the process by which he succeeded in his designs.

In the narrative of Moses the temptation of our first parents is said to have been effected by the serpent, described by him as “more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.” The comparison here implied does not necessarily shut us up to the conclusion that the tempter was one of the lower animals, for the whole effect of the comparison may be simply to intimate that the agent here introduced was more crafty than any of those living things with which Adam and Eve were acquainted ; they knew all the

beasts of the field which God had made, and could measure their power ; but now they were to come into contact with an agent of deeper craft, and whose subtlety they could not easily measure or master. But a comparison like this plainly necessitates our regarding the tempter here as *an actual being* ; a being having a substantive existence, and possessing certain properties which rendered comparison between him and the lower animals possible. Comparison may be between quality and quality, between being and being ; but not between being and quality. And as we are sure of the actual being of one side of the comparison here, we must set out with the conviction that the other side of the comparison is an actual being also.

There is no one, I presume, who takes this narrative literally as it stands ; no one who believes that one of the serpent tribe of its own accord, and by no impulse beyond itself, acted the part of the tempter on this occasion. In departing from the purely literal interpretation, however, we need not recoil to the opposite extreme, and regard this account as wholly parabolical and allegorical. The style of the historian is that of plain narrative, not that of allegory ; what precedes and what follows is simple historical narration ; and there is not the slightest intimation here of any departure from that style. All attempts, therefore, to give an allegorical colouring to this part of the narrative must be repudiated as arbitrary, and as forcing upon the passage a sense which it plainly does not bear.

We therefore set aside at once the notion that we have here a highly figurative delineation of the working of evil thoughts or unlawful curiosity in the human breast. The serpent here is not a thought but a thing ; and so we must hold it if we would not be found dealing lawlessly with God's word.

(i.) Who, then, was the tempter here ? If not a mere animal serpent, what being is it that appears here under this designation ? On this point we have the authority of Scripture for speaking without hesitation. We know that it was Satan who tempted Eve ; our Saviour tells us that that fallen spirit, the devil, was " a man-murderer from the beginning ; " and we find him on this account, and with obvious reference

to the narrative before us, called by Paul the "serpent," and by John "that old serpent." On this point, then, we can indulge no doubt. The only question that can legitimately arise is whether Moses applies the term serpent to the devil directly as Paul and John do, or whether he would intimate that the evil spirit assumed the form of a serpent, and in that form addressed Eve. I cannot say that it seems to me of much importance which side of this alternative we embrace; on either view that which is essential is preserved, viz. the fact of an actual temptation by the Wicked One of our first mother. Nor is it very easy to determine on which side the preponderance of evidence lies. The statement of the apostle, that Satan transforms himself into "an angel of light," seems to point to some well-known instance of such a manifestation of the adversary's power and craft, and besides the case before us there is no other instance on record in which he may be supposed to have assumed such a disguise. Nor can we suppose any case in which such a disguise would be found so suitable for his purposes. To what being was Eve so likely to listen without suspicion and without fear as to one whom she saw in the appearance of those shining visitants from the heavenly world whom she had been accustomed to welcome as messengers of light and love? But whilst this supposition favours the conclusion that the term "serpent" here is a mere designation of Satan, and intimates nothing as to his having made use of the animal serpent for his purpose, the subsequent part of the narrative in which an animal serpent seems to be certainly introduced as having had to do with the temptation of Eve, taken in connection with the prevailing belief of the Jewish Church, the traditions of the Oriental nations, and extensive prevalence of serpent-worship, and a belief in the power of divination possessed by the serpent in the ancient world, would rather conduct us to the conclusion that a real serpent was in some way employed by Satan as his instrument in this transaction. And perhaps it is to indicate this that Moses says emphatically "*the* serpent" here; meaning thereby not the serpent tribe generally, which are not remarkable for subtlety, certainly not superior in this to many other of the lower animals, but this one particular serpent—this terrible foe who in serpent's guise came crawling

into Paradise, and has left the poison of his trail on all earth's treasures ever since.

(ii.) Let us now consider the process by which the tempter accomplished his designs. Saluting Eve as the less enlightened, the less cautious, the less reflective, and therefore the more likely to prove a ready victim, he with apparent simplicity and artlessness put to her the question, "Yea hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden?" as if he only desired information on a point which had excited his curiosity. Under this simple question, however, was concealed a dark insinuation against God, as if it surprised the speaker to find Him holding back from the creatures He had formed and so richly endowed any part of the produce of the place He had given to them as their own. The tempter evidently sought to stir in Eve's mind some suspicion of the perfect goodness of God, and to beget the thought that in what appeared an unreasonable and needless restriction there was caprice or tyranny. Too crafty to rush directly to his point, or to place before the mind of Eve the vile insinuation as something coming from him, he by quietly assuming an air of incredulity and astonishment insensibly leads his victim in the direction where doubts and difficulties about the divine wisdom and goodness might spring up as the spontaneous product of her own mind. If such doubts, however, were excited by his question in the mind of Eve, she seems instantly to have subdued them, for she at once, with the genuine simplicity of unsuspecting innocence, answers his question, dwelling on the largeness of the divine bounty in placing at their free disposal all the other trees of the garden, and intimating the fearful penalty by which His prohibition of the one tree in the midst of the garden was sanctioned. Finding from her perfect ingenuousness that he might proceed more openly, and, indeed, must do so if he was to gain his end with her, Satan no sooner hears her utter the dreaded penalty than he proceeds boldly to play the liar, to call in question the sincerity of God, and to deride her fears, founded on the belief that God was sincere in what He had said, and meant to execute what He had threatened. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened,

and ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil." How daringly, but at the same time how cautiously and adroitly, he proceeds ! First, he boldly impugns the veracity of God, assuring the woman that it was not true that death was consequent on the eating of the fruit, and probably confirming this by showing with what impunity he himself partook of it. He thus took away from her the great conservative power which a belief in God's faithfulness necessarily exercises over those who are placed under His law ; and having thus, as it were, broken through the defences that encompassed her moral nature, he sets himself to work on her appetites and desires. Taking occasion from the name of the tree, he hastily insinuates that it possessed an intrinsic power to make those who ate of it wise ; and perhaps also he dwelt on the beauty of its fruit and dilated on its sweet and nutritious qualities, for we find that the attention of Eve was forcibly drawn to these properties of it ; she saw that it was pleasant to the eye, and good for food. It was her curiosity, however, and her ambition which the tempter sought chiefly to excite and play upon—her desire to know what had been veiled from her view, and to grasp what had been thought too precious a thing for her to possess. And with the promise of enlightenment and power, should she obey his counsel, he artfully couples the audacious assertion that God knew that such would be the effect upon His creatures of their partaking of that fruit, and therefore had forbidden it ; thus insinuating that it was not from any regard to their welfare that He had thus acted, but simply from a jealous dread of their attaining an eminence where they might claim equality with Him. Thus gradually, cautiously, and craftily did the arch-deceiver weave round our first mother the meshes of his web, and ensnare her to her ruin.

The steps by which Satan advanced to his end were first to disturb the serene repose of piety in the mind of Eve by suggesting doubts or questionings respecting the divine goodness ; then to drive from her mind the restraints which fear of God's threatening imposed by leading her to doubt the divine veracity ; then to work upon her appetites and desires ; and finally, to crown the whole by making her regard God as her enemy, and as one who could be actuated in His dealings

with His creatures by a paltry and pitiful jealousy. With whatever other feelings we may regard this exhibition of his ingenuity, we cannot fail to see how fully it illustrates all that the Scriptures teach of his craft and cruelty, and how strongly it enforces those admonitions which bid us not be ignorant of his devices or indifferent to his wiles.

### iii. *The Fall.*

Let us now turn to glance for a little at the immediate effect of the temptation. And here it is interesting also to observe the process by which evil consummated its triumph over Eve. The narrative of Moses, brief as it is, may be viewed as an articulate illustration of the analysis of the Apostle John in his theory of evil as consisting of the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life. The woman, we are told, when she looked saw that the tree was good for food: there was the lust of the flesh, the craving of irregular appetite and lawless desire; and that it was pleasant to the eyes: there was the lust of the eyes, the inordinate love and desire of what is merely beautiful and attractive with the craving after the possession of what merely enriches and magnifies; and that it was a tree to be desired to make one wise: there was the pride of life, the unholy love of pre-eminence, the restless curiosity that would pry into what God has concealed, the ambition to grasp power above our due, and the impious assumption, if not of equality with God, yet of a right over ourselves independent of God. These three affections are the main sources and occasions of the evil which now predominate in the world; and we see they had all a share in bringing about the first sin that was committed on its surface. They saw the origin of evil in our race; and as they sat at its cradle, they have ever since nourished and led it; nor shall it utterly perish until they have been entirely subdued, and man's whole nature has been restored to its pristine purity.

There is another statement of the N. T. which receives an interesting illustration from the process by which Eve advanced along the path into which the tempter had drawn her. "Lust," says the Apostle James, "when it hath con-

ceived, bringeth forth sin." This is the genealogy of transgression; first there is the evil desire, and then by natural consequence from that the evil act. So was it with our first mother; she began with lust and ended with sin. She allowed a forbidden desire to be nourished in her heart, and this quickly developed itself into a forbidden deed. A deceived heart led her aside; a mind betrayed by Satan betrayed her in turn. And as lust leads to sin, so sin naturally tends to propagate itself. Hence no sooner had Eve herself sinned than she sought to draw her husband into the same snare. Adam, however, was not deceived as she had been. He followed her example, but it was with his eyes open. Whether it was mere thoughtless indifference, or a too yielding affection for his wife, or a sort of chivalrous feeling that he would share with her in the risks she had incurred, that moved him, we cannot tell; but certain it is that what he did he did fully aware of the evil of it and the consequence of it. In any case his sin was great. He preferred a brief indulgence to the claims of duty and of gratitude. Forgetful of God and His authority and His law, he looked only at the beautiful and smiling image, and listened only to the horrid words of the fair but fallen partner of his life. Thus was he drawn to follow her example and to partake her sin. Then was man's first disobedience complete. Then was the ruin of our race accomplished. Then was the covenant broken and the curse incurred. Then was the image of God in man blotted and defaced. Then was discord produced between earth and heaven. Then did the bowers of Paradise, a moment before the abodes of stainless innocence, become the sorrowful scenes of guilt and passion and shame. At this sad sight

"Earth trembled from her entrails, as again  
In pangs, and nature gave a second groan;  
Sky lour'd, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops  
Wept at completing of the mortal sin."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book ix.



## CHAPTER V.

## SECOND DIVISION.—SIN.

## I. THE UNIVERSALITY OF SIN.

From contemplating man in his original condition and early degeneracy, let us now turn to contemplate his actual condition in a moral point of view as he now lives and acts upon earth. And here, first of all, let us look at—

*i. The Testimony of Scripture.*

The assertion which the sacred writers make respecting man is that he is a sinful creature—that sin is universally characteristic of our race,—that all men, without exception, are sinners in the sight of God. Not only is this directly asserted in many passages, but the entire history of man as presented in the Bible, and all that the Bible proposes for man's culture and benefit, presuppose this. This last consideration renders it of importance that we should be thoroughly settled on this point, inasmuch as without a just and clear view of it we shall not be in circumstances to apprehend aright the remedial system to the development of which the Bible is chiefly devoted, and which constitutes the substance and supreme use of Christianity.

Of the passages in which the universal sinfulness of our race is formally asserted, there is none more worthy of notice than that embracing the reasoning of the apostle in Rom. iii. 9, 10, 11, etc. “We have before proved (*προητιασάμεθα*, previously accused or indicted) all, both Jews and Gentiles, to be under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth: there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” These sentences are quoted by the apostle from Ps. xiv. 1–3. They strikingly depict the universal sinfulness of the race. The Psalmist represents Jehovah

as looking down from heaven to see if there were any that understood, any that sought after God ; as searching with His omniscient eye to discover if haply there were any that had not gone astray from Him and from goodness ; and as finding the melancholy result that not one is to be seen who is not a sinner against Him. Destitute of a just sense of God or understanding of His claims, and without any desire of the heart towards Him, they have sunk into moral degeneracy and worthlessness. The great principle of morality being wanting or dormant within them, they speedily plunge into all practical vice and ungodliness ; having turned aside from God, each goes in his own way, but all along a downward and darkening path. One character of evil attaches to them all ; on all the same verdict must be pronounced. " All are under sin "—under its dominion, under its curse ; and He, who on man's first creation proclaimed him " very good," now says as He looks on him, " There is none good, no, not one."

In the following verses Paul, still quoting from the O. T., and chiefly from the Psalms, goes on to set forth some of the manifestations of this depravity in man. He denounces men as pernicious, noxious, deceptive, and slanderous ; as given to malediction and bitterness ; as indulging in violence, and prone to sudden gusts of passion ; ready ever to commit murder through their lust of revenge ; and so mischievous and hurtful in their courses that destruction and misery become prevailing characteristics of their ways or mode of life. It is not the design of the apostle, of course, to charge each of these forms of evil upon all individually ; what he intends is, in the first instance, to overthrow the self-confidence of the Jews by showing from their own books the extent to which, in spite of their privileges, sin and corruption had prevailed in their nation, and thereby to contribute to the support of his general position that all men are sinful before God.

This latter consideration tends to obviate an objection which has sometimes been urged against the conclusion we would draw from the apostle's language here. These passages, it has been said, are all cited from the O. T., and they occur there in a special application, so that they merely prove, what no one would deny, that there have been as there are bad men

in the world ; they do not prove that all men are sinful and evil. But even if we allow that, as originally used by the O. T. writers from whom they are taken, they do not assert the depravity of any beyond those to whom they are applied by them, yet the use which the apostle makes of them here shows us that he meant them to bear on the proof of the universal depravity of man. The general position he lays down is that "All men are under sin ;" and to this the passages he cites are applicable only on the supposition that they directly contain or somehow involve the assertion of the universal depravity of man. Now, allowing that they do not all directly assert this, how does it appear that they lend support to the apostle's thesis ? I reply, in two ways. In the first place, Paul employs them to assert forcibly and in language that would tell upon his readers the position he would maintain. Whether these O. T. writers assert it or not, there is no doubt that *he* asserts it ; and as he preferred using language borrowed from them for the purpose of conveying his assertion of it more forcibly, it is surely absurd to argue from this that his assertion is thereby rendered invalid. It must be borne in mind that it is not with the apostle as it is with us in this respect ; when we would prove a theological truth, we must see to it that the passages we cite from Scripture actually assert that truth, or logically involve it in the sense in which we wish it to be received. But the apostle needed not this support. His own assertion is as valid as could be that of David or Isaiah ; and if he saw meet to express his own position in language borrowed from them, his meaning is to be interpreted from his own context, not from that in which the passages originally occur. The N. T. writers use the O. T. for various purposes, and it would be a serious mistake to say that the passage as quoted by them has in every case exactly the same signification, neither more nor less, that it has as used by the writers from whom they quote. But, secondly, the apostle's argument, as expressed in these words of the O. T. writers, is an argument *a fortiori*, especially as addressed to Jews. These passages are from their own Scriptures, and primarily they relate, by the supposition, to the Jewish people. Their truth, as forming parts of the divine word, no Jew could question ; and the inference, that if such things could be truly said of the Jewish people,

much more could they be said of the heathen, is one which no Jew would feel the least inclination to question. Thus the apostle shuts up his readers to the admission of the universal sinfulness of mankind.

Even assuming, then, the passages quoted by Paul were not, as originally used, intended to enunciate this truth, they, as adduced by him, do most distinctly and forcibly announce it. Of one of them, however, it cannot be justly said that it does not, as uttered by the original writer, proclaim the sinfulness of the race as such. The language of the 14th Psalm, from which Paul largely quotes, is used, not of this class or that, nor of one nation rather than another. The language is as general as possible, and is evidently intended to apply to all men alike—to man as man under whatever peculiarity of outward circumstances he may be found. “The Lord looked down upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God [*i.e.* any one individual who regulated his life wisely, and was piously affected towards God]. All have gone aside together [*i.e.* one and all, כֻּלָּם]; they are corrupt; there is none that doeth good, not so much as one” (ver. 3). No language could be more general than this, and therefore there is hardly an interpreter who does not understand it as intended to apply to the whole race. Both by David, then, and by Paul is the universal sinfulness of the race asserted in the striking words which the former uttered by divine inspiration, and which the latter by the same inspiration quoted from him.

In the words used by the Psalmist, and quoted by the apostle, there seems to be an allusion to an equally general assertion of the universal sinfulness of man uttered at an early period in the history of the race. In the days of Noah, God, we are told, “looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth” (Gen. vi. 12). This, of course, applies only to the men of that generation as respects its primary and immediate application; but the allusion to it by the Psalmist would seem to imply that as it was then so it has continued; earth is still filled with a guilty and sin-loving race.

There is another statement of the apostle bearing on this head which deserves notice. In Rom. v. 12 he argues that

“as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, *for that all have sinned* [ἐφ’ ὡ πάντες ἥμαρτον].” Interpreters differ as to the proper rendering and force of the words ἐφ’ ὡ here; some making them mean “in whom,” *i.e.* in the one man by whom sin entered; others rendering them “even so;” others “into which;” others, as in the common version, “for that;” and others, “provided that,” “on the supposition that,” “it being supposed that.” But for our present purpose it matters not which of these renderings we prefer, though either of the last is better than any of the others. What concerns us is the apostle’s decided assertion that all have sinned. These words not only assert without qualification that all men are sinners, but it is essential to the apostle’s argument that they should be so understood. His reasoning is this: Death is a penal infliction, and under a just government a penalty is inflicted only on those who are guilty of the offence to which it is attached. But death comes upon all men without exception; whence it follows that all have without exception incurred guilt, or become sinners. In the universality of the doom we see convincing evidence under the just government of God of a universal offence.

To these passages we may add such general statements as the following: 1 Kings viii. 46, 47; 2 Chron. vi. 36; Eccles. vii. 20, 29; Job xiv. 4, xv. 14; Isa. liii. 6; Rom. iii. 23; Gal. iii. 22; 1 John i. 8. Many such statements are found in the Bible, and indeed the doctrine of man’s sinfulness and guilt so pervades the entire book that, like the figure upon the ancient shield, it could only be by destroying the book that it could be obliterated.

Among the proof passages commonly adduced on this head is 2 Cor. v. 14: “For we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead,” *i.e.* in sins. If this statement of the apostle relates to mankind, the passage is undoubtedly valid for the purpose for which it is adduced; for if all mankind are dead in sins, undoubtedly all mankind are sinners; the two propositions are almost identical. But it may be doubted whether the passage is to be thus understood; and I refer to it particularly because of the opportunity I am thereby afforded of bringing before you another, and, as I think, a

much better exegesis of it. I regard the apostle as referring here not to a state common to all men, but to a peculiarity in the condition of Christ's people, His elect Church, viz. that they have had fellowship with Him in His death,—that they died in His death, and thereby have become dead with Him. This is a view of the believer's connection with Christ which Paul gives elsewhere. Thus, in Rom. vi. 2–11 he speaks of believers being dead to sin, being baptized for Christ's death, as being planted together in the likeness of His death, as having had their old man crucified with Him, as having died with Him, and as consequently to be reckoned as dead unto sin. Of the meaning of such language we shall fall very far short if we understand by it merely that through Christ's death in some way we are delivered from sin; the apostle plainly intends to teach that believers are one with Christ—partakers of Christ—persons having fellowship with Christ in His propitiatory work, so that in His death they died and are thereby freed from sin. In like manner in writing to the Galatians (ii. 20), Paul says of himself, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me;” where the same idea of the believer's participation with Christ in death and subsequent life is set forth. To the same head are to be referred such statements as in Col. iii. 3, “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;” 2 Tim. ii. 11, “It is a faithful saying, For if we died with Him (*συναπεθάνομεν*) we shall also live with Him,” etc. I regard all these statements as resting upon one basis—as flowing out of one fontal thought, viz. that salvation, including justification and sanctification, comes to a man in virtue of his faith in Christ uniting him to Christ so as to become one with Him, and thereby bringing him to a participation of all that was secured by Christ's obedience unto death and resurrection from the dead. But, be this as it may, the passages I have cited plainly show that in some sense it is true of Christians that they are dead—that this is a peculiarity of their spiritual condition; and it is to this, I take it, that the apostle refers in the passage we are now considering. That this is the meaning of the passage appears from the following considerations:—1. The proper rendering of the passage is, “We judge thus, that if one died for all, then *the*

all (οἱ πάντες, for whom he died) died (ἀπεθانون, the aorist here describes an event contemporaneous with that described by the previous aorist, ἀπεθάνεν)" Whatever it be, then, that is affirmed by the words οἱ πάντες ἀπεθانون, it must be something which took place when the εἰς ἀπέθανεν, not something which was true of the race apart from Him.

2. The assertion ἀρα οἱ πάντες ἀπεθانون is adduced by the apostle as logically involved in the previous assertion εἰς ὑπερ πάντων ἀπεθάνεν. This is the force of the ἀρα here following the εἰ of the preceding clause, "if,"—"then." But the fact that all men are sinners, and dead in their sins, is in nowise logically involved in the fact that Christ died for all. Take this latter statement in what sense you please, it cannot be held as logically included in the fact that the whole race of men are dead. This is a fact which stands quite independent of Christ's death, and, indeed, so far from flowing out of the latter, is presupposed by it. As it is a fact which would have remained such whether Christ had died for us or not, so, on the other hand, it was because this was a fact that Christ died. We cannot suppose the apostle to reason so illogically as to make the truth of a fact flow out of an act which itself flowed out of the fact.

3. In the 15th verse Paul describes a class of persons as οἱ ζῶντες, "they that live." Now, these are certainly identical with the πάντες ὑπερ ὧν εἰς ἀπέθανε, and this would lead to the conclusion that the word πάντες is used here, as it often is, for a limited totality, *i.e.* not for all men, but for all of a particular class, *viz.* those who, united to Christ by a living faith, are held to have died in His death and to live in His life.

4. Paul draws in the 16th verse an inference from what he has asserted in the 14th verse: "Wherefore," says he, "hence forth know we no man after the flesh." Here the apostle asserts that Christians from the time forward of the event previously referred to (ἀπο τοῦ νῦν) know no man after the flesh, *i.e.* do not esteem men according to a carnal selfish manner, and therefore are not moved by men's opinions or judgments in the discharge of duty. Now, what is it that the apostle says produces this effect upon the believer? It is the fact of his being dead. But this cannot mean being dead in sins, for that would have the contrary effect, the

effect of shutting up to a carnal earthly way of regarding men; it must mean being dead *to* sin, the having undergone that death to which he refers in the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans as realized by the believer through connection with Christ, and for which—with a view to which—he was baptized. When men thus die they pass out of the state in which they form carnal selfish judgments; they become new creatures, with whom old things, including such methods of judging, have passed away; they are alive through the Spirit, and so, being spiritually-minded, they judge according to the spiritual judgment and with a just spiritual discernment.

On these grounds I would take this passage out of the class of those in which the universal sinfulness of man is asserted, and rank it with those that set forth the great spiritual truth that believers have died in the Saviour's death, and are alive again through His life. We have no need to press into the service of our thesis passages of doubtful applicability; as already intimated, Scripture is full of statements on this head of the clearest and strongest kind. "In truth," as Dwight observes, "no doctrine of the Scriptures is expressed in more numerous or more various forms, or in terms more direct or less capable of misapprehension."<sup>1</sup>

Besides those express statements to which we have referred, the fact of man's sinfulness is involved in many of the most characteristic revelations of the Bible. It is involved in the provision of a sacrifice for the sins of the world; it is involved in the declaration that Christ came to seek and to save the lost; it is involved in the assertion that if a man die without an interest in Christ he dies in his sins and must perish; for, as Chalmers pointedly puts it, "If it be through the blood of Christ, the blood of expiation, that all who get to heaven are saved, then does it follow universally of them who get to heaven as of them who are kept out of heaven,—inclusive of the whole human race,—that one and all of them have sinned;"<sup>2</sup> it is involved in the sentence that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified, which means, of course, that no man has ever kept the law so as to be held righteous by it; it is involved in the necessity

<sup>1</sup> *Theology*, Sermon 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Institutes of Theology*, i. p. 385.



of regeneration before any man can see the kingdom of God, for, as Dr. Pye Smith observes, "the Scriptures represent holiness of character in any of mankind as the *exception*, and as owing to *grace* which makes men 'new creatures' and 'all things new;' whereas the wickedness of extremely depraved men is put as affording fair specimens of human nature, because it is the spontaneous unchecked growth of our nature;"<sup>1</sup> and it is involved in the announcement that our bodies are to be changed so as to be delivered from a corrupting and polluting virus before they can appear in the heavenly glory. The peculiar character of the Christian dispensation as a dispensation of repentance involves the assumption of the universal sinfulness of the race. The gospel is a call to the race as such to repent and return unto God. "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts xvii. 30). But what need of universal repentance, except on the supposition of universal sinfulness? The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; the Lord came to call sinners, not righteous persons, to repentance; and when, consequently, we hear Him addressing this call to "all men everywhere," we cannot doubt that in the view of heaven all men are sinners, and further, that unless this be admitted and realized, there is no just apprehension of the true nature and design of Christianity obtained.

It thus appears that the testimony of Scripture is decisive in respect of the fact that all men are sinners. "They that have read the sacred volume," says Howe, "cannot be ignorant that 'all flesh have corrupted their way;' that the great God, looking down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God, hath only the displeasing prospect before His eyes even of a universal depravation and defection; that every one of them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; that this world lieth in wickedness; and that this was not the first state of man, but that he is degenerated into it from a former and better state; that God made man upright, but that he became otherwise by his own many inventions; that by trying conclusions to better

<sup>1</sup> *First Lines of Theology*, p. 383.

a state already truly good, he brought himself into this awful plight ; and by aiming at somewhat *above*, sunk so far *beneath* himself into that gulf of impurity and misery that is now become to him as his own element and natural state.”<sup>1</sup>

## ii. *The Testimony of Human Life.*

“ The Scripture hath concluded all men under sin : ” this we have already seen to be the sum of the Scripture testimony regarding the moral character and condition of our race. It is not to Scripture alone, however, that we may appeal in this case ; the same conclusion is supported by the testimony of consciousness, by certain phenomena of human conduct, and by certain facts in human experience.

(i.) The *testimony of consciousness* conspires with the Bible doctrine that all men are sinners. All men know that they have done wrong, that they are continually doing wrong. They not only perceive that, tried by a certain assumed standard, they have deflected from the path of goodness and virtue, but they *blame* themselves for this, they cannot but blame themselves for it. In this self-blame lies the consciousness of *sin*. A man never thinks of blaming his head for aching, or his foot for being clumsy, or his nose for being twisted, because he knows that with these aberrations sin has nothing to do ; they are not the result of free choice. But let a man perceive that he has acted in a way that is crooked, perverse, or mischievous, and he at once pronounces of his conduct that it is wrong, and condemns himself for it. It is true that by habit he may blunt his sense of the evil of his conduct ; but this is effected rather through his diverting his attention from this aspect of his conduct than from his having ceased to feel it to be wrong and blameworthy when he fairly considers it. If we would see how a vivid consciousness acts in this matter, we must go back to the commencement of the man’s wicked career ; we must look at the workings of his mind when the sin was new to him, when he was tempted to commit it for the first time. How painful and agitating were the exercises of his mind ere he came to the point of yielding to the temptation ; and when

<sup>1</sup> *Living Temple*, Part II. ch. iv. ; *Works*, vol. iii. p. 291, Rogers’ ed.

he had committed the sin, how bitter and agonizing was the remorse that ensued! In some minds the remembrance of one sin committed, it may be in secret and never brought to light so as to bring down censure from others, abides as a constant source of theme and self-reproach, covering the countenance with blushes, and causing the heart to throb at the very thought of it,—

“Some fatal remembrance, some sorrow that throws  
Its bleak shade alike on his joys and his woes.”

If any were to question the fact that man is conscious of sin, we might appeal to the curious fact that men who will repudiate at once the charge of being guilty of any particular sin they know they have not committed, will yet not only suffer themselves to be accused of sin in the general, but will even go voluntarily where they know this charge will be brought against, nay, will prefer a man who prefers it against, them boldly and strongly to one who merely feebly suggests it, or tries to explain it away. Let a preacher, *e.g.*, tell a congregation of respectable people that they are thieves, and drunkards, and liars, and unclean, and they will very soon forsake his teaching; but let him tell them plainly and forcibly that they are sinners, that they all do what is wrong, that they are verily guilty and blameworthy before God, and they will not only take no offence, but will commend and approve his teaching. Why is this but that they know in themselves that what he says is true?

Now, whence this self-blame, this self-reproach, but from the consciousness of sin? and if there be no one who is altogether a stranger to this, does it not manifestly follow that there is no one of our race who is not at the bar of his own conscience adjudged to be a sinner?

(ii.) We appeal to certain *phenomena of human conduct* as attesting the existence of sin in all men.

1. And here the first that strikes us is that all men impute *blame* to their fellow-men for what they do that is wrong. There is no man who seriously believes that his neighbour is not blameworthy when he injures him. Why is this? We never attach blame to the storm that injures our crops, to the lightning which strikes our cattle dead, or even to one of the

lower animals which injures us. Why, then, do we blame our fellow-men when they do us harm? Because, simply, we regard them as moral agents, and count their doing of harm to us sin. But if, when they harm us, they are counted sinners, are they not also sinners whatever wrong they do? It is not merely because it is against us that they have done wrong that we impute blame to them; it is because we regard them as free agents who could have done otherwise if they had pleased, and who are consequently to blame for not doing otherwise. Whenever men, then, act wrongly, they are liable to blame—they are to be counted sinners; and as no man ever yet lived who did not do wrong, as no person ever knew a man who at no time swerved from the path of right, we are shut up to the conclusion that all are sinners—wilful wrong-doers, who are therefore to be blamed.

2. Another phenomenon of human conduct to which we may appeal in support of this position is the unwillingness men have to think or speak about God. That such is the fact needs hardly to be proved. Men like not to retain the knowledge of God in their thoughts. They are ready to say in their hearts, "No God." They resort to every expedient to banish Him from their reflections. They cannot, indeed, eradicate the religious principle wholly from their bosoms; they must have something to worship and fear; but to meet this they resort to the expedient of inventing a God for themselves, to whom, either in gross idolatry or with more or less of avowed and open superstition, they do homage, rather than keep before them the knowledge of the living and true God. So familiar is this to us, that in civilized society it has become a sort of recognized courtesy that God shall not be spoken of; and were any one to introduce the subject into a company, not of bad men, but men of ordinary average good character, there would be immediately, if not by words, yet by most significant signs, clear indications given that the subject was felt to be a most unwelcome one, and that his introduction of it was a most unseasonable one, if not a piece of unpardonable rudeness. Now, how is this fact to be accounted for? No one can say the subject is unworthy his notice. No one can pretend that it is otherwise than most proper and necessary that intelligent and accountable creatures should

have their thoughts occupied with God, and should often converse together concerning Him. And it would be idle to trace the reserve which men show in respect of God to any feeling of reverence for Him such as would prompt them to confine their consideration of Him to their most secret and solemn moments; for the very men who are most unwilling that the truth should be brought before them concerning God are the most ready to consider and embrace every false or sceptical view that can be thrown out in relation either to His perfections or His government. I can see no way of accounting for this fact but by referring it to the existence of sin in men, and the consciousness of it in every human breast. A company of pure and sinless intelligences would not, if placed in a world like this, be so shy of God—so averse from thinking and speaking of Him, whilst all around proclaims His majesty and His beneficence. The conduct of man in this respect can be accounted for only by the supposition that he is not sinless and pure. “The only and true explanation is that God and the soul are themes that move disturbance. They suggest blame; they lacerate, in this manner, the comfort of the mind.” “Men,” adds the same writer, “are under a subtle and tacit but damning sense of blame, and cannot bear, on all occasions, or anywhere but in the public assemblies of religion, to have subjects introduced that remind them of it, and stir again the guilt of their conscience.”<sup>1</sup> To all pure and intelligent beings the name of God is a name of joy: that among men it should have power to strike into silence or inspire with uneasiness is an ominous circumstance which can be accounted for only by the fact that man though intelligent is not pure, but feels himself guilty before God.

3. Another fact to which we may appeal as showing from man's conduct his consciousness of sin, is the fact that all men act on the supposition that sin is a thing to be constantly dreaded or guarded against. Whatever men may think or say of themselves, all men show by their conduct that they cannot implicitly trust others in this respect. They feel that they have an enemy in the souls of their fellow-men against which they have to guard. Hence they surround

<sup>1</sup> Bushnell, *Nature and the Supernatural*, p. 155.

themselves with protection of every kind. In simple states of society they cultivate powers of self-defence, go abroad more or less prepared for battle, and lie down at night with weapons within their reach. In states where society is better organized, men surround themselves with the protection of penal laws, directed against the various offences by which one man may suffer at the hand of another; and not relying wholly on these, they seek by various other precautions to protect themselves and their property and their households from the sin of others. What are the locks and bars by which we secure our dwellings against the intruder,—the bonds, and receipts, and deeds by which we seek to guard against fraud and deceit—the oaths by which we endeavour to constrain men to speak truth, and other such like contrivances with which all who live in society are familiar,—what are they but evidences that men universally hold themselves prepared for wrong, and have to guard against it? Now, why this constant expectation of evil, this constant dread of harm, this uneasy state of preparation against possible iniquity? Is it not because men know that there is a terrible reality in the world called sin, and that from the influence of this no man is free, so that the only way to be at all secure is to act on the presumption that there is no quarter from which the incursions of the enemy are not guarded against? In a sinless state of society, in a society where sin was the exception, would not such precautions be regarded as needless and preposterous?

4. Another fact to which we may appeal under this head is the necessity universally felt for family discipline. “A child left to himself,” says the wise man, “bringeth his mother to shame” (Prov. xx. 15); and to the truth of this all experience gives testimony, so that wherever such a parent is seen following such a course with his child, the common sense of the neighbourhood confidently anticipates a result such as Solomon announces. Now, why is this? Why may not children be left to themselves to spring up as the flowers, or to develop their powers as the birds without control, without check, without chastisement? Why should their young life be disturbed by law, and discipline, and reproof, and punishment? Why should all wise men who care for their

children act on the principle that the best thing they can do for them is from the beginning of life to subject them to a system of discipline which it is often far more painful for the parent to enforce than it is for the child to submit to? Can any rational defence be offered for this, except that it is a known and undeniable fact that sin is in the bosom of every child, and that it is only by keeping him from the beginning under a scheme of government that that sin can be kept from growing into a monstrous and all-commanding power before which all moral restraint would be impotent, and by which life would be rendered a scene of lawless ferocity and reckless indulgence?

5. We appeal once more under this head to the fact that all men confess their sinfulness by adopting a religious system which is exclusively adapted to a sinner. There have been many different forms of religion in vogue among men, but however they may differ in other respects, they all agree in this, that they presuppose man's guilt, and profess to meet and provide for emergencies thence arising. In all of them we find the idea of propitiating an offended Deity; in all of them the rite of sacrifice is inculcated as a means of attaining this end; in all of them penances, mortifications, and painful inflictions are recommended as means of securing the divine forgiveness; in all of them ablutions as a method of purging away pollutions are set forth as important; in short, they are essentially *expiatory* in their character and pretensions. Now, why is this, but that man feels himself a sinner, and knows that he can come into the presence of Deity only to be condemned and punished for his sin unless some method of removing it be found? In the piety of a sinless being such ideas and acts have no place; they would never so much as enter his mind. An offering of expiation is a confession of guilt. As has been strikingly said with regard to the offering of human sacrifices, a rite which "has prevailed under every form of nature-worship," there goes up from all such painful and costly expiations "a dreadful, in some sense a prophetic, cry for help on the part of man, conscious that he is without God, and which could only on Golgotha be resolved into hymns and thanksgivings."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kurz, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 46.

(iii.) In turning to the facts in *human experience* which go to attest man's universal sinfulness, we may, in the outset, appeal to the large and unqualified admission of this which men, the most competent to speak on such a subject, have in all ages made. If we turn, for instance, to the literature of nations, what ample admissions do we find of this fact alike in poetical, historical, and philosophical composition! The experience which breathes through all the remains of ancient literature is that of men who were not ignorant of right and wrong, who were not weak so as to be unable to follow the right and refuse the wrong, but who were and felt themselves to be wicked, prone to prefer the wrong, and who knew that in consequence of this they were constantly doing wrong. "Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor," are words which express the experience, not merely of the man who uttered them, but of all men in all ages, so that they have passed into a proverb. "Nemo sine vitiis nascitur," exclaims Horace;<sup>1</sup> and says a poet of Greece,<sup>2</sup>—

ἀνθρώποισι γὰρ  
τοῖς πᾶσι κοινόν ἐστί τ' ἑξαμαρτάνειν.

"There appears," says Aristotle, "another something besides the reason natural to us which fights and struggles against the reason; and just as the limbs of the body when under paralysis are when they would move to the right are carried away to the left, so is it in the soul."

How pointed is the language of Plutarch in speaking of the mingled good and evil of our nature: "Some portion of evil is mingled in all who are born; for the seeds of our being are mortal, and hence they share in causing this, whence depravity of soul, diseases, and cares creep upon us."<sup>4</sup> How uniform also was the belief of the ancients in the defilement with which the soul went into the future world, and the need of a severe purification there before it could be admitted to the place of the blessed!

"Quisque suos patimur manes; exinde per amplum  
Mittimur Elysium, et pauci læta arva tenemus:  
Donec longa dies perfecto temporis orbe  
Concretam exemit labem, purumque relinquit  
Ætherium sensum, atque aurai simplicis ignem."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sat.*, i. 3. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Sophocles, *Electra*.

<sup>3</sup> *Eth. Nicom.*, i. 11.

<sup>4</sup> *De Consol. ad Apoll.*

<sup>5</sup> *Æneid*, vi. 743.



“That the world lieth in wickedness,” says Kant, “is a lament as old as history, nay, as old as the oldest poetry. The world began, it is allowed, with good, with a golden age, with a life in Paradise, or with one still happier in communion with heavenly being. But this felicity, it is admitted, has vanished like a dream; and now man’s course is even with accelerated speed from bad (morally bad, with which the physically bad ever advances *pari passu*) to worse. . . . A few moderns have advanced the opposite opinion, which, however, has found favour only with philosophers, and in our day chiefly among pædagogues, that the world is progressively tending from bad to better, or, at least, that the basis of this lies in human nature. But this opinion assuredly is not derived from experience, if it is of moral goodness and badness, not civilisation, they speak; for the history of all times speaks decisively against it.”<sup>1</sup> “Profound observers of the human nature,” says Hahn, “in great numbers since Kant have acknowledged the truth of the Biblical doctrine, that the root of man’s nature is corrupt, so that each feels himself by nature morally sick and unfree, and no one is able of his own strength to fulfil the divine law, though he acknowledges it to be good and inviolable.”<sup>2</sup>

It is needless to multiply extracts: those I have given may be taken as a specimen of how the universal experience of mankind falls in with and attests the position so fully asserted in Scripture of man’s universal sinfulness and guilt.

We might further dwell here on the fact that human experience taken on the most extensive scale refuses to acknowledge that it has ever come to the knowledge of a sinless and perfect man,—a fact utterly inexplicable on the supposition that men generally, or that some men, are sinless. We might advert also to the fact that experience attests that it is much more easy to find a clever and able servant or agent than one thoroughly honest, virtuous, and trustworthy. But it is unnecessary; the fact is so notorious that no man ventures formally to deny it, and it is only by ignoring it, or by the most curious expedients of word-juggling, that those who are

<sup>1</sup> *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, p. 1. Comp. also Part I. § 3, p. 26 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Lehrbuch*, p. 364.

unwilling to contemplate or admit it get rid of its solemn presence or explain away its existence.

Of these expedients one of the most common is to apply to this fact in the experience of our race some term, or to refer to it in phraseology, which insinuates that it is rather a misfortune that has befallen man, a calamity that has come upon him, than a state for which he himself is responsible, and which entails on him guilt. Thus it is spoken of as a disorder or a disease which has overtaken man, and Mr. Theodore Parker speaks largely and eloquently of it as a "misdirection of human nature." Now, what is such language intended to convey? Those who use it cannot mean us to take it literally; they cannot mean that when a man goes contrary to the order of the moral world he simply suffers some disarrangement or suffering, such as he endures when his digestive powers are out of order, or when a limb gets dislocated; they cannot mean that when moral law is transgressed by man an occurrence of the same kind has taken place as happens when an arrow shot from a bow swerves from the course it was intended it should follow, or a bullet fired from an ill-grooved rifle goes awry. In such a case everything like blame or censure would be out of place, and right and wrong would be terms of no moral significance. On this principle all denunciation of vice is an absurdity, and all punishment of crime a piece of gratuitous cruelty. On this principle some of Mr. Parker's own most eloquent and valuable utterances must be regarded as mere idle words, for they are denunciations of slaveholding and such arts as wicked and criminal. To take his doctrine literally, therefore, is to fix on him a charge of gross inconsistency and idle vituperation. But if such phraseology is not to be taken literally, how is it to be taken? To this no definite answer can be given by those who use it. The truth is they do not use it for the purpose of conveying a definite utterance of opinion. They employ it rather to conceal opinion than to express it. Their object is, without denying our position, to rob it of all its force. They cannot shut their eyes to the fact that evil has laid hold upon every individual of our race; but they seek to escape from unpleasant feelings in the presence of this fact by calling it by names that suggest other

ideas than those of guilt and blame. It is a poor expedient, and as foolish as it is poor. It is a mere trick of wordcraft which may deceive the unwary, but leaves the case exactly as it was.

Were it worth while reasoning with those who resort to such expedients, we might express to them our wonder that it does not occur to them to ask, Why should men blame themselves and others for doing what they call wrong? That men do so blame themselves and others is undoubtedly certain. We may appeal to any man's consciousness and experience in support of this. An individual, perhaps, here and there, may by dint of long practice have succeeded in silencing the monitor within, or may so little heed it that he is in nowise hindered by it in his career of sin. But he knows that it took him a long time to do that, that it was not without a hard struggle that he succeeded in that, and that the voice within though silenced is not dead, but is still prone to rise up and stun him with its reproving utterances. It is curious, also, to observe how the very persons who teach these views of human nature severely blame and censure others when they do them any wrong. Is this reasonable on their ground? Do they blame the elements when through their disorder some grievous injury is sustained by them in person or property? Do they blame the wind which blows down a tree or a house? Do they seriously pronounce censure on an epidemic, or animadvert on the moral impropriety of a pestilence? But if not, why blame a man if when he does what is wrong he is simply the victim of disease, or is simply following the bent of unfortunate circumstances? Does not this inconsistency show that they do not really believe their own theory, but in spite of themselves feel it to be true that the unalterable law of this universe is the law of *right*, and that the man who breaks that law in any of its requirements is not unfortunate and to be pitied, but is guilty and to be blamed?

There is thus abundant testimony from within man's own soul and experience, as well as in nature without him, to the fact of sin. The testimony of Scripture is thus amply confirmed. And they who would aright estimate man's condition and prospects as an intelligent agent must take this fact fully

into consideration. If it is overlooked or misinterpreted, an essential factor in the calculation will be missed, and the whole conclusion thereby vitiated.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### SIN.

#### II. EVIL THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

We have seen that sin has entered our world, and that it prevails universally over the race, so that there is not a man that liveth and sinneth not. We have seen also how it was that sin was introduced into our world, and by whose means man was drawn into it and brought under its power. Before proceeding to consider the effect upon the race of the first sin of the first man, there are two inquiries of a more general kind to which it may be proper to advert. These are, What is evil? and, What is the origin of evil in the universe?

These questions have engaged the attention of thoughtful men from early times. In respect of the first, conclusions have been reached which may be regarded as satisfactory; but though many attempts have been made to answer the second question none of them has been successful, and we must be content to leave it as an insoluble problem. Some of the more important of these attempts, however, it may not be out of place or uninteresting to notice.

##### i. *Definitions of Evil.*

To the question, What is evil? we may reply generally, that it is the antithesis or negation of good. It is not possible to give other than a negative definition or description of it. It is not something positive. In the abstract, evil is want of conformity to good; in the concrete, it is anything that is opposed to or comes short of actual good. Good is something positive, evil is simply the absence or negation of good. In this all are agreed. "All evil," says Origen, "is

nothing, since it happens as not being.”<sup>1</sup> “No nature,” says Augustine, “is evil, and this name is only of the privation of good,”<sup>2</sup>—a statement which he after repeats in the course of his writings. Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero all taught that by nature all things are good; evil arises when there is a dereliction from nature or a negation of it. “Evil,” says St. Basil, “is not a living substance and endowed with soul, but an affection of the soul contrary to virtue sprung from the desertion of good, so that we have no need to seek for a primitive evil.”<sup>3</sup> “Properly speaking,” says Leibnitz, “evil formally has not an efficient cause, for it consists in privation, that is, in that it is not made by an efficient cause. Hence the schoolmen are wont to call the cause of evil *deficient*.”<sup>4</sup> But I have nowhere seen this point more clearly and accurately exhibited than by the French philosopher Bartholmess. “Considered in an abstract manner,” he says, “evil is the negation of, or the antithesis of, good. Now, good in any being is the entire and facile development of its nature conformably to itself, to its end, and to its law. God alone realizes for us the idea of the absolute good, because He possesses the plenitude of being, and encounters no limit to His attributes. God also enjoys absolute and boundless felicity. The idea of a perfect being, therefore, excludes the possibility of evil as its proper negation. With created and finite beings evil consists in their very imperfection, or in the disagreement between their nature and their end, their actions and their law. The complete, regular, and facile accomplishment of all the particular ends concurring to a general end is order, or the general good; the derogation from order, the infraction of the universal law, or of those which regulate each being in particular, constitute evil. It thus appears that evil is not in itself anything positive; it is resolvable into either a negation, an imperfection, a defect, or a discordance between the end of beings and their development.”<sup>5</sup>

A threefold division of evil has been signalized, viz. into

<sup>1</sup> Πασα ἡ κακία οὐδὲν ἐστίν, ἐπεὶ καὶ οὐκ ἔν τευχαναι. *De Princip.* ii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> “Cum omnino natura nulla sit malum, nomenque hoc non sit nisi privationis boni.” *De Civit. Dei*, xi. 22.

<sup>3</sup> *In Hexæm.* Hom. ii.

<sup>4</sup> *Theodiceæ*, Pt. i. § 20.

<sup>5</sup> *Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques*, T. iv., p. 61.

*Metaphysical, Physical, and Moral.* The first, *malum metaphysicum*, has been defined by Leibnitz<sup>1</sup> as “in the general consisting in the imperfection of things, even such as are non-intelligent;” the second, *malum physicum*, as relating “specially to what incommodes intelligent substances;” and the third, *malum morale*, as “belonging to the vicious actions of such.” Stapfer defines them thus: “*Malum metaphysicum* is defect of ulterior or greater perfection in a thing, and consists, therefore, in limitation of essential determinations;” or it may be called “the absence of ulterior reality and perfection in creatures;” *Malum physicum* is “whatever is thought to render the state of things as respects natural effects more imperfect than they would have been had they been other than they are;” and *Malum morale* is “that on account of which men’s actions are said to be vicious.”<sup>2</sup> Or we may state the distinction thus:—Every existence has an ideal or ulterior perfection; when it comes short of that there is evil. Every sentient being has happiness as its end; whatever impedes or destroys this is evil. Every intelligent being is bound to be morally good and virtuous; wherever there is a departure from this, or a coming short of it, there is evil. It may, however, be doubted whether the first of these should not, as well as the last, be restricted to *intelligent* existences; inasmuch as it is only as it affects them that imperfection in themselves, or in other existences, is an evil. It may be further observed that even in reference to intelligent existences imperfection is not so much an evil as a possible cause or occasion of evil; for limitation, or even defect, if it do not lead to unhappiness or sin, and if it do not hinder the due development of the being towards its proper end, cannot with strict propriety be called an evil. All creature perfection is necessarily relative perfection; absolute perfection belongs only to God; consequently, if imperfection were in itself an evil there would be no creature, however exalted and holy, who would be free from evil. Not only so, but it may be better for a creature to be imperfect, as compared with an

<sup>1</sup> “*Metaphysicum generatim consistit in rerum etiam non intelligentium imperfectione; physicum accipitur speciatim de substantiarum intelligentium incommotis; morale de earum actionibus viciosis.*” *Causa Dei Asserta*, § 30-32.

<sup>2</sup> Stapfer, *Institt. Theol. Polem.*, T. i. p. 110.

ideal or absolute perfection, than to be perfect, because thereby more fitted for the position he has to occupy in the universe.

(i.) We may satisfy ourselves, then, with a twofold division of evil—*physical* and *moral*: the former being whatever is opposed to or less than good, in the sense of happiness; the latter whatever is opposed to or less than good in the sense of rectitude, virtue, or holiness. We may further distinguish between the absolutely good and the relatively good; the former of which is to be desired for its own sake, the latter of which may be desired as a means to an end. A correspondent distinction of evil may be made; the antithesis of the absolutely good being the absolutely evil, which cannot be chosen by perfect wisdom and holiness, either for itself or as means to an end; and the antithesis of the relatively good being the relatively evil, which, though not to be chosen for itself, may be used by infinite goodness and wisdom as a means to an end, and which in the case of physical evil may be even desired as the means best adapted to secure some end that is good.

(ii.) Moral evil is often identified with sin. It would be more correct to say that sin is moral evil viewed under a certain aspect, viz. as lawlessness (*ανωμα*), as “*illegalitas seu difformitas a lege.*”<sup>1</sup> Moral evil is evil *in genera*; sin is evil *in specie*; the former is *malum in se*, the latter is *malum prohibitum*; and as the commission of what law forbids entails guilt and exposes to punishment, this latter becomes also *malum culpæ*.

(iii.) The relations of physical and moral evil may be stated thus: 1. Physical evil is by the divine ordinance the consequence of moral evil, and frequently the outward exponent of what is hid from created vision. 2. Physical evil is *malum pænæ*, the punishment which is made to fall on the being who has been guilty of the *malum culpæ*: “Evil,” says Augustine, “is twofold; there is the evil which a man does and the evil which he suffers; what he does is sin, what he suffers is punishment. The Divine Providence moderating and governing all things, man so does evil as he wills that he suffers ill which he would not.”<sup>2</sup> 3. Physical evil may often

<sup>1</sup> Calovius, *System. Locc. Theol.*, v. p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> “*Dupliciter appellatur malum, unum quod homo facit, alterum quod patitur*;

be the means of preventing moral evil, and of securing the opposite good; it may thus become not merely, as Hierocles calls it, *πονηρίας ἱατρική*, but even a mediate or subsidiary good.<sup>1</sup> 4. The converse may not lawfully take place; moral evil may not be resorted to for the averting of physical evil; God never directly wills evil that good may come; and He has forbidden this to us. 5. It is nevertheless possible, for aught we know to the contrary, that moral evil may be the condition without which intelligent creature existence cannot reach its highest and most perfect development, *i.e.* becomes entirely and for ever superior to all defect and evil; and for this reason, though not directly willed by God, it may be permitted by Him.

(iv.) The distinction between physical and moral evil has by some been subverted. This is pre-eminently the case with the Pantheistic school. With them, indeed, moral evil as such is wholly ignored. According to Spinoza, "Good is that which we certainly know to be useful; and evil that which we certainly know to impede or hinder in any degree our attaining any good." We propose to ourselves an idea of man, or an exemplar of human nature, and good is that which we know to be the medium of more and more approaching to that; while evil is what we know to hinder us from reaching that.<sup>2</sup> Thus, from our concept of good, all notion of moral rightness or conformity to ethical law, and from our concept of evil all notion of moral turpitude or difformity from moral law, is excluded. Good is simply what is useful, as tending to the more perfect development of our nature; and evil is only what is noxious, as tending in some degree to impede that development. There is thus neither moral good nor moral evil; all is purely physical or natural. Nor is this other than a necessary consequence of the Pantheistic concept of the universe. For if God be the immanent cause of all

quod facit peccatum est, quod patitur pœna. Divina Providentia cuncta moderante et gubernante ita homo male facit quod vult ut male patiatur quod non vult." *Contr. Adimant.* c. 26. So also Grotius: "Est autem pœna generali significatur malum passionis quod infligitur ob malum actionis." *De Jure*, l. ii. c. 20, § 1.

<sup>1</sup> "Mala physica interdum fiunt bona subsidiata tanquam medix ad majora bona." Leibnitz, *Causa Dei Assert.*, § 35.

<sup>2</sup> Spinoza, *Ethics*, Pars iv., *præfatio*.



things, and if all thought be simply God thinking, simply the consciousness of the one infinite substance, there cannot be any real or essential distinction between right and wrong, moral good and moral evil, because that would argue essential distinction in the divine substance, which is impossible. Pantheism thus leads necessarily to the obliteration of moral distinctions as such, and resolves good and evil into the merely accidentally useful or hurtful. Less pronounced are the conclusions of the naturalistic or sensualistic school on this head; but with them also there is no real place for moral evil or sin. With them all is the outcome of nature; good is that which is in accordance with nature and promotes human happiness; evil is only at the worst defect, a short coming from the abstract ideal, incident in the process of development to a being which is gradually, by purely physical agencies, working towards it the realization of that ideal. As Principal Tulloch has well remarked, "The two conceptions of sin and of development in this naturalistic sense cannot coexist. I cannot be the mere outcome of natural law, and yet accountable for the fact that I am no better than I am. If I am only the child of nature, I must be entitled to the privileges of nature. If I have come from matter alone, then I cannot dwell within the shadow of a responsibility whose birthplace is elsewhere—in a different region altogether."<sup>1</sup> To be in accordance with their own fundamental principles, the disciples of the sensualistic school must hold that pleasure is the only good, and pain or suffering the only evil, of which we have any knowledge. To the other extreme have gone those who would resolve all evil into that which is immoral, regarding pain and all forms of physical evil as mere accidents which the wise man will regard with indifference, or as necessarily involved in that moral evil of which they are the punishment. But it is vain to deny that pain, suffering, disorder, are real evils; and it is a mistake to include that which is the consequence and penalty of sin as part of the sin itself. As the pleasure which God has made to attend on goodness is not itself goodness, so the pain which He has made to attend on sin is a real evil, which must ever be discriminated from sin itself.

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, p. 5.

ii. *The Origin of Evil.*

Passing on to the consideration of the origin of evil, we come to a question the most perplexing of all connected with the subject of evil. *Ποθεν το κακον*; this is an inquiry which from the dawn of speculation has excited the curiosity and exercised the ingenuity of philosophic thinkers.<sup>1</sup> The hypotheses which have been advanced for the solution of this problem may be classed under two heads, as the Dualistic and the Monoistic. The Pantheistic hypothesis does not come into consideration here; for on it the distinction between good and evil virtually disappears, both being viewed as only varied applications or manifestations of the One original, infinite, and eternal substance. We may also pass over the hypothesis of pre-existence — a hypothesis which was favoured by Plato, who thought that our present knowledge is but a reminiscence of what we experienced in a previous state of being, and who imagined he was furnished by this with an argument in favour of the immortality of the soul, inasmuch as the soul having passed from a previous state into the body without suffering dissolution, might be presumed capable of passing out of the body into a future state without being thereby destroyed.<sup>2</sup> This notion of Plato, which he probably derived from Pythagoras,<sup>3</sup> was adopted by some of the Christian Fathers, especially by Origen, whilst by others it was sternly repudiated.<sup>4</sup> Some such notion seems to have been in the mind of Wordsworth when he wrote his splendid ode, entitled, “Intimations of Immortality from recollections of early childhood.”<sup>5</sup>

Strange to say, this notion has been of late revived in theology by some who imagine it helps to account for the fact

<sup>1</sup> “Eædem materiæ apud hæreticos et philosophos volutantur, iidem retracatus implicantur: Unde malum et quare?” Tertullian, *De Præscr. Hæret.*, c. 7. *περί του πολυβρῦλλητου παρα τοῖς αἰρεσιωταις ζητηματος, του Ποθεν η κακία.* Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.*, v. 27. Comp. also Epiphani. *Hæc.*, xxiv. 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Plato's *Phædo*, c. 18, p. 73 A; *Meno*, p. 81 B; *Phædrus*, p. 249 C; cf. Cicero, *Tusc. Quæst.*, i. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Diog. Laert., l. viii. c. 4; Theodoret, *Epitom. Div. Decret.*, l. 9, p. 272, quoted by Suicer, *Thes. Eccles.*, s.v. *ψυχη*.

<sup>4</sup> Epiphani., *Hæres.*, lxiv.; Photius, *Epist.*, i. p. 11, etc.; Cyrill. Alex., *In Johan.*, l. i. c. 9; comp. Davis's note to Cicero, *Tusc. Qu.*, i. 24.

<sup>5</sup> See *ante*, p. 176.

of original sin. It is a hypothesis, however, wholly imaginary; it rests upon no evidence of any kind; and as related to the question of the origin of evil, it is wholly worthless; for even were we to admit it, it merely “removes,” as Stewart remarks, “the difficulty a little out of sight, without affording any explanation of it.” To the question, Whence is evil? it is no answer to say, It came with man from a previous state of being; for this only provokes the inquiry, How came it into that previous state of being?

(i.) The Dualistic hypothesis is the earliest of which we have any knowledge, and it is that which, we may say, would most naturally occur to those who, without the knowledge of the one living and true God, sought to follow up the sequence of good and evil in the universe to a primal source.

1. The oldest form in which this hypothesis appears is that of Zoroastrianism, of which the more recent Parseeism is a product. In the *Zend-Avesta*, which, if not the production of Zoroaster himself, is the authentic record of his teachings, and is of great antiquity, it is taught that infinite, boundless Time, of the origin of which no wise man inquires, brought forth fire and water, from the union of which came Ormuzd (the Oromasdes of the Greek writers), the luminous, pure, fragrant, the lover of all good, and capable of all good. As he looked into the abyss, he saw at a vast distance Ahriman (the Arimanes of the Greeks), black, impure, of evil savour, and wicked. Ormuzd, startled by the sight of this terrible foe, set himself to endeavour his removal, considered how this might be accomplished, and gave himself to this work. Thus arose conflict between the two,—between the supremely good and the supremely evil principle, between light and darkness, of which the universe is the theatre. This conflict, the idea of which is the general formula of the universe, is symbolized in the natural world by the succession of day and night, which dispute the empire of Time, and alternately put each other to flight. Man also is the subject of this conflict. From Ormuzd he has received a soul, understanding, judgment, the principle of sensation, and the five senses.<sup>1</sup> From Ahriman come to men lust, want, envy, hatred, defilement, falsehood, and wrath. Thus it is that there is evil in the

<sup>1</sup> Anquetil du Perron, *Zend-Avesta*, Paris, 1771.

world, and that the evil constantly strives against the good.

Whatever else may be said of this speculation, it must, as an attempt to explain the origin of evil, be pronounced wholly inadequate. For whilst, on the one hand, it starts from the assumption of a primal unity as the source of good, it, on the other, leaves the origin of the evil principle immersed in obscurity. If Ahura Mazda, the Eternal Time, produced Ormuzd, how or by whom was Ahriman produced? As to this opinions differ among the Parsees. Some say that Time produced Ahriman in order that Ormuzd might know that it is omnipotent; others say Time produced both Ormuzd and Ahriman, that the bad might be mingled with the good, and diversified things be produced; others, that Time did not produce Ahriman, though able to do this had it so pleased; and others, that Ahriman is a fallen angel, cursed because of disobedience.<sup>1</sup> These, it will be seen, are not answers to the question, Whence is evil? but rather mere evasions of it. The whole remains in darkness, unless it be said that the primal unity, Infinite Time, produced the evil as well as the good.

2. Among the Greeks the Dualistic Hypothesis assumed a different form. Whilst they held the existence of an eternal deity (*το θειον*), they also taught that there is an eternal matter (*υλη*), the material cause of things. This Hyle they “represented under various images—as the darkness that exists along with the light; as the void (*κενωμα, κενον*) in opposition to the fulness of the divine life; as the shadow that accompanies the light; as the chaos, the stagnant, dead water.” This Hyle is thus essentially evil; and as it has acquired a sort of life and energy, there has arisen an active opposition to the godlike, and hence, as products of the Hyle, all evil things and beings have come into existence. This hypothesis may be regarded as in a way accounting for the origin of evil; but it rests on a basis which is purely imaginary, the existence of an eternal Hyle being assumed without a shadow of evidence. It may be therefore relegated to that limbo where rest so many idle fancies with which speculative thinkers have

<sup>1</sup> Vullers, *Fragmente ub. die Religion des Zoroasters*, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Neander, *Hist. of the Church*, vol. ii. p. 13, Eng. Tr.

amused or deceived themselves when seeking to account for what lies beyond the bounds of human knowledge.

This Hyleistic hypothesis was revived among the Gnostics, by certain of whom it was mixed up with and modified by opinions and notions borrowed from Christian sources. Such was the doctrine taught by Basilides and Valentinus and their followers. Others among the Gnostics adopted the Persian hypothesis, "a doctrine," as Neander remarks, "which it would be natural, especially for those Gnostic sects which originated in Syria, to appropriate to themselves." Of these sects, that best known is that of the Manichæans, so called from their founder, Manes or Manis, a Persian sage, who, falling under the displeasure of the Magi, was persecuted by them and obliged to flee, and who, alienated from the tenets which they favoured, sought, by combining Christianity with the unqualified dualism of the ancient Parsee faith, to construct a religious system that should satisfy human reason and account for the facts of the world. Of this system the following account is given by Gieseler:—

"His system of religion rests on the assumption of two everlasting kingdoms coexisting and bordering on each other, *the kingdom of light* and *the kingdom of darkness*, the former under the dominion of God, the latter under the demon, or Hyle. After the borders had been broken through by a war between the two kingdoms, and the material of light had been mixed with the material of darkness, God caused the world to be formed by the *living spirit* (ζῶν πνεῦμα, *spiritus vivens*) out of this mixed material, in order that by degrees the material of light here captured (*anima* and *Jesus patibilis*) might be again separated, and the old boundaries restored. Two exalted natures of light, *Christ* (whom Mani calls in preference *dextra luminis*, τοῦ αἰδίου φωτὸς υἱός, etc.) and the *Holy Spirit*, the former dwelling in the sun and moon (*naves*), the latter in the air, conduct this process of bringing back the material of light, while the demon and the evil spirits, fettered to the stars, endeavour to hinder them. In every man there dwells an evil soul besides the soul of light; and it is his commission to secure to the latter the sway over the former, to unite with it as many as possible of the elements of light which are scattered in nature, especially in certain

plants, and thus to free it from the fetters of the evil principle, and prepare the way for its return to the kingdom of light.”<sup>1</sup>

This curious compound of Oriental theosophy with Christian ideas found many to accept it, though it was vehemently opposed by the Catholic Church and the most eminent of the Christian Fathers. In the early part of his career it was espoused by Augustine ; but he soon after renounced it, and became one of its most determined, as he was one of its ablest, opponents. After having apparently died out, it suddenly sprang up again in the East in the 12th century, in the sect of the Paulicians, and rapidly spread through many parts of Europe. “It was soon discovered,” says Gibbon, “that many thousand Catholics of rank, and of either sex, had embraced the Manichæan heresy, and the flames which consumed twelve canons of Orleans was the first act and signal of persecution.”<sup>2</sup> This was followed by many other such acts, directed chiefly against the Albigenses in the south of France, who united with the Paulicians in their opposition to Rome, and in their attachment to a simpler polity and a purer worship than that which Rome upheld, though to what extent they had embraced the peculiar doctrine of Manichæism does not clearly appear. Strange to say, this doctrine found favour with a philosopher of our own age. Writing of his father, Mr. John Stuart Mill says, “He found it impossible to believe that a world so full of evil was the work of an author combining infinite power with perfect goodness and righteousness, and he was not disinclined to the Sabæan and Manichæan theory of a good and an evil principle struggling against each other for the government of the universe.”<sup>3</sup>

In this system it is evident that the Christian elements are wholly subordinated to the old Pagan hypothesis of an eternal good and an eternal evil principle ; it is simply a reproduction of the Zoroastrian doctrine, and is exposed to the same censure

<sup>1</sup> *Compendium of Eccles. Hist.*, translated by Davidson, vol. i. p. 224, Clark's Series. A very full account of the Manichæan system is given by Neander, *Gen. Ch. Hist.*, vol. ii. p. 157 ff., Torrey's translation. He describes it as a “Buddhist-Zoroastrian-Christian system.” See also Bayle, *Dictionnaire*, arts. *Manichee* and *Paulicien*.

<sup>2</sup> *Decline and Fall*, vol. x. p. 177, Milman's edition.

<sup>3</sup> *Autobiography*, by J. S. Mill.

which the all but unanimous judgment of mankind has pronounced upon it.

(ii.) Turning now to the Monoistic hypothesis, we shall at once dismiss, as not deserving consideration, the Pagan doctrine that the one infinite and eternal God is the author of evil as well as good.<sup>1</sup> Such a doctrine not only contradicts all the laws and facts of man's moral consciousness, but is in fact suicidal; for if God be the author of evil as well as of good, there must be a duplicity in His essence, or He must be liable to change, and in either case He ceases to be eternal and infinite. There can be no just conception of God which does not regard Him in relation to evil as simply permitting it, not causing or originating it.

But assuming that God simply permits evil, the question remains, Whence did it originate? and with this comes up another question, How is it that evil has been permitted by God?

To the first of these questions an answer has been given which has come down from Plato, through St. Augustine, Leibnitz,<sup>2</sup> and others to our own time. This answer founds upon the position that evil is not something positive, but something negative, and arises from a negative cause, viz. the necessary limitation and imperfection of the creature. "Where shall we find the source of evil?" says Leibnitz. "The answer is, It must be sought in the ideal nature of the creature in as far as that nature is shut up in the eternal verities which are in the understanding of God, independent of His will. It must be considered that there is an *original imperfection in the creature* previous to sin, because the creature is limited essentially; whence it comes that it cannot know all, and that it can be deceived and commit other faults." In later times one of the ablest expounders and defenders of this theory was Dr. Edward Williams, theological professor in Lotherham College. It is set forth by him in his *Essay on Equity and Sovereignty*, and also in his notes to Edwards *On*

<sup>1</sup> "Pagani bona et mala, tetra et splendida, perpetua et caduca, mutabilia et *erta*, corporalia et divina unum habere principium dogmatizant." Augustin, *Contr. Faust.* l. xx. c. 3.

<sup>2</sup> See Cudworth, *Intell. Syst.*, vol. i. p. 448 ff., Harrison's ed.; Augustin, *De Civitate Dei*; Leibnitz, *Theodicee*, i. 20, etc.

*the Will*, in the edition of Edwards' Works edited by him and the Rev. Ed. Parsons.<sup>1</sup> From the latter source I borrow a statement of his view as to the origin of evil. "The entrance of sin into the world, or the true and precise origin of moral evil, may be found in *two causes united*, the one positive, the other negative, but neither of which is morally good or morally evil. If the cause were morally good, the effect could not be morally bad; and if morally evil, it would be contrary to the third axiom [that the origin of moral evil cannot be moral evil, which would make a thing the cause of itself] and to common sense. These two causes are, first, *liberty*—a cause *naturally* good; secondly, *passive power*—a cause *naturally* evil. And these two causes are as necessary for the production of moral evil as two parents for the production of a human being according to the laws of nature." On this it is obvious to remark that one does not see how *liberty*, which is merely freedom to act, can be properly regarded as a *cause*. Without liberty, it is true, there can be no action and no effect; but the liberty merely furnishes the opportunity or sphere of action: it is in no sense a cause from which the effect flows. The sole cause, then, of moral evil is, according to this theory, what Dr. Williams calls passive power; and this he defines to be "that natural defect which exists in a created nature as a contrast to the *natural* (not the moral) perfections of God" (p. 249). It thus appears that his theory is substantially the same as that of Leibnitz.

Dr. Wardlaw has devoted one of his lectures to an examination of Dr. Williams' theory;<sup>2</sup> and to this I refer you for a full discussion of the question. I content myself here with remarking on this hypothesis generally:—1. That it seems utterly incongruous to suppose that a cause which is not itself moral should produce a moral result. According to the hypothesis what Williams calls "passive power," and Leibnitz "original imperfection in the creature," is a purely natural power having no moral quality whatever. By what possibility then, we may ask, can it of necessity produce in a creature not already evil a bad moral effect? As Dr. Wardlaw has observed, "If there be no unholiness and no guilt but what is the result of choice, it is anything but self-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 398 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Theology*, vol. ii. p. 93.



evident that what is good (without any evil tendency) should necessarily prefer evil; what is holy, sin; what is innocent, guilt." 2. In this hypothesis it is assumed that defect in the creature necessarily leads to evil. But if by defect is meant *faultiness* or *vitiosity*, the proposition that there is evil in the universe because of defect in the creature, becomes a purely identical one, tantamount to the assertion that there is evil because there is evil. If, on the other hand, by defect is meant mere *limitation*, then the assertion simply affirms that the creature is potentially evil; it in no way explains how that potentiality becomes an actuality, which is the real question at issue. The creature because of limited powers may be liable to sin; but it by no means follows from this he must of necessity sin. 3. On this hypothesis it seems impossible either to vindicate the divine equity or to maintain the moral responsibility of the creature. For the creature, being created by God, is as God has made him. But if God has made him so that he cannot but fall into evil if left to himself, how can the creature be held justly responsible for obeying this necessary tendency, or how can God be said to deal equitably if He first make a creature with a rational and necessary tendency to evil, and then treat him as guilty and punishable if he yield to this tendency? Dr. Williams has struggled hard to get over this objection and difficulty, but, as Wardlaw has, I think, conclusively shown, without success.

(iii.) In setting aside this hypothesis, we set aside the only one for which any show of reason can be adduced. We are therefore reduced to the necessity of admitting that the question, How came evil into the world? is by us insoluble. All we can say is that evil exists, and that God, for purposes known to Himself, permitted it somehow to enter His universe.

That this conclusion is burdened with serious difficulties it would be vain to deny. The question cannot but rise up in the mind, Why has God permitted evil if He is not the Author of it? The Epicureans of old propounded this dilemma: "Aut non vult, aut non potest tollere malum." Evil is here either because God does not will to remove it or because He is impotent to remove it; and men may say the same as to

His permitting it to originate. In either case we lose the true thought of God. If He has willed evil to exist, how can He be good and holy? If He was unable to prevent it, how can He be omnipotent?

This is a difficulty which human reason is unable to remove; nor does the Bible help us here by any of its revelations. The Bible, however, fully authorizes the only positive conclusions to which we can come on this dark subject. It certifies us that God is not the author of evil in any sense; that though able to prevent it, He has nevertheless permitted it to exist; and that though He has permitted it to exist, He neither directly wills it, nor regards it otherwise than with abhorrence. It is true we meet in the Bible with such utterances as, "Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos iii. 6). "I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I, the Lord, do all these things" (Isa. xlv. 7); and there are some who lay hold on these, and are bold to affirm that "the older prophets and prophetic historians had not hesitated to derive even evil, moral evil not excepted, from Jahveh."<sup>1</sup> But in the Bible God is often said to do what He only permits to be done, or what comes to pass through His providential arrangements; and such statements as those above quoted are to be interpreted in accordance with the general teaching of Scripture, which invariably sets forth that though it is by God's will that evil is permitted, the evil itself is ever what is wholly unauthorized by Him, and wholly opposed to Him. He permits evil to exist, and He makes use of the evil that exists to accomplish His own purposes; but the evil does not originate with Him, and He ever regards it with abhorrence. From the Bible also we learn that the evil permitted in the universe is not only less than the good directly willed by God, but is characterized as something intrusive and transitory, while the good is real, fundamental, and permanent. Further, the Bible assures us that in permitting evil God has not left it uncontrolled or at the disposal of any evil power, but ever holds it in His own power, and will make it subservient to His purposes, so that ultimately a larger amount of good will be evolved than if

<sup>1</sup> Kuonen, *Religion of Israel*, iii. 40, E. Tr.

evil had not been permitted. In fine, we may rest assured that what is perplexing to us in the existence of evil arises out of the limitation of our faculties and imperfection of our knowledge; and that, as in the natural world many phenomena which to the untutored mind appear anomalous and inexplicable are by the philosophers seen to be in accordance with law and with the order of the universe, so the phenomenon of evil, which to us is so full of difficulty, may by higher intelligences—must by the Highest—be seen to be in full accordance with the noblest order and the purest rectitude. “If it be asked,” says Dr. Reid,<sup>1</sup> “Why does God permit so much sin in His creation? I confess I cannot answer the question, but must lay my hand upon my mouth. He giveth no account of His conduct to the children of men. It is our part to obey His commands, and not to say unto Him, Why dost Thou thus?” “Great,” says Lord Brougham,<sup>2</sup> “as have been our achievements in physical astronomy, we are as yet wholly unable to understand why a power pervades the system acting inversely as the square of the distance from the point to which it attracts, rather than a power acting according to any other law; and why it has been the pleasure of the Almighty Architect of that universe that the orbits of the planets should be nearly circular instead of approaching to or being exactly the same with many other trajectories of a nearly similar form, though of other properties; nay, instead of being curves of a wholly different class and shape. Yet we never doubt that there was a reason for this choice; nay, we fancy it possible that even on earth we may hereafter understand it more clearly than we now do; and never question that in another state of being we may be permitted to enjoy the contemplation of it. Why should we doubt that, at least in that higher state, we may also be enabled to perceive such an arrangement as shall make evil wholly disappear from our present system, by showing us that it was necessary and inevitable even in the works of the Deity; or, which is the same thing, that its existence conduces to such a degree of perfection and happiness upon the whole as could not even by omnipotence be secured without it; or, which is also the same

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Active Powers*, Ess. iv. ch. xi. Works by Hamilton, p. 634.

<sup>2</sup> *Dissertations appended to Paley's Natural Theology*, vol. ii. p. 73.

thing, that the whole creation as it exists, taking both worlds together, is perfect, and incapable of being in any particular changed without being made worse and less perfect ? ”

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## CHAPTER VII.

### SIN.

#### III. THE NATURE OF SIN.

There is no subject on which it is of greater importance that we should have just views than the subject of sin, its nature, its source, and its guilt. By our views on this subject all our views of the Christian system will be modified. According as we regard sin shall we regard deliverance from sin, and the proper method by which that deliverance is to be effected. If we err on the first of these points, we can hardly fail to err also on the others. The mind does not willingly retain doctrines as parts of the same system which do not fundamentally agree. If an error be adopted and retained on one point, it will be almost sure to insinuate its poison so as to corrupt all that surrounds it. And especially if we adopt an error on any point which comes first in order in a connected series of opinions, there is hardly a possibility of escaping error on subsequent points in the series. Hence, in point of fact, wrong conceptions of the nature of sin will be found to lie at the basis both of infidel systems and of those false forms of Christianity which affect the vital doctrines of religion ; whereas, on the other hand, a sound evangelical theology has always had its root in a just and scriptural view of the nature of sin.

Nor is this merely a question of theoretical interest ; it has also an intimate bearing on the practical interests of Christianity. The religion of Jesus Christ is a scheme for destroying sin, first in the individual, and then through him in the race. To those who embrace it the great duty of their life comes to be to fight against sin and seek its destruction in

themselves and others. Sin is their great antagonist, which they are by all means to resist and to overcome and to keep under. But how shall they effectually do this if they do not understand aright what sin is? What soldier can contend successfully if he know not the kind of enemy he has to deal with? or what can be expected but disaster, and it may be defeat, to the general who is misled by wrong, by partial, or by unfounded intelligence respecting the resources, arrangements, and designs of his antagonist? If, then, the practical Christian would prove himself a good soldier of Jesus Christ, he must begin by ascertaining aright what is the nature and qualities of sin—that great adversary from which Christ came to deliver man, and against which he as a follower of Christ has to contend.

i. *Description of Sin in 1 John iii. 4.*

Now to this question the Apostle John gives us a very brief but most explicit answer: *Πας ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν ποιεῖ καὶ ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία* (1 John iii. 4). Here we have both the *subjective* and the *objective* presupposition of the possibility of sin. The subjective presupposition is that man can do that which is *ἁμαρτία*, sin; that is, that man has a capacity of distinguishing right from wrong, and that he can choose to do wrong and will to do it—in other words, that he is a moral agent endowed with conscience and will, and so responsible for his conduct. The objective presupposition is that there is a law under which man is placed, which he is under obligation to obey, and which exists independently of his will and choice. Of this law sin is pronounced to be the transgression, or rather sin is *ἀνομία*, lawlessness; a term which embraces not only positive violations of the law, but also failures and omissions in respect of any of its precepts, in short, all departures from it, whether by going athwart it or by falling short of it.

The law, then, conditions the possibility of sin. Were there no law there would be no sin properly so called. As St. Paul says, “Where no law is, there is no transgression;” and again, “Sin is not imputed where there is no law” (Rom. iv. 15, v. 13). A free agent utterly without law might do

what was morally wrong, *i.e.* what is contrary to the divine nature, but for him it would not be sin. Nor, on the other hand, even where there is a law does the transgression of it become sin save on the supposition that the transgressor is a free moral agent, knowing the law and willing to transgress it.

With this definition in view we have only, in the first place, correctly to understand all that it implies, and, in the second place, to perceive its accordance with the general testimony of Scripture and the facts of our own consciousness to realize to ourselves a just and full and satisfactory answer to the question, *What is sin?*

(i.) In proceeding to expound this definition, the first thing to which I ask your attention is the recognition it makes of a distinction between the concept of lawlessness and the concept of sin. The proposition "sin is lawlessness" is not a mere identical or explicative proposition; it is ampliative and definitive of the just idea of sin: in other words, it implies that sin may be conceived of otherwise than as lawlessness. Now, this is true. Sin may be viewed merely as *evil*, as a thing which we cannot approve of, as an unlovely thing, or as a thing which is attended with unpleasant consequences. But under none of these aspects does sin necessarily involve the idea of lawlessness, from which it follows that when it is positively said to be lawlessness something more is told than already lay in the idea of sin. We must understand St. John, then, as meaning to tell us that *sin* is something more than merely evil or unlovely, that its essence lies in its want of accordance with a law, that it always *has reference to a law* as that by which its character is determined, and that though apart from a law there may be evil, apart from a law there can be no sin.

(ii.) It enters into the idea of law that it should be something enacted and rendered imperative on those who are under it. Law is something more than order: it is authoritative order. It not only enunciates something good; it also commands and enjoins that good. It properly assumes the form of an imperative direction, with a threatened penalty in case of transgression. It is only in a secondary and derivative sense that this term is used to denote some general fact or principle, as when we speak of the laws of nature, by which

we mean the great general principles according to which Nature carries on her operations; though even here the idea of imperativeness is not altogether excluded, because in construing these general principles we tacitly assume that the power of the Creator has been exercised in impressing upon matter that constant conformity to these general principles which we speak of as obedience to the laws of Nature. "By creating His materials endued with certain fixed qualities and forms, the Divine Author of the universe has impressed them in their origin with the *spirit*, not the *letter*, of His law, and made all their subsequent combinations and relations inevitable consequences of this first impression."<sup>1</sup> Even in the case of a law of nature, then, the idea of authority and imperativeness is preserved; and this, which is a fundamental idea of law, comes forward into primary importance in all laws which are designed to regulate the conduct of intelligent and moral agents. A law for them is an enactment which they are bound to obey. It is a positive injunction which they are authoritatively called to follow. We cannot conceive of a law for such which does not essentially involve and primarily set forth this idea. Abstract the notion of imperativeness from the law, and of corresponding obligation on the part of the agent, and the idea of law disappears altogether. The party may still act in the way the law prescribes, but he does so not in virtue of the law, or from regard to it, but for some other reason with which the law as law has nothing to do. When, therefore, sin is spoken of as a transgression of the law, or as lawlessness, it means not only that sin is an unlovely thing, but that it is also of the nature of rebellion to a lawful authority—that it is not only an act of disorder, but also an act of disobedience.

(iii.) A law implies a lawgiver—a superior authority from which the enactment emanates, and by which it is upheld. Now, in the case of Man and the law under which he has been placed, this authority is God. Man's condition as a creature implies that he is under law to God. Just as he must use the material universe as he finds it subject to a fixed ordinance imposed upon it by the fiat of the Creator, so must he himself, as a part of God's creation, regulate his

<sup>1</sup> Herschell, *Discourse on Nat. Phil.*, p. 37.

conduct according to those laws under which the will of God has placed him. It is true it is not the mere will of God—the *merum arbitrium Dei* of the schoolmen—which constitutes the distinction between what is right and wrong in a moral point of view: that distinction finds its ground in the Eternal Mind itself—in the unchangeable nature of Jehovah. But though the will of God is not the basis of rectitude and goodness, it is that by which rectitude and goodness are made known to us and made incumbent upon us. Man can never be, strictly speaking, a law to himself. The law that binds him must be something out of himself—something above himself. Through whatever medium he may acquire a knowledge of that law, whether from the constitution of his own moral nature, or from perceiving the relations of things, or by direct revelation from God, the law itself can be resolved only into the will of Him by whom the moral nature of man has been made such as it is, by whom the relations of things have been ordained, and from whom all revelations of moral and religious truth come. When sin, then, is said to be a transgression of the law or a dereliction from it, we must regard it as an act of disobedience against God, whose will the law enunciates. Sin, therefore, is not merely evil, it is not merely disorder, it is disobedience against God—an act of virtual rebellion against Him as the great Moral Governor of the universe.

(iv.) Sin as lawlessness includes not only positive violations of the law, but all that comes short of conformity to it. In the definition of sin given in the Shorter Catechism, it is described as “any want of conformity to or transgression of the law of God;” and this twofold aspect of it is held by almost all who have written on the subject.<sup>1</sup> For such an opinion there appears the best grounds. If God impose upon His intelligent creature a law or a rule of action, it seems to be equally a departure from that law whether the creature does what the law forbids or omits to do what the law enjoins; and if the former is to be treated as an act of dis-

<sup>1</sup> Gerhard: “Peccatum seu *avopía* est aberratio a lege, sive non congruentia cum lege sive ea in ipsa natura hærat, sive in dictis, factis, ac concupiscentiæ motibus inveniatur.” Calov.: “Illegalitas seu difformitas a lege.” Reinhard: “Absentia convenientiæ cum lege.” *Dog.*, p. 267.



obedience and rebellion, the latter surely should be treated as such likewise. To affirm otherwise would seem to lead to the monstrous conclusion that if God enjoins anything as good, we can sin only by doing something the opposite of that; there is no sin in wilfully falling short of it: so that, *e.g.*, if He command a creature to love Him with his whole heart, that creature would sin only if he hated God, not if he failed to love Him, or came short of loving Him supremely. A doctrine like this is not only dangerous, but apparently utterly unreasonable. It has therefore been all but universally repudiated by all theologians; nor would it be necessary to dwell upon the subject were it not that a very serious use is sometimes made of the doctrine, viz. that though a creature cannot reach such perfection as the law embodies, he may yet live without sin if he only does not transgress the law, and if he do his honest endeavour to come up to the law,—a doctrine on which the Papal scheme of works of merit and supererogation rests. In support of this doctrine an ingenious objection to the view above contended for has sometimes been propounded. It is this: If, it is said, this principle holds good of man, it must hold good in reference to all God's intelligent and moral creatures; it must hold good, therefore, of those who are sinless. Now, those sinless creatures, being creatures, are not infinitely perfect,—that belongs only to God; they are therefore creatures who fall short of what is absolutely good and holy. But if a shortcoming from what is good be sinful, it follows that these are not sinless beings, and that there never can be sinless creatures, and that all advances in goodness and holiness being in reality *short* of perfect goodness and holiness, are nothing else than acts of sin. This reasoning has an air of plausibility, but that it is fallacious every one must feel; and it is not difficult to point out where the fallacy lies. The author of the objection has tacitly assumed that God can never impose upon any of His creatures a law which requires less than absolute perfection; for if it be posited that God may impose a law which demands only relative perfection, *i.e.* perfection relative to the conditions and capacities of the being on whom it is imposed, his objection loses all force, seeing in this case there may be a full coming up to the standard of the law and yet a coming short

of absolute perfection. Now that this is actually the case, and that what the objection has assumed is false, all reason and experience conspire to show. Of all the laws which God has imposed upon His intelligent creatures of which we have any knowledge, there is not one which exacts anything more than a relative perfection. Take, *e.g.*, the first great law of love to God. In this man is not required to love God as He in the infinitude of His being and perfections deserves to be loved, but only as far as man's capacity extends; he is to love God with all his heart, and strength, and mind; and he who does this is sinless so far as this precept extends. If man had a higher capacity, more of mind and more of might, then the degree in which it is now his duty to love God would be too low for what would then be required of him; but still it would only be relatively to his capacities that the law would be binding on him. It is the same with all God's laws: they are adapted to the nature and the capacity of His creatures on whom they are imposed; and it is reasonable it should be so: for how can we conceive of God imposing upon man a law which he never could fully obey, which came not nigh to him, within the range of his ordinary capacities, but stood afar, at an infinite reach above him? It is possible, then, for a creature to be sinless and yet come short of absolute perfection, even though the principle be held that a want of conformity to the law is sin; inasmuch as sinlessness consists not in conformity to the highest possible good, but in conformity to that degree of good which is inculcated by the law under which he has been placed, and is within the range of his capacities.

(v.) The law of God extends to the inner motive whence actions spring, as well as to the actions themselves. It is, indeed, in a moral point of view impossible to separate these two. The motive and the act constitute one moral whole; and though man can only judge this motive from the act, God who sees the inner soul of man, and searches his heart, judges the motive along with the act. Nay, even when the mental feeling does not give birth to a positive act, it has a substantive existence in His sight, and is weighed in the balances of His unerring judgment. It is impossible, therefore, for us to obey the law of God unless we obey it from the heart. An

act cannot be good whilst the motive from which it springs is bad. The commandment of God "is exceeding broad:" it reaches from the circumference to the centre of our active being; it aims at the regulation of all our thoughts and feelings as well as all our actions; and it may be transgressed as well by a wrong state of mind as by wrong words or wrong deeds.

## ii. *The General Testimony of Scripture concerning Sin.*

Having thus expounded the statement of the Apostle John, I now proceed to show that the doctrine thus laid down is in full accordance with the general testimony of Scripture. Here I notice,—

(i.) The terms employed in Scripture to designate sin. Of these terms a few, such as *πονηρον*, *κακον*, *αἰσχρον*, and the Hebrew *רָע*, convey immediately the idea of the moral turpitude, the unloveliness and baseness of sin; but by far the greater part, and those most frequently used, are such as convey the idea that sin is the not doing on the part of man of something which by law and prescription he is bound to do. Sometimes it is presented as the missing of a mark which man ought to reach, or of the path he ought to keep, as in *αμαρτία* and *חַטָּא*, and their cognates; sometimes as a deflection from God's way, or recoil from God, as *סָרָה*, from *סֹר*, "to resile or draw back;" *עָגָה*, from *עָל*, "he turned aside;" and sometimes as lawlessness or guiltiness, *i.e.* liability to a legal penalty, as *ανομία* and *παράβασις*, with the Hebrew *רָשָׁע*, from *רָשָׁע*, which in the Hiphil signifies "to declare guilty of a breach of law," "to condemn," as, *e.g.*, Deut. xxv. 1: "If there be a controversy between men, and they come with judgment that they may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous and condemn (*והרשיעו*) the wicked." In all these terms we find the two fundamental ideas of, first, something man ought to do or to be; and, secondly, a failing on the part of man to perform that requirement. The idea of sin consequently shadowed forth by these designations is essentially that of the want of conformity to or transgression of a law. And the same is conveyed by those passages of Scripture which represent sin as something done against God;

for as God is the author of the law under which man is placed, as well as its administrator, every breach of the law must be an offence against Him, an act of godlessness and impiety as well as of disobedience. Hence such expressions as *ασεβεια*, *παραπτωμα*, and *מַרְדּוּ*, "rebellion" or "revolt," etc.

(ii.) The support this receives from other express statements of the word of God. Take, *e.g.*, the declarations of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (iii. 20): "By the law is the knowledge of sin," *i.e.* it is by the enactment of the law that what is sin is determined, and by its sentence that the transgressor knows he has sinned. Still more explicitly does Paul in the same Epistle reiterate the statement of St. John when he says (v. 13), "Sin is not imputed where there is no law,"—a statement which plainly intimates that sin takes its birth and being from the law of which it is a transgression, and that apart from the law there would be no sin. To the same effect are such statements as these, "Where there is no law there is no transgression." "Without the law sin was dead." "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law" (Rom. iv. 15, vii. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 56). In all these passages the same great truth is set forth. Man is not only a being susceptible of moral impressions and capable of moral distinctions; he is directly and authoritatively under law to God, bound to obey His will, and subject to obligation to do that which is right and to abstain from that which is wrong. As God's creature he is the subject of a kingdom which has laws for the regulation of its affairs and penalties to be inflicted on those who are rebellious. Now, these laws man does not keep as he ought. Some things which God has commanded him to do he refuses or neglects to do, and some things which God has forbidden he persists in doing. There is thus a want of conformity on his part to God's law,—transgression and lawlessness; and this the Bible stigmatizes as sin.

(iii.) The account which the Bible gives of the first great sin which man ever committed places this truth in a clear light. That sin consisted, so far as the act was concerned, in the eating of a particular fruit which our first parents had been forbidden to eat. Now, wherein lay the sin here? Not in

the mere act surely : there was nothing immoral in that ; the eating of one fruit was *per se* as innocent as the eating of another. The sin lay in this act being contrary to God's express command ; in its being, therefore, an act of *disobedience* against God, and virtual rebellion against Him. Here then lay the essence of the first sin,—it was an act of lawlessness ; and it stands out with this single character of evil belonging to it at the head of all the long train of woes and evils which it brought into the world, an awful and memorable comment on the declaration that sin is the transgression of law.

(iv.) It is on this ground that sin may be righteously punished. That God should inflict suffering of any kind upon His intelligent creatures is a fact not to be contemplated without anxious and solemn feeling. Every thoughtful man will feel that there is a difficulty in the fact which there is a pressing urgency to have removed. Is it righteous in God to make suffering consequent on any wrong act ? Is it consistent with His goodness and beneficence to make physical calamity consequent upon moral evil ? These are difficult questions, and I apprehend we can steer our way to a solution of them only by keeping fast hold of the principle that it is not simply as moral evil that sin is punished, but because being morally evil it is the transgression of the divine law. It is of the essence of a law that it be enforced by penal sanctions ; and it is indispensable to the stability of a law that when the sanctioning penalty has been incurred it shall be inflicted. The punishment of the sinner, therefore, flows out of his position as under a law of which his sin is a transgression ; it comes to pass by the necessity of the case ; it could not be otherwise. Man as a creature is conditioned by law ; man as a moral creature is conditioned by moral law ; law to be law must be sanctioned by a threatened penalty to be inflicted on the transgressor, and when the penalty is incurred it must be inflicted, else the law will become of none effect. When man thus sins and is punished for it, this is no arbitrary act of the divine administration ; it is a necessary and unavoidable consequence of his sin being a transgression of the divine law. On this ground, therefore, may the punishment of sin by God be vindicated,—

on this, but not on any other; and hence there comes back from that suffering which is the penalty of sin a clear testimony of the truth that sin is the transgression of the law.

(v.) The doctrine of redemption by atonement rests for its vindication on this view of sin. For suppose man's sin to be merely an offence of a personal kind against God, the doing of something repugnant to His wishes, or merely a departure from moral order, it will not be easy to see what inseparable barrier lay in the way of his offences being forgiven without an atonement on his repenting and entering on a better course. A mere personal offence might have been forgiven on the representation of the offender; and as to sin being a breach of moral order, it is difficult to see why atonement should be made for that, or, indeed, what sense we are to attach to the expression "atonement to the moral order of the universe;" one might as well speak of making atonement to the physical order of the universe. It is only when we distinctly realize and represent to our minds the idea of government by law, and of sin as a violation of that law, and an act of rebellion against that government, that the necessity of an atonement for the pardon of sin becomes manifest. In that case it is at once seen that where sin has been committed and the penalty consequently of the law incurred, one of two things must happen if the law is to be sustained: either the sinner must endure the penalty he has incurred, or an atonement must be made for his sin which shall have the effect of making his forgiveness and release compatible with the claims and honour of the law. It appears, then, that unless we keep steadily before us the view of sin as a transgression of the law of God, we shall be unable to see clearly whence arose the necessity of an atonement for sin ere it could be forgiven. And here I may observe how, in point of fact, the theological systems of men are necessarily moulded according as they take or refuse this view of sin. If men think of sin simply as an infirmity or an error, deserving censure, it may be, but still more calling for pity and compassion; or if they view it merely in the light of an immorality, a departure from ethical propriety or the moral order of the world, a thing requiring to be put right, but not entailing any punishment

on the party who has gone astray,—it is easy to see that their views of redemption and of the relation of Christ to the sinner will be exceedingly different from those of the man who views sin as an act of transgression, a breach of the law which God, as the great Ruler, has given man to obey,—an act of rebellion against God, entailing upon the party committing it the charge of *guilt* in the sight of God, and exposing him to the penalty attached to the breach of that law, as legally his due. To the former, salvation means nothing more than rescue from evil; to the latter, it means also and primarily deliverance from guilt. The one thinks merely of escape from the discomforts and disadvantages of a weak moral nature; the other thinks primarily of pardon for damnatory offences as introductory to reconciliation with God and restoration to moral power and goodness. Into the mind of the one there enters simply the idea of moral rightness as constituting salvation; in the mind of the other there is prominent, as antecedent to that, the idea of legal righteousness or justification at the bar of God. Clearly, therefore, because these two persons set out from different views of sin, they have arrived at different views of salvation, different notions of what men are to seek in Christ; and the logical result of this will be an entirely different scheme of theology for the one than for the other,—so different that if the latter be right, the system of the former must not only be defective, but positively and perilously wrong.

A conviction of this was doubtless in the mind of the apostle when he was writing his Epistle to the Romans; and hence he labours so earnestly to lay the basis of his whole system in a demonstration of sin, so as to shut men up to a conviction of it, of its guilt, illegality, and penal effect especially. He felt he could proceed on sure ground in showing the nature and excellency of the gospel only as he could convince men of sin, so that every mouth might be stopped, and all flesh become guilty (*υποδικος* = *reus*, *pœnis obnoxius*) before God. That accomplished, the way was clear for his setting forth God's way of justifying sinners and so saving them. It was only as he could make it manifest that all had sinned and come short of the glory of God, that he felt there was any use in telling men how they might be

justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

From all this we may see the importance, both in our theology and in our preaching, of right views of sin as a transgression of the divine law, entailing guilt, condemnation, and punishment.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### SIN.

#### IV. THE PRINCIPLE OF SIN.

Our previous investigations have conducted us to the conclusion that sin is, as the Shorter Catechism defines it, "any transgression of or want of conformity to the law of God," and as such an act of rebellion against God. In ascertaining this, however, we have not ascertained all that it concerns us to investigate on this subject. There is a point beyond this which requires to be reached. For—1. As all man's volitions spring from some predominant principle and tendency in his nature, the fact that in thought, word, and deed he transgresses the divine law must have its source in some predominant principle within him. There must be some *principium et fons* whence these impure streams flow, and to which they are to be traced. And having ascertained the character of the stream, we are anxious to discover to what this is to be traced; just as if, on analysing the waters of a river, we found them marked by certain physical peculiarities, we should feel solicitous to discover whence these peculiarities arose. By a sort of psychological necessity, therefore, we are urged from investigating the nature and characteristic quality of sin to inquire into its principle and source in man's nature. Then, 2. In observing man's conduct, we perceive that the acts which constitute his sins are not only multitudinous in point of number, but also extremely diversified in point of



character. We find them differing in various aspects—in respect of object, of character, of compass, and of kind; and yet all are classed under the head of sins, and legitimately so. There must therefore be something in common to them all, some principle which pervades them all, something from which we can abstract everything also belonging to the act, and yet leave that by which it is constituted a sin. The mind is naturally urged to investigate this something; and we cannot say that our induction is at all complete until we have found it. 3. When we have laid down the position—that “sin is the transgression of the law,” we cannot long regard it without the question arising, Is it the mere transgression of the law, in and by itself, that constitutes the evil of sin? Assuming that it is as a transgression of law that sin is dealt with, and that it is under this aspect that we must contemplate it in relation to God’s dealings with sinners, both in reference to the punishment of sin and in reference to the remedial provision of the gospel; the question will still press upon us, What is it that makes this transgression of the law an evil, and causes it to be so abhorred of God? Evidently there must be something in the inner nature of man, something that amounts to a severance of the bond between God and him, something that violates the relations that ought to exist between them, involved in the act of transgression which makes it so hateful to God. To Him in the infinitude of His being the mere act must be a matter of small moment, a simple turning to the right hand rather than the left on the part of one of His creatures, which in itself would be infinitely beneath His notice. It must be something involved in the act, some spiritual principle from which it springs, which, if we may so speak, by disturbing the relations between the Father of spirits and the soul of His creatures, grieves and offends Him. What that something is it obviously concerns us to discover if we can.

As illustrative of these statements, and in part confirmatory of them, we may select the instance formerly cited, that, namely, furnished by the case of our first parents. The act by which they fell was the taking and eating of a particular fruit. This in itself was a purely indifferent act; there is no moral principle involved in the eating of one kind of fruit

more than another, viewed simply in itself. This act became a sin, because it was the transgression of God's precise injunction forbidding them to eat of the fruit of that tree. But that act on their part arose from, and was the index of, a particular state of mind; it was but the outcome and result of an internal working; and in this lay the real principle of their transgression—the spirit, of which the act was the form and utterance. Further, it is only in this that we can see a point of community between their act as sin and the act (say) of their son Cain when he slew his brother. Both acts were sins, and yet in form and outward manifestation the two are wholly distinct. Wherein do they resemble each other? At what point do the two lines cross so as to give a point common to both, in virtue of which they are both included under one head? To investigate this we are naturally prompted, and the answer to it can be found only in our discovering the principle, common to all sin, from which the two sinful acts, so differing in all outward characteristics, sprang. In fine, Wherein lay the intrinsic evil of this act? What was there in it to make it so hateful in the sight of God? Granting that the rebelliousness of the sin and its enormity as a transgression of the law which God had enjoined demanded its punishment, it remains to ask, Whence arose the odiousness of it so that God, who cannot look on sin, abhorred and hated it with a perfect hatred? The proper answer to this will be found if we can discover the real principle of sin—the inner operative cause of transgression.

On this inquiry we now enter; and, as preparatory to it, there are two questions of a preliminary kind on which it may be desirable that we should bestow some attention, viz.—1. What is the psychological law of man's acting? and 2. What is the vital principle of moral goodness or personal holiness, the opposite of sin?

#### i. *The Psychological Law of Man's acting.*

In regard to this, I must content myself with simply enunciating and briefly illustrating certain positions.

(i.) The actions of men are determined by their volitions.

As we will so we act; that is to say, when we are free to obey the impulses of the will, when no extraneous force constrains our actions. This is sometimes called freedom of will; but properly it is freedom of action—liberty to act as we will.

(ii.) The will is determined by motives. We choose to do that which we are moved by certain inducements to prefer.

(iii.) The general law is, that what appears to us the strongest motive determines our choice, determines our volition. To this position it has been objected that, in point of fact, men do not always obey the strongest motive; that, for instance, men are seen obeying impulses which are positively weak, foolish, and wicked, in the face of the strongest reasons for an opposite course. But this objection is doubly fallacious. For 1. It confounds motives with reasons. These two are not the same. A reason does not become a motive until it is felt; and consequently, whilst there may be the most potent reasons why a certain course of action should be preferred, these may never act as motives on an individual, simply because they are not felt by him, or only feebly felt. And 2. This objection is irrelevant; it involves an *ignoratio elenchi*. It proceeds on the assumption that what is said to determine the will is what is the strongest motive, whereas what we assert is that the will is determined by what *appears* to be the strongest motive. These two are not always the same. We all know that a man may resist the strongest motive simply because another presents itself with greater power, *i.e.* appears stronger to him. It is not by what things are, but by what they appear to be, that our choice is determined. We may bring the strongest motives to bear on a man, but if he meets us with the reply, "I cannot *see* it," we feel that it is in vain to urge him further. As our proposition is, that it is what *appears* the strongest motive that determines the will, it is irrelevant to object that sometimes what *is* the strongest motive determines the will.

(iv.) The light in which motives appear to us is determined not only, perhaps not so much, by what they are in themselves as by what is lent to them by the mind itself. The mind of man, it is to be ever kept in view, is not a dead

or inert substance; it is vital and active, and each mind has its own personality. In no case, therefore, do we see things exactly as they are nakedly and *per se*; the mind always lends some tinge or hue from itself to them as they are perceived by us; and what is lent by one man may differ very much from what is lent by another. Hence differences of conception, of taste, of belief in regard to the same objects among different men. This applies also to motives. No motive acts pure and simple on the will; every one derives from the mind through which it passes a peculiar tinge and character by which its effect on the will is affected, it may be powerfully affected.

(v.) The hue which the mind lends to motives, and by which they are made to appear strong or otherwise so as to move the will, is derived from various sources. It may be due to natural constitution, or to acquired habit, or to fixed opinion. Thus the child of a drunkard may have derived from his parent a constitution which strongly predisposes him to intemperance, *i.e.* causes the motive to indulgence in intoxicating drinks to appear much stronger to him than it does to a man of another constitution; or a man may, from the habit of sensual indulgence, have his mental eye so jaundiced that he gives a wrong colour to objects of this class; or a man, from a strong and established opinion, may lend to some motives a force which does not really belong to them, or refuse to others that which is their due. Hence it is that men are found putting sweet for bitter and bitter for sweet, good for evil and evil for good.

The bearing of these remarks on our present object must be obvious. We are in search of the *principle* of sin; and these remarks show that, according to the constitution and laws of our nature, that principle must be something which biasses the will in favour of transgression—something in the mind which lends to the motives to transgression an attractive hue, and makes them appear stronger than the motives to obedience.

## ii. *The Principle of Moral Goodness.*

The other point on which it is desirable that we have

settled views respects the vital principle of moral goodness or holiness. As this is the opposite of sin, it is obvious that if we can determine it we shall be thereby guided directly to that of which we are in search.

(i.) Your studies in Moral Philosophy have already made you acquainted with the varied answers that have been given to the question, What constitutes virtue or goodness? To enter at any length into the examination of these answers would lead me too far from my proper field; it will be sufficient for my present object that I generally describe and classify them, and then advert particularly to such as may seem more strictly theological in their character.

The differences of opinion on this subject are not so much differences as to the *nature* of virtue or goodness viewed subjectively, as to the *basis* and *essence* of goodness viewed objectively. Virtue in the subject—in the moral agent of whom it is predicated—all will agree in regarding as the love and practice of goodness, *i.e.* of objective goodness. The point awakening difference and dispute is respecting this objective goodness, on what it rests, what it is that constitutes it. Now, discounting entirely at present the answers of the sceptical school, who maintain that there is no real, qualitative distinction between right and wrong, but that these are terms descriptive merely of certain prejudices or accidental or convenient distinctions which men have made, just as they have made certain conventional arrangements in matters of business courtesy, the answers which have been given to this may be ranked in four classes:—

1. Those which place the basis of moral goodness in *the moral nature of man*; whether they proceed from the school of Hutcheson, who taught that we possess a moral sense which is at once the organ and the criterion of moral truth; or from the school of Brown, who taught that goodness is that which by the constitution of the mind we immediately approve; or from the school of Smith, who taught that goodness is that with which we perfectly sympathize, in other words, that which by the constitution of the mind we fall in with when we see it exhibited by others.

2. Those which place the foundation of goodness in the *beneficial results of actions*; whether they confine these results

to such as affect the temporal interests and physical comforts of the race, or extend them so as to include all that constitutes the true happiness of man.

3. Those which place the foundation of goodness in the *mere will of God*.

4. Those which place the foundation of goodness in the *Divine Nature*, and find in the constitution of the human mind, the relations of society, and the fitnesses of things so many revelations or unfoldings of that which in its intrinsic majesty and glory no man hath seen or can see.

Of these classes we may dismiss the first two with a very few remarks. With regard to the first, I would observe that its advocates appear to me to be involved in a vicious circle ; for they seem first to answer the question, Why is this good ? by saying, Because the human mind in virtue of its natural constitution approves it ; and then to answer the question, Why does the mind approve this ? by saying, Because it is good. A thing is thus made the reason of itself ; and goodness is represented as at once the cause and the effect of approval. With regard to the second, its great vice appears to me to lie in this, that it confounds the *basis* of virtue with the *motives* to virtue. If I wish to *induce* a man to be good and virtuous, I may very effectively appeal to the benefits which will flow to him and to society from his following such a course ; but these benefits no more constitute the virtuousness of the course suggested than the good effects of a medicine constitute the curative qualities of that medicine. These qualities reside in the medicine itself, and are to be traced to the wisdom and benevolence of the Creator who implanted them there ; whilst the benefits accruing from the use of the medicine are to be set down simply as effects resulting from its possessing such qualities. In like manner the benefits resulting from virtuous conduct are not the source or measure of its virtuousness, but merely the effect of qualities belonging to the conduct, and which exist in it independent of any effect it may produce. And just as I may labour to induce a person to take a certain medicine by detailing its good effects and tendencies, so may I seek to induce to virtue by a similar appeal. To place the virtuousness of the act, therefore, in such beneficial

tendencies is to confound the foundation of virtue with what is only an excellent motive to virtue.

The opinion which places the foundation of goodness in the will of God is one which in a theological course may be thought deserving of a somewhat fuller consideration; for to those who have not carefully reflected on the subject it often appears as if this was an opinion which as Christians we are bound to support, and it is one which the statements of Scripture have sometimes been supposed to favour. I can only, however, stay to offer on it a very few observations.

In the outset it is important to notice what the question before us really is. It is not as to whether the revealed will of God be a perfect *development* of moral truth—a perfect *representation* of rectitude and goodness; for on this point both sides are agreed. Nor is the question whether the revealed will of God should be made by us the *test* and *standard* of rectitude and goodness; for here also both parties are at one. The question before us is, Does the revealed will of God *constitute* goodness and rectitude? in other words, Are actions and feelings in themselves morally indifferent, and do they become right or wrong simply and primarily because they are commanded or forbidden by the law of God?

Now, when this question is fairly presented to the mind, it cannot fail to strike us that there are undoubtedly *some* things of which this is true, some actions and feelings which take their moral character solely from their relation to a law forbidding or enjoining them. But is this true of *all* the objects of moral judgment? If so, what becomes of the distinction between positive duties and moral duties? To the moral consciousness of man this distinction is most palpable. No man ever made the mistake of confounding the two. They are as distinct in the human mind as the ten tables of stone, graven by the finger of God and containing the Decalogue, were in the Mosaic legislation distinguished from the rest of the Law written by Moses. But what becomes of this distinction if all morality be resolved into enactment and prescription? In this case what we call a positive law stands on exactly the same footing as what we call a moral law. Both are enacted, and if it is enactment which *pro-*

*duces* moral rectitude, the one is not more moral than the other. All duties in this case then are moral, and all are positive. To steal is wrong, for no other reason than to omit baptism is wrong; to rob and murder, for no other reason than to neglect going to church! Against such a conclusion as this the moral judgment of all men would rebel; for all feel that the former are wrong inherently, whilst the latter are wrong because contrary to prescription.

It is further to be observed that to resolve all morality into the will of God is to deny the *essential* distinction between vice and virtue. If it be the will of God which constitutes the one bad and the other good, then apart from this will they were neither the one nor the other; and as it was a mere arbitrary will which made them differ, what we now call virtue might have been made vice, and what we now call vice might have been made virtue. According to the supposition, here are two acts equally destitute *per se* of moral character; but God, for no reason but in pure arbitrariness, enacts that the one shall be done and the other avoided; and out of this alone, it is alleged, arises the goodness of the one and the badness of the other: who does not see that the case of the two might have been reversed, and that the same arbitrary will which made the one good might have made it bad, and *vice versa*? I have heard it said, in reply to this, that God could not do this, for He can never command anything but what is good. True, but irrelevant; for the question is not whether God can enjoin anything but what is good, but whether it is His injunction alone which *produces* the goodness belonging to that which He enjoins. The objector, in fact, concedes what he pretends to deny; for in asserting that God can enjoin only what is good, he implicitly admits that there is a source of moral distinction apart from the divine will, and antecedent to any utterance of it. If I say God enjoins what is right because it is right, nothing can be more manifest than that I admit that rectitude exists antecedent to any injunction of God's will concerning it; otherwise I should make rectitude at once the *cause* and the *effect* of the divine command.

Once more, it may be observed that to regard rectitude as produced by the mere will of God is to affirm that God wills



and enjoins virtue as to be preferred to vice without any reason. It could not be because the one was morally excellent that it has been enjoined, and because the other is morally evil that it has been forbidden, for by the supposition it is the simple injunction or prohibition that makes them either the one or the other. Their moral character is acquired *after* and *in consequence of* the divine declaration regarding them; it could not therefore form the reason for that declaration. In the eye of God, it is assumed, that previous to His enjoining the one or forbidding the other, neither possessed any moral character. Why then, it may be asked, did He prefer the one to the other, and say to men, "This is good, and that is evil"? No reason can be assigned; the whole must be resolved into what the schoolmen have called the "*merum arbitrium Dei*,"—the arbitrary will—the unreasoning decree of God; in other words, that in this matter God acted without reason or motive, and simply from a blind impulse or unintelligent caprice. No one who has any just views of God can entertain this opinion; and as this is a just and necessary consequence of the doctrine which resolves morality into the mere will of God, that doctrine, though often maintained with a view of honouring God, must be set aside as really incompatible with His glory.

(ii.) Rejecting these theories of the basis of moral rectitude, there only remains that which finds this in the *divine nature*—in the essential perfection of the Almighty. God is essentially good and holy. He cannot but be so. To conceive of Him as otherwise would be to conceive of something which is less than God—which is not God. He is good, not because He wills or chooses to be good, but because goodness is His essence, and by the necessity of His nature He cannot but be good. Hence all that He wills is good, for He must ever will in accordance with His own perfect nature; and as all the relations of His intelligent creatures, all the order and constitution of nature, all the fitnesses and utilities of things have been fixed and appointed by Him, conformity to these becomes good because in reality conformity to the perfect mind of God of which they are the utterance. In the constitution of the divine mind, then,

we find the basis of goodness—the ultimate reason of the inherent and inflexible distinction between right and wrong, as well as between true and false, lovely and odious.

Now, having found the basis of goodness, it is easy to find the *principle* of goodness in moral agents. It is simply a harmony of feeling on the part of the agent with the basis of moral excellence—a love for, a complacency in, a clinging to the one great foundation of goodness and truth. Wherever this feeling exists it will become a principle of holy living—a continual and vital spring of goodness and virtue.

This complacency in God is what the Bible intends by that love to God which it inculcates as the first of all excellences and the source of all virtue. Theologians have, indeed, disputed whether love to God be properly the disinterested affection of love to Him for what He is, or the grateful affection of love to Him for what He has bestowed. Into this question I do not intend to enter at present, further than to observe that the proper answer to it will depend altogether upon the connection in which the question is asked. It must be admitted on all hands that both affections may exist in a creature towards the Creator—both the affection of complacent delight in his infinite perfections, and the affection of responsive gratitude to Him for His boundless beneficence. But though both these principles may exist in the same mind, they do not operate to exactly the same results. If it be asked, What is it that operates in an angel to make him delight to do the will of God? the proper reply, I take it, would be, his grateful love to God—that sense of deep obligation which he experiences in consequence of the innumerable tokens he has experienced of the loving-kindness of the Lord. If, again, it be asked, What is the principle which operates in the bosom of a holy creature and leads him to rejoice in God's perfections and aim at conforming himself to God? the proper reply, I take it, would be, not his sense of gratitude for favours received, but his complacency in the divine nature itself as revealed to his mind. Now these considerations may guide us to the conclusion that the love to God which is the source of holiness is love to Him for what He is, not love to Him for what He

has done. This alone can be strictly called a *holy* principle,—the other is rather the *natural* state of a well-ordered mind under the circumstances.

The vital principle of true holiness, then, we take to be, Love to God for what He is—sincere, pure, adoring complacency in that perfect excellence which essentially and eternally belongs to Him. Out of this all holy feeling and acting spring. This is the element which distinctively confers holiness or moral goodness on any act or purpose—which raises any above the level of the merely natural or becoming, and constitutes it holy and good. “God is not only the chief object of human love, . . . but the *absolute and all-embracing object of this love*, so that every other love is holy and imperishable only by being taken up into love to God.” Our love to man must be subordinate to this; even as it is from man’s relation to God that he becomes a claimant for love from us. We act aright only as all our actions have a respect to God—only as in whatever we do we do it to His glory.

(iii.) Before proceeding further it may be desirable to show the accordance of the conclusion we have reached with the statements of Scripture upon the subject. And here we cite—

1. The injunction which commands us to be holy, as God is holy, and perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect. The meaning of such injunctions obviously is not that the holiness of the creature is to *equal* that of the Creator, for this is impossible; the meaning must be that holiness in the creature must be of the same kind as holiness in the Creator; the latter must be the norm and standard of the former. In order, then, to ascertain what holiness in the creature is, we have to inquire wherein consists the holiness of God—the perfection of God; and in answer to this, the view which Scripture teaches us to take of God, as finding in Himself the reason and end of all His doings, leads us to the conclusion that holiness in Him is just the consistency of all His actions with Himself, and that the principle of holiness in Him is just the complacency which He has in His own infinite and eternal excellence. He can see nothing better, nothing more lovely than this; and whatever his eye rests on with complacency in any of His creatures is but the reflection or

emanation of this. If this, then, be holiness in God, the holiness of His creatures—which is to be of the same kind as His—must be the accordance of their volitions and actions with the divine nature, arising from a complacent delight in that nature as revealed to them.<sup>1</sup>

2. Again, our Lord Jesus Christ is presented to us in the N. T. as the perfect model of all holy excellence for man. What then, let us ask, was the life-principle of His conduct? what sustained it, animated it, and gave it its peculiarly holy character? We have His own repeatedly expressed authority for saying that it was love to God—love to the Father. It was that the world might know that He loved the Father, and that as the Father gave Him commandment so He did; that He was obedient unto the death, and went forth to meet the prince of darkness in that last tremendous struggle; and as this principle actuated Him in the great closing scenes of His life, so was it the animating principle of all that had gone before. To glorify God on the earth, to vindicate His majesty and His claims, to manifest His truth to men, to do His will, and to finish His work,—these were the objects which our Lord continually placed before Him as the grand ends for which He had come into the world. Everything was postponed or subordinated to these. “Not my will, but Thine be done,” was the maxim of His life and

<sup>1</sup> “Quando Deus se ipsum amore purissimo amare concipitur, ut simul ab omni imperfectione remotus, secretus, separatus censeatur, amor ille vocatum sanctitas.” Buddeus.

Bengel extends the meaning of the term so as to comprehend “omnia illa attributa quæ simul sumpta conceptum Dei quidditatem exhaustiunt.” These he regards as embraced under the term קָדוּשׁ, and adds, “De Deo itaque, ubi Scriptura nomen illud קָדוּשׁ enumerat, statuo non denotare solam puritatem voluntatis, sed quicquid de Deo cognoscitur et quicquid insuper de illo, si se uberius revelare velit, cognosci possit adeo ut vocabulum קָדוּשׁ ex impositione divina vere sit inexhaustæ significationis.”

“The holiness of God flows from the love which He has for Himself, and in the exercise of which He shows Himself in all His affections in exact conformity to His own perfect nature.” Venema, *System of Theology*, p. 161.

That the word includes more than moral purity is evident from such applications of it as in the phrase “The Holy One of Israel,” with whom none can be compared, and as in Ex. xv. 11, “Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” and Ps. xcvi. 1, where “the arm of His holiness” is joined with “His right hand” as the instrument by which “He hath done marvellous things.”

the rule of His conduct. Hence the perfect complacency with which Jehovah regarded Him. He was His well-beloved Son, in whom He was ever well-pleased. He kept the Father's commandments, and so abode in His love. Now, in all this, as He is our example and model, so does His example teach us that in love to God lies the germ and principle of all true obedience and holy acting.

3. What our Lord's personal character and conduct exemplified His teaching distinctly expressed. Nothing can be more precise and satisfactory than His answer to the youthful Pharisee who asked Him, "Which is the greatest commandment?" Our Lord's reply was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. xxii. 36-39). And, lest it should be supposed that these two commandments were signalized merely as of prior importance,—as the first amongst many which might be ranked after them as of the *same class*, though of inferior urgency,—our Lord adds, "On these two commands the whole law and the prophets hang," intending thereby to teach us that all religious and all moral duty are wrapped up in these, as the tree is included in its seed, or the manifestations of activity in sentient creatures are included in the vital principle. In love, then, according to our Lord's teaching, lies the principle or germ of moral goodness. Without this all conformity to the law is merely outward and pretentious; it is dead, having no real moral life, no real moral loveliness in it; whereas, on the other hand, when sincere love to God dwells in the heart, it will lead to all moral goodness in the soul and life, just as naturally as the vital principle in a sentient creature leads to activity, or a germ unfolds itself, under favourable conditions, in the verdure and fruitfulness of the tree.

Our Lord's words, I have said, teach that love to God is the central and germinating principle of all moral goodness. To some it has appeared as if our Lord here lays down *two* co-ordinate principles of holy activity—love to God and love to man; and His words are often quoted as authorizing the opinion that these two principles stand on the same footing as constitutive principles of goodness, though the latter be

less solemn and urgent than the former. Our Lord's words, however, carefully considered, not only give no sanction to such a view, but in reality set it aside. Not only does He call love to God *ἡ μεγάλη καὶ πρώτη ἐντολή*,—the absolutely great and first commandment, whilst love to man, including ourselves, is described as simply *resembling* this—not equalling it, but merely being *like* it, *ὅμοία*,—but it is important to observe that He expressly teaches that we are to give to God a whole and undivided love. We are to love Him with *all* our heart, and *all* our soul, and *all* our mind. It is evident that whatever love we may legitimately entertain to ourselves and to our fellow-men cannot be co-ordinate with, but must be subordinate to, the love we render to God; in other words, the latter, as the principle of *all* good, must embrace and comprehend the former in so far as it is good. If all my inner being is to be absorbed by love to God, it is abundantly evident that I can find place in it for love to any of His creatures only in so far as that is included in and produced by love to Him. If I love myself or my fellow-creature in such a way as to subduct from God any portion of my heart and soul and mind, I manifestly transgress, or at least fall short of, the first and great commandment; and from this nothing can be clearer than that I can keep these two commandments only by subordinating the second to the first, and loving the creature in and through the Creator. But if all moral goodness be included in germ and principle in these two commandments, and if the latter be included in the former as a corollary is in its propositions, it follows that our Lord's words must be regarded as announcing that the one grand, all-embracing, all-securing principle of goodness is love to God.

4. In the writings of the apostles we find the same prominence given to love as the root and spring of all true goodness. We need only cite such passages as the following: 1 Cor. viii. 2, 3, "And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of God," *i.e.* love to God not only directs a man to the right knowledge of all that it concerns him to know in relation to God, but renders him also an object of the divine knowledge, and thereby of the divine teaching. So, in writing to the Romans, Paul, after

enumerating the beneficial effects of a state of justification through faith, traces all to "the love of God shed abroad in the heart" (Rom. iv. 5),—where it does not greatly matter, for our present object, whether we understand by the phrase "the love of God," God's love to us or our love to God, because in the former case it is only as a sense of God's love diffused in our souls by the Holy Ghost awakens within us a corresponding emotion of supreme and all-subduing love to Him that it can operate in the way of producing Christian virtues in us. The same may be said of the apostle's expression, "the love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. v. 14), where, if we understand by the love of Christ His love to us, as is most probably the meaning of the phrase there, it is yet only as that love is realized by us as a subjective impression, and produces in us a corresponding love to Him, that its constraining power can be felt by us. To the same effect also is that sublime passage of the apostle, Eph. iii. 17–19, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." In this passage the apostle traces the spiritual life to its true and only origin, union with Christ by faith; but he at the same time specifies the element by the action of which spiritual vitality is sustained and spiritual progress secured. That element is love; and it is by being rooted and grounded in it that we are to scale the heights of divine attainment, and go steadily forward so as at last to be filled with all the fulness of God. In a similar sense may we understand that passage, which is not without its difficulties, in Eph. iv. 15, *ἀληθευοντες εν αγαπη*, etc. The interpretations which have been given of this passage are very many; but the apostle's meaning seems to be this: It is not desirable that Christians should be like children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine; and for the purpose of preventing this the great Head of the Church has made provision for the instruction and edification of the Church, that all its members may come together in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

What, then, is the becoming and profitable state for the Church to be in? It is ἀληθευοντες, etc., literally, “that holding the truth, or being truthful, in accordance with the truth, we may by love increase in all things towards Him who is the Head,” etc. As if Paul had said, Christ has made all this provision for the edification of the Church, that they may be supplied with that truth which is the proper nutriment of the soul, and may be confirmed in that love which is the source and spring of all Christian virtue and godliness.

5. I only add here, that we may legitimately borrow for our present purpose all those passages in which the apostles inculcate love to the Christian brotherhood as the fulfilling of all Christian duty; for, as they ever regarded love to the brotherhood as an offshoot and product of love to God,—just as in the family the mutual love of the children has its root in their common love to their parents,—so whatever they ascribe to the inferior and derived principle must be referred ultimately to the primary and all-embracing one whence it sprang.

### iii. *The Principle of Sin.*

Having thus ascertained with some degree of certainty what is the vital principle of moral goodness or holiness, we are in circumstances to answer the question for the sake of which this inquiry was entered upon, viz. what is the principle of sin in the heart of man? The answer to this must be, that as sin is the antithesis of holiness, and as the principle of holiness is love to God, the principle of sin must be the negation of this—the absence of love to God, or estrangement of heart from Him. It is not necessary that this should amount to positive hatred of God; it is enough that the heart be destitute of supreme love to God, having no complacency in His holy character, no delight in His favour, and no desire for His glory.

With this accords the lesson which the apostle teaches in Rom. i. 21–23, where he traces all the degeneracy of the heathen world, all its idolatry and deep moral degradation, to an alienation of heart from God. They began their course of evil by being irreverent and unthankful,—not glorifying God as God, withholding from Him that admiration, adoration,



and love which the infinite perfection of His character demands, and refusing that grateful acknowledgment of His mercies which the multitude and graciousness of these mercies justly claim. And having this alienation of heart from God, they naturally did not like to retain God in their knowledge, and hence, says the apostle, it is that they were given up to a reprobate mind, and fell under the sway of all those unhallowed influences which gradually immersed them ever deeper and deeper in the foul abyss of sin and uncleanness. It was not that they *had* not the knowledge of God, it was not that they *could* not retain that knowledge, it was simply and solely because they did not *like* to retain it, that they lost it, and so were led to change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things, and were left to become the prey of all lawless lusts and passions and desires. Like a ship which had lost its rudder, they were driven helplessly whithersoever the winds and waves of passion or evil example carried them.

I prefer regarding the principle of sin as simply alienation from God, or want of holy love to God, to attempting the determination of any positive tendency or feeling in which it may be supposed to consist. It is true that we thus rather lay down a negative than establish a positive principle of action; but this, instead of being regarded as an objection, is rather perhaps to be looked upon in the light of a recommendation, inasmuch as sin being in itself rather a negative than a positive state,—just as darkness is the mere negation of light, and cold the mere negation of heat,—the principle appropriate to it is rather a negative than a positive one. Those who have sought to fix a positive principle of sin have either concluded on selfishness, *i.e.* the undue love of self, or on creature-love, *i.e.* the undue estimation of any created objects, ourselves included, so as to prefer them to God, or to withhold from God that which belongs to Him. Now, that both selfishness and undue attachment to the creature are sinful is at once conceded, but whether either can be properly regarded as constituting the positive principle of sin may be more than doubted.

If we were required to choose between these two views,

the latter certainly appears the preferable, not so much because it includes the former, as because it avoids an objection to which the former is exposed. For if all sin be resolved into selfishness, we must either conclude that every act of man is a selfish act, or hold that there are some acts which man in his fallen state can perform that are without the stain of sin. Of this alternative the advocates of the selfish school would accept the former side; for by them it is maintained that all the acts of man are either directly or indirectly, either grossly or by a more refined process, the results of selfishness; and in this conclusion some who do not professedly belong to the selfish school in ethics seem inclined to concur. But against such a doctrine the moral consciousness of man revolts, and it is one which will not abide the test of facts. It is no doubt true that pleasure attends the performance of that which we desire to perform, and that sometimes we act purely for the pleasure resulting from the act. But is it not preposterous to affirm that we *always* so act,—that the child, for instance, who for the first time in its existence comes in contact with sorrow, and desires to relieve it, does so not from a natural sympathy, but from a refined calculation as to the selfish pleasure to be derived from the relief of the suffering,—that the mother who sacrifices ease, health, perhaps life itself, for her babe, is all the while only seeking a refined self-gratification,—that the man who at the call of friendship imperils his liberty, his property, his reputation, his life, rather than desert the cause of one to whom he is attached, is not moved by any generous principle, but is all the while only offering incense at the shrine of self-love? To maintain such a position would be to read human nature backward, and to contradict some of the strongest convictions of the human heart. We all know and are sure that there are other principles of action by which we are swayed than selfishness. We know that we often desire the happiness of others, without the slightest thought of any reaction from the gratification of that desire of a pleasurable kind upon ourselves. Indeed, the very fact that we desire pleasure from the gratification of the desire, shows that the desire must have existed as a generous and unselfish emotion antecedent to the performance of the act. For suppose I relieve

the wants of one in poverty or suffering, either the generous desire to do that person a kindness prompted me, or I was, as the selfish school teach, induced thereto solely by a desire to enjoy a personal gratification. Let us suppose the latter. In this case it follows that I had no generous desire to relieve another previous to the act. Whence then, I ask, the gratification derived from the act? Who does not see that if there be any gratification derived from the act it must be because that act gratified a desire to relieve the distressed, and that this and not any calculation of selfish gratification was the motive prompting to the act? This selfish system, then, contains in itself its own confutation: on its own showing the antagonist doctrine is correct.

As a matter of psychological science, then, we cannot resolve all our actions into selfishness. It follows from this that if selfishness be the essential principle of sin, and if, consequently, no act can be regarded as sinful which cannot be traced directly to selfishness, many of the acts of man even in his fallen state, and whilst at enmity with God, must be regarded as sinless; nay, it would follow that whatever love and reverence man withheld from God, if he only did not expend that upon himself, but bestowed it generously on his fellow-creatures, he would nevertheless be innocent of sin in this. With such a conclusion our Lord's doctrine, that we are to love God with our *whole* heart and strength and mind, is, as we have seen, clearly incompatible. It must therefore be at once rejected, and with it the doctrine that selfishness is the essential principle of sin.

The more general principle that the essence of sin, or moral evil, lies in the undue love of the creature in general, is not exposed to any such objection as this. It has consequently been that principally embraced by theologians.<sup>1</sup> I am nevertheless inclined to think that this may, with greater propriety,

<sup>1</sup> "Hoc enim peccabam quod non in ipso, sed in creaturis ejus, me atque ceteris, voluptates, sublimitates, veritates quærebam; atque ita irruebam in dolores, confusiones, errores." Augustin, *Confess.*, lib. i. § 31.

"Propter universa hæc et hujusmodi peccatum admittitur, dum immoderata in ista inclinatione cum extrema bona sint, meliora et summa deseruntur, tu Domine Deus noster, et veritas tua, et lex tua." *Ibid.*, lib. ii. § 10.

"Animum enim peccati arguimus cum eum convincimus, superioribus desertis, ad fruendum inferiora præponere." Augustin, *De lib. arbit.*, l. 3, c. 1.

be regarded as a primary result or manifestation of this principle rather than the principle itself. Man must love something ; he is destitute of the supreme and all-embracing love of God ; he therefore turns from the *summum bonum* to the *minus bonum* ; he gives to the creature what is due only to the Creator. This perversity, however, is not itself a primary principle of action ; it has a cause in the antecedent alienation of heart from God ; and in this therefore would we place the principle and vital source of sin.

This estrangement from God will come into conscious manifestation as soon as the will of God comes into collision with any of the lusts and passions of our nature. As love to God will show itself most evidently in the ready and joyful submission of the human will to all that God enjoins or appoints, so the absence of this will display itself most naturally in resistance and repugnance to the divine will. The first and most immediate effect of it is in producing a state of untruthfulness, of error, and darkness, and wrong judging in the mind. Men alienated from the centre of truth and light become immediately darkened in their minds and given up to vain imaginations, so that they put good for evil, and evil for good. A further step in this downward course is to put the creature in the place of the Creator, and at the head of all creatures to place self as the supreme object of devotion. Hence, though to resolve all men's actions into selfishness be false philosophy, it remains an undoubted fact that of the positive sins which men commit nearly all may be resolved into some form or other of selfishness. The dominant principle in man becomes his emotional nature, and that in itself alone, unregulated by sound judgment and reason. As the apostle describes it, "Lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin" (Jas. i. 15). This is the true genesis and history of evil in our world.

This serving of self and of the creature may exist to a large extent without any conscious aversion of the mind from God. But this arises not from any real love lurking in the heart to the source of all good ; but simply because the mind has the power of abstracting from all thoughts that are unpleasant to it, and hence, not *liking* to retain God in its knowledge, simply ejects the thought of God altogether from

the circle of its ideas and feelings. Hence the Bible represents men in their natural state as not so much haters of God as simply without God—*αθεοι*, not *αντίθεοι*—as those that forget God—in all whose thoughts God is not. But though there may not be a conscious repugnance of mind to God, all the while a process is going on which is increasing the native alienation of the heart from God, and which needs only some occasion of collision between the man's lusts and God's expressed will to bring it forth in all the odiousness of full-grown hatred and hostility to the Most High.

And as the principle of sin is thus ungodliness, so the great end which Christianity aims at accomplishing in man is the restoration to man's heart of that great regulative principle of his moral nature, that great fountal source of all real goodness in man, love to God. The consummation of Christianity in a man is when in life he lives unto the Lord, and in death dies unto the Lord, that whether living or dying he is the Lord's, so that through eternity he shall be wholly and for ever with the Lord.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### SIN.

#### V. KINDS OF SIN.

Though all sin has essentially the same nature, and proceeds from the same evil principle, there are different forms under which it presents itself to observation. Hence theologians have been led to classify sins according to certain differential qualities as follows:—

i. In respect of their immediate object—that against which they are immediately committed—we have—

(i.) Sins against God; also sins against the first table of the law, *peccata primæ tabulæ Decalogi*.

(ii.) Sins against our neighbours.) *Peccata secundæ tabulæ*

(iii.) Sins against ourselves.           *Decalogi*.

ii. In respect of the law of which they are a transgression—

(i.) Sins of commission — *Peccata positiva quæ committuntur adversus legem vetantem.*

(ii.) Sins of omission — *Peccata negativa, quæ committuntur adversus legem jubentem.* Comp. Matt. xxv. 42–45, “Inasmuch as ye did it *not* ;” Jas. iv. 17, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

There is here perhaps a want of sufficient precision. Every positive act of sin is a breach of a law which forbids that sin, but it is also a breach of a corresponding law which enjoins the opposite good. On the other hand, every omission of good which the law enjoins is not necessarily a breach of the law which forbids the opposite evil. We cannot commit evil without omitting the antagonist good ; but we may omit good without necessarily committing the antagonist evil, *e.g.* one cannot tell a lie, which is a breach of the law forbidding falsehood, without at the same time breaking the law which commands and speaks the truth ; but one may omit to obey the law which commands to show kindness to all men, without directly breaking the law which forbids us to do injury to any man. We must distinguish these here, and say that all sins of commission are also sins of omission, but all sins of omission are not also sins of commission. And we must distinguish, further, between a law of primary obligation and a law of secondary obligation. By the former, we mean one which directly arises out of our relation to God, and which is always binding ; by the latter, we mean a law arising out of our relations to our fellow-men, and which is binding only under certain conditions. Now, in reference to the former, there is no distinction between a sin of omission and one of commission ; every omission of the commanded good is a commission of the prohibited opposite evil, and *vice versa*. In reference to the latter, there is a distinction between sins of omission and sins of commission, to the extent that though the commission of a forbidden evil is also of necessity the omission of the opposite good, the omission of a commanded good is not necessarily the commission of the opposite evil.

iii. In respect of the compass of the act itself, there are—

(i.) Inward sins, *peccata interna, sive cordis, επιθυμία*  
 πρὸ : all such tendencies and emotions as oppose, or are

inconsistent with, the law of God—evil thoughts, lusts, and passions.

(ii.) Outward sins, *peccata externa, sermonis et operis*—all words and deeds which transgress the law.

iv. In respect of the party charged with them, there are—

(i.) Sins directly committed by himself, *peccata propria*.

(ii.) Sins committed by others in which he partakes, *peccata aliena, permissionis, participata*.

This distinction is founded on such a passage as Rom. i. 32, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them," or consort with them that do them; and 1 Tim. v. 22, "Neither be partakers of other men's sins." But neither of these passages seems to authorize the distinction. There is undoubtedly a distinction between sins which we ourselves commit, and sins which we are pleased to see others commit; but in the latter case the sin, *quoad nos*, is not in the thing actually done, but in the approval which we bestow upon the doing of it; and this is as much a *peccatum proprium* to us as the doing of the act is a *peccatum proprium* to the party committing it. Then, as to the apostle's caution against our becoming partakers of other men's sins, his meaning plainly is, that we are not to sanction, authorize, or encourage other men to do wrong, inasmuch as we thereby become participators, as it were, in the sins which they commit. But in this, as in the former case, the sinful part of the act, *quoad nos*, lies in what we really do, viz. the sanctioning of what is wrong, or the permitting a person to do what we know to be wrong. The sin of an act, as an act, belongs wholly to the person committing it; the sin that attaches to others, in the case supposed, accrues from their regarding with satisfaction that sinful act, or the encouraging to the commission of it by their sanction. In fact, the reason of the thing forbids such a distinction as this. There is no such thing as a sin chargeable on a party which is not *peccatum proprium* to that party. If he can truly say, "I did not do it, another did it," he says what completely removes from him the charge of that sin. He may, indeed, approve and consent to it, or sanction and encourage in it; and in so far he is guilty of sin; but the

sin of which he is guilty is his own sin, viz. the transgression of God's law, which he has committed in approving of what is evil, or sanctioning what is wrong; of the evil done, or the wrong committed, the sin rests wholly on the party who acted in the case. We would set aside this distinction, therefore, as one altogether unfounded.

v. In respect of intention on the part of those committing them, there are—

(i.) Voluntary sins, *peccata voluntaria*, *προαιρετικά*, *quæ deliberato consilio committuntur*.

(ii.) Involuntary [unpremeditated] sins, *quæ non deliberato consilio committuntur*. These may be—

1. Sins of ignorance, transgressions of an unknown law, and that either (1) helpless ignorance, as where the law has not been revealed [these are properly not sins at all. Comp. John xv. 22, "If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin"]; or (2) ignorance that may be overcome, as, *e.g.*, that of the Jews in crucifying Jesus, "I wot," says Peter, "that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers" (Acts iii. 17); and that of Paul in persecuting the Church, "I did it," says he, "ignorantly and in unbelief" (1 Tim. i. 13). In both these instances, however, the ignorance was culpable, because it might have been helped.

2. Sins of rashness or precipitancy, into which a man falls from the suddenness of the temptation. To such Paul refers when he says, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault," etc. (Gal. vi. 1).

3. Sins of infirmity arising from the influence of physical causes. Comp. Matt. xxvi. 41, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

"Voluntary" sins would be more properly called premeditated sins. All sin is voluntary. It is a fundamental principle in ethics that neither viciousness nor virtuousness can be predicated of any act if it be not voluntary. "Nunc vero," says Augustine, "*usque adeo peccatum voluntarium est malum ut nullo modo sit peccatum si non sit voluntarium.*"<sup>1</sup> If the party apparently performing the act be not acting in accordance with his will, he really ceases to be an agent; he becomes passive in the hands of another; and the act, so far

<sup>1</sup> *De Vera Relig.*, xiv.



as he is concerned, possesses no moral quality whatever. The apostle, indeed, uses the words *εκουσιως ἁμαρτάνειν* (Heb. x. 26), but he is speaking there of apostasy. He that, knowing the natural result of such sins, runs into them with his eyes open, virtually rejects the gospel, and for him there is no second Saviour.

vi. In respect of enormity and punability, there are—

(i.) Clamant sins, *peccata clamantia vel manifesta*—such as those of which Paul speaks when he says, “Some men’s sins are open or manifest beforehand (*πρόδηλοι*), going before to judgment” (1 Tim. v. 24). Sins of this class are such as, whether men may punish them or not, the righteous judgment of God will be sure to overtake those who have committed them. Comp. Gen. iv. 10, xviii. 20, xix. 13; Ex. iii. 7, 9; Deut. xv. 9; Jas. iv. 4.

(ii.) Non-clamant sins, *peccata non clamantia, muta, quæ Deus longanimitate sua dissimulat et tolerat*. Comp. Acts xvii. 30.

(iii.) Mortal sins, *peccata mortalia*, or *mortifera*. Comp. 1 John v. 15–18. These, as distinguished from venial sins, are commonly described by Protestant divines as sins committed deliberately by the regenerate, and which destroy spiritual life; while the latter are sins of rashness, etc. So far as this is true, it coalesces with the following.

(iv.) Sins of greater or less aggravation. Matt. xi. 24; Luke xii. 47; 1 Tim. v. 8.

(v.) Sins remissible or irremissible. The only irremissible sin is that against the Holy Ghost, Matt. xii. 31. Comp. Mark iii. 28; Luke xii. 10; Heb. vi. 4–6.

“Clamant” sins have been enumerated in the mnemonic verse,

“Clamitat ad cælum vox sanguinis et Sodomorum.  
Vox oppressorum, mercesque retenta laborum.”

As in this distich Ex. xxii. 23 seems to be overlooked, the second verse has been altered by some, thus,

“Vox oppressorum, viduæ, pretium famulorum.”

Perhaps, better still, thus,

“Oppressi ac viduæ mercesque retenta laborum.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Bretschneider, *Handbuch*, ii. p. 11, sec. 119; Hahn, *Lehrbuch*, p. 416.

## CHAPTER X.

## SIN.

## VI. THE SOURCE OF SIN.

Having considered the fact of man's sinfulness, and the nature, principle, and modifications of sin, it now comes in course that we should ask, Whence this fact? To what are we to trace the universal sinfulness of the race?

*i. General Considerations.*

Now, as sin is the same thing in all men, its essential principle and manifestations being the same in all, it must be regarded as something adhering to our nature in our present state of being. Were it not so, we should either find some men who are not sinners, or some whose sins spring from a different principle from that which lies at the source of those of others.

Further, the fact that all sin, both in act and in principle, is the same as that sin by which our first parents fell,—viz. in act, a transgression of the law of God; and in principle, alienation from God,—is a fact which, if it does not suggest, certainly falls in with the conclusion that the first sin has had something to do with the production of all that have followed.

Once more, if sin be the same thing in all men, and therefore something adhering to our nature as at present existing, it must be something which is either added to that nature in each individual man immediately by God, or it must be something which accrues to each man in consequence of the connection of all men with the common source of the race. Besides these two, there is no way in which we can suppose that a quality belonging to the nature of all men could have come to be attached to that nature; nothing but community of derivation, either directly by God or by connection with a common head, being adequate to account

for a quality belonging to all men. The former supposition, however, is altogether incredible, and must therefore be rejected, inasmuch as it would make God directly and immediately the author of sin. We are therefore shut up to the latter, and must trace the universal sin of men to their connection with the first man, Adam. We do not at present express any opinion as to the *nature* of that connection; that will be subsequently investigated; we simply indicate the conclusion, that to a connection of *some* sort with the original man the sinfulness of the human family must be traced.

## ii. *The Testimony of Scripture.*

What these general considerations thus render probable is placed beyond doubt by the testimony of Scripture.

(i.) The sacred historian of man's origin and early experience, after telling us that man was made in the image and likeness of God, tells us that his son Seth was begotten by him "in his own image and likeness." It would not be competent for us to lay much stress upon this expression by itself, but when it is considered that this expression only occurs here, that it occurs on the first occasion that seems suitable after the narrative of Adam's fall, that it enunciates a marked contrast with what the historian has previously described as the original state of man, and that there seems no reason for its being introduced here, except to mark that man no longer comes into being in the image and likeness of God, but now bears the image of his sinful and fallen parents,—there seems strong ground for concluding from this passage that an intimation of no very doubtful kind is conveyed in it of a connection between Adam's sin and fall and the sinful and corrupt nature of his posterity. This is confirmed when we find the apostle describing the natural condition of men as a bearing of the image of the earthly (1 Cor. xv. 49). The most natural and satisfactory explanation of this is, that an allusion is made in it to man's natural condition, as a result of the descendants of Adam being born in his image and likeness, and no longer in the image and likeness of God.

(ii.) There are many passages which distinctly assert that sin is connatural to man: Gen. vi. 5, viii. 21; Job xv. 14, 15,

vii. 20 ; Ps. li. 5 ; John iii. 6 ; Rom. vii. 14, etc.<sup>1</sup> None of these passages, it is true, asserts any connection between man's sin and that of Adam ; but they all more or less clearly intimate that sin is not an accident that befalls this man or the other, not something which is conveyed to man from external sources and grows upon him wholly from without, but something which operates from within, something which is in man as man, something which, if not of the nature of a *vitium originis*, is at least the result of a privation of which all men are the subjects ; and as this can belong to all men only in virtue of their being descended from a common stock, these passages implicitly support the position now before us.

To the same effect is that remarkable expression of the apostle, "by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. ii. 3). Here the being by nature the children of wrath is described as the common condition of the race ; the Ephesians were so, "even as others," not by any peculiarity of their state or character, but because all men are so. As regards the phrase *τεκνα οργῆς*, it is best explained by reference to the Hebrew idiom, according to which a person was said to be son of any object or quality, when the object or quality exercised a dominant influence on his condition or state ; comp. *בְּנֵי־תַמְתָּה* (Ps. cii. 21), *i.e.* persons delivered over to death, exposed to its attack ; *οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ φωτός* (Luke xvi. 8), *i.e.* persons under the illuminating influence of divine teaching ; *κατάρας τέκνα* (2 Pet. ii. 14), *i.e.* persons under the curse of God. Thus taken, the phrase *τεκνα οργῆς* is much the same as if the phrase *ὑπὸ οργῆν* had been used, *i.e.* persons under wrath—the wrath of God. Now this, says the apostle, all men are *φύσει*, by nature, *i.e.* they become so, not by any external influence, ordinance, or power, but by an internal tendency which develops itself in them from their birth. It is impossible to attach to this any clear or consistent meaning but by understanding it of the native sinfulness of the human race, exposing them universally to the divine displeasure and consequent condemnation.

<sup>1</sup> On these passages see, on the one side, Taylor *On Original Sin*, and, on the other, the replies of Edwards and Payne in their respective treatises on this subject.

(iii.) The fact of a connection between Adam's sin and that of mankind is expressly asserted in several passages of Scripture. Isa. xliii. 27: "Thy first father hath sinned." This language plainly fixes our regards upon some *individual* as here referred to; and amongst individuals, our choice lies between Abraham, the progenitor of the Jewish people, and Adam, the progenitor of all men. But the reference to Abraham seems excluded by the thing predicated of the party here spoken of, viz. that *he sinned*. This must be looked on as emphatic, as constituting in some way a marked and peculiar fact in his history which distinguished him from others. Now this could not be said of Abraham. He doubtless was a sinner, but only just as other men are. He committed no special and peculiar sin which stands out in contradistinction to others as the sin of Abraham. His peculiar distinction among men is rather the eminent piety to which he attained than any eminent sin of which he was guilty. It was otherwise with Adam. The great event in his history is the sin he committed. This stands out from all other events recorded concerning him as the *peculiar* event of his history; and as it has acquired this character not so much from anything in itself as from its momentous bearing on the race, so it is most natural to understand such an expression as that of the prophet in the passage cited as referring to this. In this interpretation Hitzig, Umbreit, Knobel, and several others, whose conclusions are guided solely by hermeneutical reasons, and are not in the least swayed by doctrinal bias, concur.

In the New Testament there are two classical passages on this head, Rom. v. 12-21 and 1 Cor. xv. 45-47. In the former of these, the fact of a connection between the sin of Adam and the sinfulness of mankind is set forth in the most explicit terms: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, because all have sinned. By the offence of one many are dead; by the offence of one [there came] on all men [something which tended] to condemnation. By one man's disobedience the many were made sinners." In the context Paul also affirms that Adam was the type of Christ, *i.e.* the official position or relative character of the one bore an analogy to that of the other; and this the apostle still further illustrates by showing

that, as the conduct of the one has had results which extend beyond himself to others connected with him, so had the conduct of the other; and that as the results flowing from Christ's work are for the acquittal and redemption of His people, so those flowing from Adam are for the condemnation and destruction of those connected with him. With this stands closely connected Paul's allusion to the subject in the other passage referred to. In this passage Paul styles Adam and Christ the *first* and *second* man. Now, as he cannot intend by this that Christ was second to Adam either in order of time or dignity, he must intend to convey the idea that Adam and Christ sustain a character peculiar to these two, in which they appeared successively, Adam first and Christ second, and in which they *alone* appeared. Now the character peculiar to Christ, as we know from the whole of the New Testament, was the character of a public head or representative, in virtue of whose obedience those connected with Him are constituted righteous. It follows that if the position of Adam was the same, *mutatis mutandis*, with that of Christ, he must have occupied the place of one through whose sin all connected with him were constituted guilty or under condemnation.

On these grounds we may set it down as an ascertained truth of Scripture, that the sin of Adam is somehow connected causally with the sin of men universally. We have yet to inquire of *what kind* this connection is; in other words, how it is that Adam's sin has become the source of sin to the race.

### iii. *The Connection of Adam's Sin with that of the Race.*

To this inquiry different answers have been returned, the chief of which I shall endeavour to classify and state. They fall into two great classes, according as the effects of Adam's sin on his posterity are viewed as *Natural* or *Penal*.

(i.) Of the first there is—

1. The *Pelagian Hypothesis*. This, though bearing the name of Pelagius (Morgan?), a British monk of the fifth century, found its most logical expounder and defender in Cœlestius, a pupil and friend of Pelagius. According to this hypothesis, no evil result flows to Adam's posterity from his

sin, except that which is inseparable from their being born into a world in which sin and misery already are ; there is no penalty to which they are exposed, no *vitium originis* under which they suffer.<sup>1</sup>

2. The *Arminian* or *Remonstrant Hypothesis*. According to this, Adam is only the remote source of that natural propensity to sin which all men exhibit, the immediate source being each man's parents ; so that sinfulness is propagated from Adam just as any other disease, defect, or morbid quality might be, the connection of mankind with him being simply that of natural descent. Death also comes on all men from Adam, not as a penal infliction, but simply as a natural inheritance.

It is, however, hardly just to Arminius to connect this opinion with his name ; for, so far as he gave utterance to his views on the subject, he seems to have held that the consequences of Adam's sin to his posterity were *penal*. "Original sin," says he, "is not that actual sin by which Adam transgressed the law concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and on account of which we have all been constituted sinners, and rendered (*rei*) obnoxious or liable to death and condemnation."<sup>2</sup> But his followers of the Remonstrant party are very distinct in their announcement of the doctrine above imputed to them. Thus Limborch : "Mors hæc non habet rationem pœnæ propriæ dictæ in posteris ; sed est naturalis tantum moriendi necessitas, ab Adamo, mortis pœna punito in ipsos derivata." "Effectum peccati Adami in posteris est impuritas quædam naturalis, quæ tamen non est peccatum

<sup>1</sup> In the list of tenets for which Pelagius was condemned by the Council at Carthage in 412, there are the following bearing on the subject before us. He taught, "Adamum mortalem factum, qui, sive peccaret sive non peccaret, fuisset moriturus ;" that "peccatum Adæ ipsum solum læsit, et non humanum genus ;" that "Infantes, qui nascuntur, in eo statu sunt in quo Adamus fuit ante prevaricationem." It would appear that Pelagius himself thought his disciple went too far when he asserted that no harm had come to the race from Adam's sin : "Ipse dicit non tantum primo homini, sed etiam humano generi primum illud obfuisse peccatum, non propagine sed exemplo" (Augustine, *De Pecc. Orig.* c. xv.). He held, however, strenuously "ut sine virtute ita et sine vitio procreamur, atque ante actionem propriæ voluntatis id solum in homine est quod Deus condidit" (*ibid.* c. xiii.). See Noris's *Histor. Pelagiana*, etc.; Wiggers, *Versuch ein. Pragmat. Darstellung des Augustinismus und Pelagianismus*; Neander's *Church History*, iv. 313-322, Eng. transl.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, by Nicholls, ii. 375, 717.

proprie dictum ;” and again, “fatemur infantes nasci minus puros quam Adamus fuit creatus, et cum quadam propensione ad peccandum : illam autem habent non tam ab Adamo quam a proximis parentibus.”<sup>1</sup> Adam is thus only the remote source of man’s natural propensity to sin : to each man his parents are the immediate source, just as some remote ancestor may have introduced a disease into his family. but which afflicts each man only through his parents.

(ii.) The second class of answers which have been given to the question as to how Adam’s sin has become the source of sin to the race, embrace those who hold that the effects of his sin upon men are *penal*. These fall into two sub-classes, according as they retain or reject the doctrine of imputation.

1. We begin with the latter, under which we include the—

(1.) *View of some Socinians*. For the most part, the Socinians hold the view of Pelagius on this subject ; but some, and among them F. Socinus himself, hold that in consequence of Adam’s sin men are penally liable to death, not from any mortal effect in the sin itself, nor that man was created at first naturally immortal, but that in consequence of Adam’s sin his posterity have come penally under the actual power of death, to which naturally they are liable, but from which they would otherwise have been protected.<sup>2</sup>

(2.) *Identification Hypothesis*. According to this, Adam’s descendants are held to have been so identified with him that they sinned his sin, are guilty of his guilt, and fell in his fall. By some who use this language nothing more seems to be intended than that, as the apostle says, Levi paid tithes in Abraham, for he was in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him ; so the race sinned with Adam in the sense that they are involved in the consequences of his sin ; and it may be doubted whether any of those who have spoken as if they meant to identify the race with Adam in

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Christ.*, Bk. iii. c. iii. sec. 1, 4. See also Whitby, *De Imputatione Peccati*, and *Comment. on Rom. v.* ; Adam Clarke, *Comment. on Rom. v.*

<sup>2</sup> “Concludimus . . . ex peccato illo primi parentis nullam labem aut gravitatem universo generis humani necessario ingenitum esse, nec aliud malum exprimo illo delicto ad posteros omnes necessario manasse quam moriendi omnimodum necessitatem, non quidem ex ipsius delicti vi, sed quia cum jam homo natura mortalis est.” F. Socinus, *Prælect. c. iv.* Comp. Taylor, *Doct. of Orig. Sin*, Part I. pp. 51-55 ; *Par. on Rom. v. 12.*



his act of sinning, really intend their words to be taken for what they express. Their language, however, is such that we feel constrained to assign the opinion it utters a place in this scheme, and for want of a better name we have called it the Identification hypothesis.

“Manifestum est alia esse propria cuique peccata . . . aliud hoc unum in quo omnes peccaverunt, quando omnes ille unus homo fuerunt.”<sup>1</sup> “Quia [Adam] . . . per liberum arbitrium Deum deseruit justum iudicium Dei expertus est, ut cum tota sua stirpe quæ in illo adhuc posita tota cum illo peccaverunt, damnaretur.”<sup>2</sup> “Ut cum omnes posterī ex primo parente ceu ex radice ortum suum trahunt generis humani universitas cum stirpe non aliter quam unicum aliquod totum, sive unica massa considerari potest, ut non sit aliquid a stirpe diversum, et non aliter ab ea differunt posterī ac rami ab arbore. Ex quibus facile patet quo modo stirpe peccante omne illud quod ab ea descendit et cum ea aliquod totum efficit, etiam peccasse iudicari possit, cum a stirpe non differat sed cum ea unum sit.”<sup>3</sup>

(3.) Hypothesis of a *Vitium Originis*. In the opinion of many the effect of Adam’s sin on his posterity as a penalty was to poison, pollute, vitiate their moral nature, or so to injure it that the lower propensities became strengthened against the higher powers, and thus man enters the world not only a fallen, but a positively depraved being.

“Ille in quo omnes moriuntur præter quod eis qui præceptum Domini voluntate transgrediuntur imitationis exemplum est, occulta etiam tabe carnalis concupiscentia suæ tabificavit in se omnes de sua stirpe venientes.”<sup>4</sup>

Some, whilst they repudiate this notion, that a positively vitiated nature has been entailed on men by Adam’s sin, yet think that an increased susceptibility to evil has thence resulted in the race, or that his descendants have received such dispositions and affections as greatly incline them to yield to those inducements to sin in the world in which they are placed.” Some have gone the length of supposing the

<sup>1</sup> Augustin, *De Pecc. Mer. et Remiss.*, i. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *De Corrupt. et Gratia*, c. x.

<sup>3</sup> Stapfer, *Theol. Polem.*, i. p. 236.

<sup>4</sup> *De Pecc. Mer. et Remiss.*, i. 9.

<sup>5</sup> See Moses Stuart, *Comment. on Rom.*, v. 19.

forbidden fruit possessed a lethiferous and morally vitiating power, which has been transfused into the race by natural descent, and so has brought all under the power of depravity and death.<sup>1</sup>

Having stated the various opinions on the connection between Adam's sin and the race which has sprung from him, held by those who believe that the effects of that sin to men are *natural*, and by those who, though holding them to be *penal*, yet reject the doctrine of imputation, we now come to consider the views of imputation held by those who accept that doctrine.

2. The term Imputation, though of frequent use in systematic theology, like many other terms similarly employed, does not occur in Scripture. The cognate verb, however, is frequently used; and it is possible that the ideas intended to be conveyed by the term may be taught in Scripture, though the word itself is not to be found there. I propose therefore, in the first instance, to examine the usage of the *verb* in those passages in which it occurs, so as to obtain a just view of the ideas it is employed by the sacred writers to express; I shall then state the doctrine of imputation as held by systematic divines of different schools; and, in fine, I shall attempt to determine how far this doctrine is, in its various modifications, sanctioned and sustained by the word of God,—the only sure criterion by which theological opinion can be tested, the *Lapis Lydius* by which alone any dogma can be proved genuine and precious.

(1.) The English verb “impute,” in our version, is represented in the original texts principally by the Hebrew verb חָשַׁב in the O. T., and by the Greek verb λογίζομαι in the LXX. and the N. T. In one passage (1 Sam. xxii. 15) where our version gives “impute,” we have in the Hebrew a part of the verb נָחַם, “to put, place, or lay;” and with this verb, which frequently occurs elsewhere in similar connections where it is variously rendered in our version, we shall commence our examination. Take the following instances: Josh. ix. 24, “their blood shall be laid upon Abimelech;” Deut. xxii. 8, “that thou bring not blood upon thine house;” ver. 17, “and he hath given occasion against her;” Job

<sup>1</sup> See Knapp's *Christian Theology*, p. 239 ff.

iv. 18, "and His angels He charged with folly." In all these passages, the meaning of the word, though it is differently translated, is substantially the same. Blood is laid upon a man when he is made to bear the blame of shedding it, and is dealt with accordingly; so blood is brought on a house when a fatal accident, occasioned by its being insufficiently built, is held to be equivalent to an intentional offence on the part of the proprietor, and he is consequently made to bear the blame and pay the penalty of such offence; occasion is given against a person when something is laid to his charge which involves blame and exposes to suffering as a penal consequence; and beings are charged with any defect or crime when they are held blameworthy, or unworthy of commendation on account of it, and are treated accordingly. These usages of the verb *שׁוּב* in such connections all involve the same idea, that of holding a person to the penal or, at least, painful consequences of a certain act or state for which he is held to be blameworthy. We may infer, therefore, that in the passage where the verb, with an exactly analogous construction in the original, is rendered in our version "impute," this term has probably the same signification. And so we find it to be. It is Abimelech who, addressing Saul in that passage, says in reference to David's having been sheltered and aided by him, "Let not the king impute anything to his servant." The meaning plainly is, "Do not blame me and expose me to punishment for what has happened;" and the reason he assigns is, partly that he did not do what was laid to his charge, and partly that what he did for David was done in ignorance of his being in arms against Saul. To "impute," then, in this case is to adjudge blame to a man, and decree punishment on him for offences of which he is held to have been guilty; and not to impute is to exempt him from blame and punishment on the ground that he has either not committed the offence, or done it in such a way as to be morally blameless.

Let us now consider the usage of the verb *חָשַׁב*, which is commonly rendered in our version by "impute."

According to Fürst, whose etymological renderings are usually very trustworthy, this word means primarily "to

bind;" hence as all thought is a putting of two or more notions together so as to arrive at a judgment, it came to signify "to think," and so it is frequently used in Scripture. Further, as all thought is a judgment, it came to denote the thinking, accounting, or declaring one thing to be another, a man to be so and so, or to have such and such qualities or characteristics. Hence, by a natural transition, it came to express the attributing or imputing such to a man; then, attributing to a man that by which such qualities are caused or produced; and finally, by the treating of a man, to whom anything is imputed, accordingly. As illustrative of this class of usages we adduce the following instances:—(1) Where it simply denotes the ascribing to a person of a certain quality or condition; 2 Sam. xix. 19: "Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me," where Shinei, confessing what he had done against David, asks him not to ascribe to him the iniquity of that conduct, but to pass him by and treat him as if his conduct had not been iniquitous. So also Ps. xxxii. 2: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity (לֹא יִחַשֵׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עֲוֹן)," *i.e.* to whom Jehovah does not ascribe iniquity for what he has done, so as to hold him guilty and liable to punishment. (2) Where it denotes the ascribing to a person of something that produces a certain quality, though that quality does not actually belong to him. Lev. xvii. 4: "Blood shall be imputed unto that man;" *i.e.* the guilt which the shedding of blood causes shall be ascribed to that man; he shall be held guilty of murder, and treated accordingly, —that man shall be cut off from among his people. Num. xviii. 27: "And this your heave-offering shall be reckoned (imputed, נִחַשֵׁב) unto you as though it were the corn of the thrashing-floor, and as the fulness of the winepress," where the quality that would result from the presenting of the whole of the Israelites' produce to God is held to belong to him, though he presents only a tithe of it as a heave-offering; as it is afterwards expressed, "they shall bear no sin by reason of it, when they have heaved from it the best of it;" by offering this they were dealt with as if they had consecrated the whole. Under this head fall such passages as Gen. xv. 6: "And he believed in God;

and He counted it to him (imputed it to him, יִיטְבֶהּ לוֹ) for (or as) righteousness;” and Ps. cvi. 31: “And that was counted unto him (Phinehas) for righteousness,” etc. (וַתִּחַשְׁבֶּה לּוֹ לְצִדִּיקָה). These passages are best understood in connection with such a passage as Deut. vi. 25: “And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God as He hath commanded us.” Here is laid down a principle of the divine administration. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and will reward it. Now this righteousness is obtained normally by the keeping of His commandments. But in the case of Abraham his simple trust in God, and in the case of Phinehas his prompt and vigorous vindication of the divine authority, were held as tantamount to a meritorious obedience, and were consequently followed by the reward which God bestows on this.

The Greek equivalent to חַשַׁב is λογίζομαι, and by this term is the former rendered by the LXX. in all the passages I have quoted. In the N. T. it occurs repeatedly in the writings of Paul. In Rom. iv. 3 we have a quotation of Gen. xv. 6, and in the 8th verse of that chapter a quotation of Ps. xxxii. 2. In the intermediate verses Paul repeatedly uses the verb λογίζομαι, and in our version it is sometimes translated “count,” sometimes “reckon,” and sometimes “impute.” The meaning, however, is in every case substantially the same. The apostle is showing that justification is not of works but of grace, and he argues from the case of Abraham that it is so. Abraham had found righteousness with God. How? By works? No; for then would he have ground for boasting before God, inasmuch as there would then have been ascribed to him merit, and the reward would have been of right or debt, and not of favour. Abraham obtained righteousness, *i.e.* a legal, meritorious claim to blessing, solely by favour; and how was this accomplished? By God’s taking an act of Abraham’s which had no legal merit in it whatever, and holding it as if it had, *i.e.* He gave Abraham blessing on the ground of what in itself gave him no title or claim to blessing. This Paul calls imputing righteousness to him; and in the same sense he explains David’s expression. His doctrine seems to be: Righteousness entitles a man to blessing; but God, in order to deal

graciously with man, who is destitute of righteousness, takes that which is not in itself righteousness, and holds it as equivalent in legal claim to righteousness, and on that ground gives blessing. So, on the other hand, when he speaks of God as not imputing sin, he plainly means that God does not ascribe to a man the quality or character which sin gives to a man,—in other words, regards and treats him as if that quality did not belong to him. Imputation is thus in Paul's sense the ascribing to a man of a position, quality, or title to which he has no real claim; and non-imputation is the ignoring or non-recognition of a quality, liability, or character that does belong to him. The *grounds* of imputation and the *effects* of imputation may differ in different cases; but the fundamental idea of the thing itself is the same in all, and is such as I have just expressed.

Except for illustration, it is unnecessary to adduce such a usage of the verb as we have in 1 Cor. xiii. 5, when the apostle says of Agape, “*οὐ λογίζεται το κακόν*” The sense here is not as our version gives it, “thinketh no evil,” but “imputeth no evil,” *i.e.* does not ascribe to a man the quality of evil when that does not really belong to him as an evil doer; or does not treat an evil-doer as he actually deserves, does not hold his evil against him, but forgives it. This latter meaning seems the preferable one. It is that given by Chrysostom and Theodoret, and followed by Beza, Rückert, Meyer, and others. It is undeniably in this sense that the apostle uses the verb in 2 Tim. iv. 16, when, speaking of the conduct of some who had treated him unworthily, he says, “*μὴ αὐτοῖς λογισθῇ*” “may it not be imputed to them,” *i.e.* as our version gives it, “may this [their misconduct to me] not be laid to their charge;” may it not be held as attaching to them a quality such as shall bring penalty upon them.

The only other word used in the N. T. besides *λογίζομαι* in the sense of “imputing” is *ἐλλογεω*. This word, rarely used in the classics, occurs only twice in the apostolic writings, Rom. v. 13 and Philemon, verse 18. In the former, where Paul says, “Sin is not imputed when there is no law,” we have the word used plainly in the same sense as that in which he uses *λογίζομαι* in the 4th chapter: Whatever

be a man's conduct, the quality of guilt and consequent liability to penal consequences cannot be ascribed to him save where his conduct is a violation of law. In the latter passage the usage is somewhat different, and hence the passage is an important one for our present purpose. In writing to Philemon, Paul says (ver. 18), concerning Onesimus, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account (τουτο εμοι ελλογει)." Here the meaning plainly is, "Let something belonging to him be ascribed to me, and exact of me the corresponding result, so that he may go free." No stress can be laid on the fact that the verb here is a part of ελλογεω, not of λογίζομαι, for the two are perfectly synonymous; or, if there be any difference, it can only be expressed thus, that while λογίζομαι is used much more frequently than ελλογέω, and used under different shades of meaning, ελλογεω is used only in the sense of imputing. That Paul regarded them as synonymous, the passage just cited from Rom. v. 13 clearly shows.

Having collated and sifted our instances, we are now in circumstances to declare the sense in which the sacred writers speak of imputation or imputing. In the general, it means the ascribing to an individual of a certain quality, either involving exposure to a penalty or entitling to a privilege, as the case may be. More specifically, and in view of the *grounds* on which the ascription is made, it signifies one of three acts:—(1) The act of ascribing to a man a quality which really belongs to him, on the ground that he is or has done something from which that quality accrues; or (2) The act of ascribing to a man a quality which does not belong to him, on the ground that he is or has done something which is held as equivalent to what would have conferred on him that quality; or (3) (in the singular case in the Epistle to Philemon) The act of ascribing to a man a quality which does not belong to him, on the ground that it belongs to another, and is transferred to the former from the latter for the advantage of the latter. These have been technically distinguished in various ways. The first has been called *imputatio moralis, sive facti*, because in it the actual doer of a deed is held to have done it *sua sponte*, and consequently to have merited the penalty or reward attached to it; whilst

the second and third have been denominated in contradistinction from this *imputatio regalis, sive juris*, because in them a privilege is conferred or a penalty adjudged by a simple act of regal or rectoral administration. In the former case, also, it is said that the word imputation is taken *improperly*, *i.e.* out of its just meaning, whilst in the latter it is said to be used *properly*. On these distinctions of appellation, however, it does not seem necessary to dwell.

(2.) I pass on now, therefore, to the second branch of my inquiry, under which it was proposed to state the doctrine of imputation as held by systematic divines. This will be best elicited by viewing it in connection with those special cases to which they have applied the term "imputation."

*a.* Theologians speak of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, the race of mankind as such. Thus, to begin with the divines of the Lutheran Church, Hollaz says: "The first sin of Adam . . . is imputed for blame and penalty to all his posterity truly, and by the just judgment of God."<sup>1</sup> Quenstedt says: "The fall of Adam, meaning thereby precisely his transgression in the matter of the forbidden tree, becomes ours by imputation alone." Reinhard sums up the doctrine of the older Lutheran Church as follows: "The imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity is that judgment of God by which Adam's first sin is turned to the faultiness of all men."<sup>2</sup> By most later divines of the Lutheran Church the dogma is repudiated. So Doderlein, Reinhard, Hahn, Bretschneider, Wegscheider, Ammon, etc.

In the Reformed Church the doctrine has found almost universal acceptance. Calvin, both in his *Institutes* and in his *Commentaries*, repeatedly asserts it: "All can become guilty by the sin of one," says he, "only by the imputation of that sin."<sup>3</sup> Beza says on Rom. v. 12: "The apostle is treating in this passage of the propagation of guilt, in contrast with which the imputation of the obedience of Christ is set forth. Hence it follows that that guilt which precedes corruption is by the imputation of Adam's disobedience; as the remission of sins and the abolition of guilt is by the imputation of the obedience of Christ." Zanchius: "We

<sup>1</sup> *Exam. Theol.*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Theol. Didact.* ii. 53.

<sup>3</sup> *Dogmatik*, § 81.

<sup>4</sup> *Instit.*, ii. 1.



say that that disobedience of Adam which was not ours in act yet as to the fault and guilt, became ours by imputation.”<sup>1</sup> Turretine: “The question is whether the actual sin of Adam is so imputed in reality to all that on account of it they are held guilty, or at least are deemed deserving of punishment.”<sup>2</sup> Marckius: “The cause of this corruption is the fault of Adam imputed to his posterity, as it is said in one all have sinned, and by the disobedience of one have many been constituted sinners.”<sup>3</sup>

The following passage from Dr. Payne sets forth very clearly the doctrine on this subject held by many modern divines: “The imputation of Adam’s sin to the race is not otherwise to be regarded than as the legal visitation upon the race of the consequences of that sin.”<sup>4</sup>

b. Theologians speak of the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of His righteousness to us. By the former, they mean that Christ, though Himself sinless, was regarded and treated as if He had committed the sins of the human race; and by the latter, they mean that we are regarded as having ourselves fulfilled the law and endured the penalty of sin, in consequence of Christ having done so. I shall quote here only the statement of Turretine: “Paul says that Christ was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, *i.e.* as the sins whereby we have violated the law are imputed to Christ, so the actions of righteousness by which He fulfilled it for us are imputed to us.”<sup>5</sup> This latter part of the subject he more fully states elsewhere thus: “When, then, we say that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us for justification, and that we, by that imputed righteousness, are just before God, . . . we mean nothing else than that the obedience of Christ, rendered to God the Father in our name, is so put to our account by God that it is really deemed ours, and that it is the one and sole righteousness on account of which, and by the merit of which, we are absolved from the guilt of our sins and obtain right to life.”<sup>6</sup>

These passages may suffice to show in what sense the term imputation is used by theologians. With them it means the

<sup>1</sup> *De Redemptione*, i.

<sup>3</sup> *Medulla*, xv. § 31.

<sup>5</sup> *Loc.* xiv. qu. 13, § 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Loc.* ix. qu. 9, § 9.

<sup>4</sup> *On Original Sin*, p. 126.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* xvi. qu. 3, § 9.

ascribing to a person of a quality, with its attendant consequences, beneficial or penal, which does not properly belong to him, and which he has done nothing directly to acquire, but which has been acquired by another and transferred to him.

It will be seen at once that there is a material difference between the sense thus attached to imputation and that in which it is commonly used in Scripture. In seeking to determine precisely this difference, it is necessary to keep in view the distinction between the *act* of imputation and the *ground* of imputation. In respect of the former, the imputation of theology does not essentially differ from that of Scripture; in both cases (save where the imputation is an *imputatio facti* and as such *impropria*) it is an ascribing to a party of a quality which does not actually belong to him. But in respect of the latter, the only instance in Scripture which bears analogy to the imputation of theology is that of Paul when he asks the debt of Onesimus to be imputed to him; and even this case is not wholly analogous, for the ground of imputation here is Paul's voluntary susception on himself of the indebtedness of Onesimus, whereas in the cases supposed by theologians, the ground of imputation is found in some extraneous arrangement or constitution existing independent of the spontaneous volition of the parties. The imputation of man's sins to the Saviour may seem an exception to this, inasmuch as He undertook that burden voluntarily; but it is only in appearance that this is an exception, for our Lord's voluntariness, in this respect, is never represented in Scripture as *spontaneous*, but always as a cheerful and rejoicing submission to the will, the scheme, the constituted plan of the Father.

(3.) We have now to inquire how far this theological doctrine of imputation is sanctioned in its doctrine by Scripture. We have seen that in form it has little or no sanction; but this does not prove that it is not really taught there, for a theological dogma may be substantially in Scripture, though the terms used to express it may not be found there at all, or found expressing something different. We have to ask now, then, not whether the *word* imputation, as used by theologians, is legitimately used by them, but whether the *thing* that word

is used to express is in accordance with Scripture. And here I shall confine myself to the one point of the imputation to mankind of Adam's sin, as that is the subject for the sake of which I have entered on this disquisition.

Theologians say that the first sin of the first man has been imputed to all his posterity: What do they intend this phraseology to convey? The answer to this question brings before us the existence of a diversity of doctrine among theologians on this head.

By all who hold the doctrine of imputation in any sense, it is maintained that men universally are involved in the consequences of Adam's sin; but there is difference of opinion, both as to the nature of these consequences, and as to the ground on which the imputation of them to the race rests. As respects the consequences, some hold that it is merely the temporal consequences of Adam's sin that have descended to his posterity; while others maintain that men are involved also and primarily in the spiritual consequences; and within the latter class opinions range from the holding that all men actually sinned in Adam, in the sense of being guilty of his sin and personally liable to all the penal consequences thereof, to the holding that only certain privative results have ensued to the race from Adam's guilt, such as the want of positive righteousness, and of the advantages Adam enjoyed in Paradise for pursuing a holy and happy course. There are differences of opinion also as to whether the consequences to mankind of Adam's sin are purely legal or purely moral, or a union of both; some contending that it is merely certain chartered blessings that we have lost, certain legal disadvantages under which we have been brought by the sin of Adam; others, that it is a moral vitiosity of nature that has been thereby entailed on us; and others, that through the sin of Adam all men have become both legally proscribed and morally corrupt. Then, as to the *ground* of imputation, some find that in a federal constitution established by God, in which Adam represented and acted for the race, so that all his posterity are involved in the consequences of his act on the juridical principle "*quod aliquis facit per alium facit per se*;" whilst others resolve the ground of imputation into the natural connection of Adam as the progenitor of mankind with his

posterity, to whom he has transmitted character and condition by a natural and unavoidable process.

In the above digest I have taken no notice of the doctrine of those who teach that God's imputation to mankind of Adam's sin is simply His determination to deal with all men who sin as He dealt with the author of the first sin ; for this, though dignified by theologians with the title of *Imputatio metaphysica*, is in reality no imputation at all, but a mere evasion of the whole subject under a specious name.

a. Disregarding minor and unessential differences, the theory of imputation as applied to the existence of sin in our race, emerges in two principal forms—that of *Imputatio ad reatum*, and that of *Imputatio ad poenam*.

(a.) *Imputatio ad reatum*. By this is intended that men, the descendants of Adam, are regarded by God as lying under guilt and blame because of Adam's sin. This opinion does not necessarily involve what we may call the identification hypothesis, according to which all men are held to have been so identified with Adam that they sinned his sin, are guilty of his guilt, and fell in his fall. It may be doubted, indeed, whether any man ever really held this opinion as literally construed, for it seems impossible to attach to it any intelligible meaning. At the same time some very able writers have expressed themselves as if they not only held this view, but deemed the holding of it essential to a just apprehension of the whole scheme of evangelical truth. Augustine, for instance, fluctuates between this and the opinion that Adam's sin reaches us not by imputation, but by the communication of an "occult infection (or poison) of carnal concupiscence," which leads all to sin ; or rather, perhaps, I should say, Augustine held both opinions, regarding Adam's sin as having not only vitiated our nature, but also entailed on us guilt. It is his doctrine on the latter of these alone that we are now concerned with, and here such statements as the following meet us in his writings: "Because he [Adam] in the exercise of his free will deserted God, he experienced the just judgment of God to be condemned with his whole race, which as yet lying wholly in him sinned with him."<sup>1</sup> What follows enunciates this view still more explicitly: "In whom

<sup>1</sup> *De Correptione et Gratia*, c. 10.

[Adam] all have sinned, since all were that one man (*omnes ille unus homo fuerunt*)."<sup>1</sup> The following is Stapfer's statement of what he regarded as the orthodox doctrine on this head: "The root having sinned, all that descends from it and with it constitutes one whole may also be judged to have sinned, since it is not different from the root, but one with it."<sup>2</sup> But by no one, perhaps, has this view been more strongly stated than by Mr. Haldane: "The sin of Adam," says he, "was ours, as really and truly so as it was the sin of Adam himself; so that every believer is bound to acknowledge and confess that he is guilty of Adam's sin."<sup>3</sup>

Under such extreme views the idea of imputation in its proper theologic sense disappears. It is no longer Adam's sin that is imputed to us but our own sin, in some mysterious way committed not by us but by our first parent, which is held against us. Of such a doctrine taken thus literally, it may suffice at present to say that such an identification of the race with the first man is in the nature of things impossible, that to affirm that Adam's sin was ours in the same sense as it was his is simply absurd, and that to confess ourselves guilty of a sin which we know we did not commit, is alike contrary to reason and conscience, to truth and good morals.

Among the more reasonable upholders of the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's guilt to his posterity this language is used to convey the idea that God, on account of Adam's sin, holds all men *as if* they had themselves committed that sin, *i.e.* holds them guilty and deserving of punishment. Along with this it is also generally held that men, through this connection with Adam, are universally partakers of a vitiated moral nature. This opinion is expressed thus in the Confession of the Westminster Assembly: "Our first parents being the root of all mankind, the guilt of their sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation." This may be regarded as the prevailing opinion of modern Calvinists.

This is what has been called *Immediate Imputation*. There is, however, a *mediate* imputation held by many excellent

<sup>1</sup> *De Peccat. Mer. et Remiss.*, i. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Theol. Polem.*, i. p. 236.

<sup>3</sup> *Comment. on Romans*, vol. i. p. 440.

writers, according to which man, inheriting from Adam a fallen and corrupt nature, commences his moral existence by appropriating to himself, as it were, Adam's sin, in other words, actually sinning in the same way as he sinned, by rebellion against God, and that all men thus incur the same guilt as he, and the same penalty as was pronounced on him. This opinion is advocated by Venema in his valuable *Institutes of Theology* (pp. 519–526). Dwight also favours it (*Theology*, Sermon 32). Dr. Wardlaw, who advocates the doctrine of immediate imputation, also advocates this as not incompatible with the other (*Systematic Theology*, ii. p. 267). The only remark which I would offer at present on this doctrine is, that whether it expresses a truth or not, it is improperly offered as being a form of the doctrine of imputation. Mediate imputation, as above explained, is no imputation at all in the sense in which that term is used by theologians. The whole amount of guilt and blame which it supposes to attach to any individual is derived from his own sin, and his connection with Adam is adduced simply as accounting for the fact of his possessing a nature that leads him to sin. This is not in any sense the imputation to him of Adam's guilt—it is simply the accounting for his individual depravity, and ascribing that to his connection with the first man. The imputation of guilt necessarily involves the holding of the party in some sense as legally involved in the blame and punishment of the act, the guilt of which is imputed to him.

(b) *Imputatio ad pœnam*. According to this view, God does not impute guilt to men on account of their first parents' transgression, nor does He send men into the world with a positively vitiated nature, but He treats them penally in consequence of Adam's sin, as if they had committed it, by withholding from them all those supernatural gifts and chartered blessings which Adam enjoyed, the consequence of which is that they, through the native operation of their own lusts and passions, fall under the power of sin, and so become personally guilty before God. This is the view advocated by Dr. Payne in his able work on *Original Sin*. According to him, Adam's transgression "rendered us liable to the loss of that sovereign and efficacious influence without which life in either sense of the term has never been known to exist"

(p. 108). In another place he thus explains the phrase "chartered blessings," by which he describes the benefits which Adam lost by his sin: They are "blessings which God was not bound in equity to bestow and to continue, —blessings which had their exclusive source in Divine Sovereignty, which might, of course, be withdrawn at any time, and in any way that should seem meet to God Himself, of which the continued and permanent enjoyment might be suspended on any conditions He should see fit to appoint" (pp. 48, 49). This is substantially the view of Edwards, so far at least as imputation is concerned; though he differs from Dr. Payne in holding with Augustine, that a positive vitiosity of nature has been derived from Adam to his posterity. It is somewhat singular (and the fact has not been noticed, so far as I am aware) that the opinion advocated by Dr. Payne is almost identical with that advanced by Bellarmine as the doctrine of the Romish Church: "The penalty, which properly corresponds as its counterpart to the first sin, was the loss of original righteousness, and of the supernatural gifts with which God had endowed our nature. . . . Corruption of nature flowed not from the want of any gift, nor from the accession of any evil quality, but solely from the loss of supernatural gifts, on account of the sin of Adam." The "supernatural gifts" of the Romish divine answer to the "chartered blessings" of Dr. Payne. Among the schoolmen, the views of Anselm and the Scotists approximated to that expressed by Bellarmine, whilst Aquinas sustained the doctrine of Augustine.

b. In proceeding to test these views by the teaching of Scripture, there are two remarks of a preliminary nature which I would offer. The first is, that as by the supposition it was through Adam's sin that evil came upon his posterity, the nature and degree of that evil as affecting them cannot essentially differ from the evil he brought on himself by his sin; it must be evil of the same kind as came on him, and not greater in degree than that. This seems to flow necessarily out of the very idea of it, as evil resulting from his fall. The second remark I would make is, that as what was purely personal to Adam could not in any judicial way descend to his posterity, we must look to something public

and legal in his relation to them as the source of the transmission from him to them of legal disabilities.

These remarks seem to indicate the course of inquiry which it behoves us to pursue in order to obtain satisfaction on the point now before us. We have, first, to ascertain what penalty Adam brought on himself by his sin; we have then to consider in what capacity he acted when this penalty was incurred by him; and we have, in fine, to determine how and to what extent his posterity suffer in consequence of their relation to him. To facilitate our investigation, I shall propose a series of questions to which I shall endeavour to find the just Biblical answer.

(a.) What was Adam's position in Paradise as respects its bearing on the question now before us? Now, in answer to this, I think the one point that we are concerned with is his being subjected to a positive test of obedience, on his meeting and satisfying which depended his continuance in that state in which he had been created. Much is often said in inquiries such as that in which we are engaged about the supernatural gifts and endowments with which Adam was invested in Paradise; and of late it has become customary in certain quarters to speak of these as chartered blessings. That Adam enjoyed in Paradise certain privileges and blessings of a peculiar kind cannot be denied; he had immunity from suffering, from the sight of moral evil, from the corrupting influence of evil example, and such like, and he enjoyed the favour of God and free intercourse with Him; and if it is these that are intended when chartered blessings are spoken of, there need be no dispute about the matter, though a phrase less liable to be misunderstood might with advantage have been used. But it is evident that the phrase is meant to convey the existence of privileges beyond these—privileges not arising out of man's condition and his natural relation to his Creator, but privileges conveyed by God's sovereign bounty to man, and of a supernatural kind. Now, in reference to this I feel constrained to ask, On what statement of Scripture is the assertion founded that Adam possessed any supernatural gifts or chartered blessings in Paradise? I confess I can find none. It is true that Adam was made in the image and likeness of God, and I freely



admit that that expression includes moral as well as intellectual resemblance to God—purity as well as intelligence; nor can we suppose, even apart from this, that from the good and holy aught but a good and holy being could immediately proceed. But moral strength is a matter of degree, and we cannot, I think, suppose that it was possessed in any very high degree by our first parents. If we apply to them the best test of moral strength with which we are acquainted, viz. the power to resist temptation, we must pronounce their moral strength very small—not much beyond that of a child; for the temptation under which they fell was about the smallest to which an intelligent agent could be exposed. I cannot, therefore, regard them as having very extraordinary or supernatural gifts. Had they possessed the moral strength of even any of us, they surely would have stood a longer siege, and some severer assaults would have been necessary before they capitulated to the foe. They were good and holy simply because they had been made so, and knew nothing else; but they could not have possessed this quality in any high—not to say supernatural—degree, or they would have successfully resisted the slight trial to which they were exposed.

I may here glance, in passing, at Dr. Payne's statement as to the special or chief of those blessings to which he has applied the term "chartered." He signalizes as one the presence in Adam of the Divine Spirit, and the influence of that Divine Agent on Adam's mind, whereby he was raised to a high degree of holiness and purity. Now, it seems to me strange that it did not occur to so acute a thinker to ask, If this boon was possessed by Adam, how came Adam to fall? According to Dr. Payne's theory, it was the loss of this which constituted the principal effect of Adam's fall, and the consequent absence of this which is the cause of sin to Adam's posterity. We sin, he tells us, because we *want*, through Adam's fault, this union of the soul with God, without which man cannot live so as to please God. But if the want of this causes us to sin, the presence of this would keep us from sin; for nothing can be more evident than that if the want of anything causes a particular result, the removal of that want would prevent that result. But Adam

had this blessing, according to Dr. Payne, for this constituted, in his view, the supreme boon of Paradise. How, then, came Adam to sin at all? If he possessed that, the want of which is the sole cause of sin, how came he to be a sinner? The conclusion is, I think, inevitable that Adam did not possess this so-called chartered blessing. To this conclusion the circumstance already noticed, viz. the ease with which our first parents were seduced into sin, adds strength. A soul in union with the Divine Spirit, and naturally holy, could not have yielded at so slight an attack of the tempter. Who of us would not stand in doubt of any man's having the Spirit of God in union with his soul, if he sank as readily under temptation as Adam did? And if we judge thus of men encompassed with infirmity and accustomed to sin, how much more must we judge so of one who thus fell when ignorant of sin, and surrounded by all the hallowed influences of a sinless world?

I am forced to conclude, then, that the common notion that Adam enjoyed in Paradise a supernatural degree of holiness and moral power, is a notion without solid foundation. I would further remark, however, that supposing this notion better founded than it is, it seems incompetent to bring such endowments into consideration in the question now before us. For whatever were the moral and spiritual excellences conferred on Adam, these were purely personal, and could have no bearing on his position as under trial, excepting as they may have increased his individual personal responsibility. The special feature of Adam's position, which it behoves us to keep in view, is his being placed under a positive prohibitory enactment, on his obedience to which his continuance in happiness depended. He was, of course, bound to keep every part of God's law, and *any* transgression of that law would have been followed by consequences of a penal kind to himself. So far as the history goes, however, it was only to the transgression of this law that the threatened penalty was attached, and we have no right to conclude that the *same* consequences which flowed from this would have flowed from any other breach of the divine law. It seems important to a just view of this whole subject that this should be kept distinctly in view, that it was not merely

because Adam sinned, but because he sinned in this particular case, by breaking this one prohibition, the appointed test of his obedience, that he fell and brought on his race so many evils.

(b.) Let us now ask, What was the consequence to Adam of his transgression? The history makes it very plain that a great, an immediate, and most calamitous change passed upon Adam after he had sinned. Without travelling beyond the record, or indulging in any speculative inferences, we may unhesitatingly assert that the following evils were incurred by Adam in consequence of his sin:—First, he fell under the divine displeasure, and incurred the penalty which had been denounced against disobedience, viz. *death*. Secondly, he came under the influence of distrust of God and want of reverence and love for God; as is evident from his hiding himself from God's presence, and from his sullen and almost insolent answers to God's questioning of him. Thirdly, he became subject to the power of the tempter—the serpent, the prince of darkness, who, having once acquired a victory over him, would ever after seek to use him as his thrall. This is evident from the nature of the promise of deliverance, which was in reality a promise that the serpent's persistent and persevering tyranny over man should ultimately be destroyed; the bruising of the serpent's head being not the destruction of Satan's person, but the destruction of his power over man.

Now of these evils that came on Adam, the only one that came on him directly, immediately, and exclusively, in consequence of his eating the forbidden fruit, was the first—viz. the penalty of death. This was the predicted and denounced penalty of transgression: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." His incurring death, therefore, was the direct and the only direct legal consequence of his sin. Other evils came upon him incidentally, and were the natural rather than the statutory effects of his transgression. They were therefore personal evils, not public disabilities, and cannot come into question as forming any part of what he entailed on his posterity.

But what are we to understand by the "death" which came upon Adam by his sin? In reply to this some have contended that it was only temporal death—the death of the

body ; whilst others with equal eagerness have contended that it was death in the most comprehensive sense—death temporal, spiritual, and eternal. I cannot help thinking that a great deal of ingenuity, and not a little temper, has been unprofitably expended on this discussion. If, instead of diverging into general speculation and debate, we keep close by the Mosaic narrative, I feel assured that we shall reach satisfaction by a shorter and surer process. From this narrative I gather, in the outset, and as a certain fact, that the penalty of death denounced against sin was one which our first parents immediately incurred. The words of the threatening are most precise : “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” According to the law, then, immediate death was the penalty to be inflicted on Adam if he ate the forbidden fruit. The law does not say, “In that day thou shalt *become* mortal, and so at some future period die ;” nor does it say, “Thou shalt then enter upon a state of progressive degradation, which shall ultimately culminate in eternal death ;” it says simply, “In that day thou shalt die.” We must believe, therefore, that Adam, having committed the forbidden deed, incurred the penalty actually threatened, and in that day did die—unless we would impute to God a trifling with His own edict which is incompatible with justice, or a carelessness of expression in the framing of His edict which is incompatible with the idea of a perfect law.

I am well aware of the attempts which have been made to show that the words “In the day thou eatest thereof” do not mean “in that very day,” but may receive an interpretation compatible with the supposition that a long interval might elapse between the commission of the sin and the suffering of the penalty ; but these attempts are for the most part of such a kind that it is impossible for any one who has been at all accustomed to a just method of interpreting Scriptures to treat them with respect. The only attempt to place this on an exegetical basis is that of those who affirm that had it been intended that Adam was to die on the very day that he broke the command, the words used would have been, not simply בַּיּוֹם, but בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא or בַּיּוֹם הַהוּאָ. This argument is advanced by Mr. Holden and adopted by Dr. Payne. It is founded, however, on a gross mistake—a double mistake ;

for, in the first place, it is not true that in order to express the idea of an event happening on that very day in which something else happened or might happen, the Hebrews never used the simple בַּיּוֹם; instances to the contrary are Lev. vii. 35; Isa. xi. 16; Lam. iii. 57; and, in the second place, it has been overlooked that in Gen. ii. 17, where we have the words of threatening, בַּיּוֹם is in construction with the verb אֵכָל, the expression being בַּיּוֹם אֵכָלְךָ, which is definite, and does not admit of the insertion of either הוּא or הָיָא. Besides, this argument is virtually given up by Dr. Payne in the very context in which he adduces it, for he goes on to say that the words of the threatening mean “instant and necessary exposure to the infliction of death.” According to this the words “in the day” are equivalent to “in the instant,” so that all the criticism expended on them to show that they cannot mean this is virtually rendered superfluous. What would have been more to the point would be to have shown that the words “thou shalt surely die” mean not “instant and certain death,” as they seem to do, but “instant and necessary *exposure to the infliction of death*,” as Dr. Payne says they mean. This neither he nor any one, so far as I am aware, has attempted.

Taking the narrative then as it stands, I feel constrained to believe that as God threatened Adam with instant and certain death in case of transgression, Adam did instantly die when he transgressed. And this may enable us to say with some degree of confidence what it was that under this penalty Adam incurred. The word “death” is used in Scripture in a variety of meanings; but instead of diverging into general speculation or inquiry on this head, if we are sure that the death Adam incurred was something that actually befell him, we have only to ask what *did* befall him to get an answer to our question. Now, on this point the history leaves us in no great uncertainty. Adam lost by his transgression (immediately and directly) all the privileges of Paradise, including immediate intercourse with God and the enjoyment of His favour and image; he was sent into a world covered with briars and thorns, and he was doomed to a life of pains and sorrows to be terminated by death. This was for one whose true life consisted in being like God and enjoying His favour

really to die. Here a real penalty was incurred, a real evil endured. The mere cessation of animal life is not necessarily an evil, any more than mere existence is necessarily a good. All depends on the state morally and physically in which the being exists; and as for man the only real good is to be at one with God, to have fellowship with Him, and to enjoy His favour and the happiness which that brings, to be deprived of these is for man to endure the sorest privation, is to be deprived of his true life, is, in the saddest sense, to die. Death in Scripture is used emphatically to designate a state the opposite of felicity, dignity, and purity, of which state the dissolution of the union of soul and body, and the return of the latter to the ruin and gloom of the grave, is the visible type. In the Epistle to the Romans the apostle puts the death which came as the consequence of Adam's sin in contrast with the grace or favour of God (v. 15), and with the gift of righteousness or acceptance with God (v. 17), and he represents it as the opposite of eternal life (vi. 23) obtained through Jesus Christ our Lord. In such a connection it would be absurd to restrict the term to mere natural decease. That is not death as opposed to righteousness, to the enjoyment of God's favour, and to eternal life through Christ. The death of which the apostle writes is that state of moral and physical dishonour, suffering, and decay which is the opposite of that state of holiness, dignity, and blessedness which Adam enjoyed whilst he lived in God's favour and obeyed His will. Into this state of death Adam entered when he sinned; on the very day on which he ate the forbidden fruit he died; he lost the divine favour; he became subject to evil, physical and moral; and he received into his frame the seeds of mortality, decay, and dissolution. This is the penalty of guilt; and this penalty Adam incurred by his transgression.

(c.) In what relation to his posterity did Adam stand whilst sustaining this probation and enduring this penalty? The reply to this is, That of federal head and representative, who appeared and acted not for himself alone, but for his posterity. It is true he was also their natural progenitor, and as such naturally transmitted to them certain qualities and conditions of a natural kind. Beyond such *natural* effects, however, his

relation to them as progenitor could not extend. Effects reaching them in consequence of his conduct as under a positive constitution, under a dispensation, could reach them only if in this condition he acted as their representative or covenant or dispensational head.

We may illustrate this by supposing the case of two men standing at the head of a family; both of whom have certain marked natural peculiarities, but one of whom has advantages which are personal though capable of being transferred, such, for instance, as wealth; while the other has advantages which he owes solely to his living under a certain constitution, such, for instance, as rank, titles, aristocratic privileges, which come to him solely in virtue of his being the subject of some specific arrangement or political system under which he lives. On comparing these two cases you will see at a glance that whilst both may and probably will transmit to their children their natural peculiarities, the former is at liberty to transmit any or all of his personal advantages as he pleases, or to alienate them from his children altogether; whilst the latter can transmit his advantages only if his position has been a representative one, only if he has held them in trust for his race, and in this case he cannot hinder them from descending to his family. A wealthy merchant may or may not make his children the heirs of his wealth; a titled nobleman cannot but transmit his dignities and privileges to his descendants, or if he should have forfeited these by misconduct he cannot but transmit to his posterity, however personally innocent, the degradation and forfeiture of privilege he has incurred. This difference arises solely from the one set of advantages being personal, whilst the other set is constitutional, and the party receiving or sustaining them bears a representative or federal character.

Applying this to the matter before us, it is easy to see that Adam could entail on his posterity his dispensational advantages or penalties (as the case came to be through his sin) only on the supposition that he sustained, whilst enjoying these advantages or receiving these penalties, a *representative* character. It comes, therefore, to be necessary to inquire whether there be any sufficient reason for believing that Adam bore such a character; and this can be

answered only by an examination of the statements of Scripture bearing on the subject.

There is one consideration, however, of a general kind which, before proceeding to examine passages, it is worth while to ponder. It cannot be denied that as the children of Adam we suffer disadvantages on account of his sin. However low we reduce the estimate of the evil which has come on us through his conduct, it cannot be denied that evil of some sort has come on us thereby. Even if we allow no more than, with Pelagius and Socinus, that the native mortality of man has thereby been suffered to come into operation, still, as this is an evil from which Adam was exempt in Paradise, it is thereby admitted that we are sufferers through his act. But if we suffer, whether it be in the way of privation or in the way of infliction in consequence of Adam's sin, this can be reconciled with equitable administration only on the supposition that Adam appeared and acted as our representative. If he did so, then, as all jurists allow, our suffering through his sin is perfectly equitable; it is a thing which, under a legal constitution, could not be avoided; the principle *quod facit per alium facit per se* covers it and justifies it. But it is otherwise if he was not our representative. We are, in that case, in no way involved in his doings, and have a right to be exempt from the penal consequences of them. It will not do to say, These come upon us naturally, as the diseased constitution of the drunkard descends to his child. The two cases are not parallel. The disease of the drunkard descends to his child because it *is* disease, not because his drunkenness is a sin. Had the position been that Adam's sin produced in him a diseased state of body which was found also in his descendants, it might be contended on physiological grounds that in their sufferings there was nothing beyond a natural effect. But this is not the position. The position is that Adam's sin, as sin, entailed on his posterity a penalty under which they suffer, and this we maintain is reconcilable with equity of administration only on the supposition that he appeared and acted in a representative capacity. This at the outset renders it extremely probable that Adam sustained in Paradise a representative character, and that the penalty



he in that character incurred has necessarily descended to all his posterity.

Of the passages of Scripture which support and establish this conclusion, the most weighty are found in Paul's Epistle to the Romans. The concluding half of the fifth chapter of that Epistle bears especially on this subject. There we find the apostle first expressly stating, not only that by one man sin entered the world and so death by sin, but that this has taken place because in that one man's sin all have sinned. It is not necessary in order to substantiate this reasoning that we should resort to the exegesis of Augustine and others who render the concluding clause of ver. 12, "in whom [*i.e.* the one man, Adam] all have sinned;" at best this is of doubtful legitimacy, both linguistically and as a matter of construction; and it is unnecessary for the purpose of bringing out the meaning of the apostle's words as above given. Adhering to the rendering in the A. V. as that best supported, viz. "for that [or because] all have sinned," we ask, To what does this refer? to the actual sins of the individuals of our race, or to their sin in Adam? That it cannot refer to the former we are constrained to conclude, from the fact that the apostle makes the incidence of the sin here spoken of coextensive with the incidence of death. "Death," saith he, "hath passed upon all, because all have sinned;" the latter fact is the cause of the former. Wherever the effect, then, is found there must be the operation of the cause; wherever there is death there must be this sin of which Paul speaks. But we find death where there is no actual sin, as in the case of infants; from all which it clearly follows that it cannot be of actual sin that Paul here speaks. But if not of actual sin, then it must be of representative sin—of sin committed virtually in Adam by his posterity—that he speaks. And with this tallies his whole statement in this verse. How jejune and empty his words if we understand this last clause of actual sin committed personally by men! "By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed upon all men, because all have committed sin." One does not see the force of the "so" here; nor, indeed, the need of the latter part of the verse at all; for if death and sin are inseparable, of course, if all commit sin all must die. It is to be noted,

moreover, that the sentence in ver. 12 is incomplete; we have a comparison where nothing is expressly compared. "*As* by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed on all men, because all have sinned,"—here the sentence stops, and the question naturally arises, *As what?* The apostle does not say, but leaves us, I apprehend, to supply the apodosis of his sentence from what goes before. Some, indeed, propose to find the close of the sentence and the completion of the comparison in ver. 18: "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life." But not only is this a violent expedient, it is withal an unsatisfactory one; for still the sentence in ver. 12 remains unfinished, and cannot possibly be completed grammatically from ver. 18, which is no more than complete in itself, and has nothing to spare for the completion of any other sentence. The "therefore" with which ver. 18 commences plainly connects it, not with ver. 12, but with the verses immediately preceding, the 15th to 17th; and, indeed, the whole train of the apostle's reasoning is dislocated and disturbed, unless we regard the 18th verse as joining part of the same context as the preceding from ver. 13. It appears to me that we have here an instance of what occurs elsewhere in the N. T. (comp. Gal. iii. 6; Matt. xxv. 14), where we have a sentence left incomplete because it is presumed that the reader will naturally complete it from what goes before. Now, in the preceding context Paul has been speaking of Christ's relation to His people, who are justified by His blood. Well, he goes on to say, The relation in which Christ thus stands to His people is analogous to that in which Adam stood to his posterity; the relation in which the sin-destroyer stands to those who through Him became righteous is analogous to that in which the sin-bringer stood to those who through him have become sinners. I would therefore complete ver. 12 thus: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed on all men, because all have sinned: even so, in like manner, has righteousness come by one man, and therewith life to all who are in Him." When the passage is read thus, the difficulties which have been thought to impede

the exegesis of this entire context will be found to be very much cleared away. But if this be the correct way of taking up the apostle's sentence, it follows that it can only be of a representative and constitutional, not of a natural connection with Adam on the part of the race that Paul here speaks. It is only thus that the analogy between the connection of believers with Christ and of the race with Adam is preserved. Believers live through Christ, not in virtue of a natural connection with Him, but in virtue of a constitution under which He appeared and acted for them. It follows that if men sin and die in Adam in a manner analogous to that in which believers are justified and live in Christ, then Adam must have sustained towards them a federal, representative, or constitutional relation, in virtue of which, and not in virtue of any natural relationship, they have become sinners.

In ver. 13 and following verses Paul goes on to a still further statement of this same doctrine. He appeals to the undeniable fact of the death of infants as proving that all men are involved in the consequences of Adam's sin. Infants do not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression, and yet the apostle argues by implication sin they must in some way, since they suffer that which was in part at least the penalty of transgression. His argument here turns on the assumed premiss that penal evil will not be inflicted under the just government of God except where the legal liability to that is contracted; and from this he argues that as penal evil has unquestionably been endured by men in cases where there was no personal breach of law, and therefore no incurring of legal liability to suffer by any deed of the person's own, it can only be through the deed of another acting for them that such liability can come upon them. Under a just government there are only two ways in which the subjects can become legally liable to penal effects; the one is their own misconduct, the other is through the misconduct of another who represents them and acts for them. A man, for instance, may suffer the penalty of a debtor either through his own extravagance or negligence, or, whilst he is still a child, through the extravagance or negligence of the trustees and guardians of his property; or a family may lose all its honours for generation after generation through the misconduct of its chief for the

time being. In the same way, under the government of God penal liability may come through a representative as well as through a person's own act; and the argument of the apostle from the case of infants is, that as death came to them through Adam without their being themselves transgressors, they must have sinned in him, *i.e.* he must have acted as their representative when he sinned. They present the case of persons to whom attaches sin without transgression—it is important to observe how the apostle discriminates *αμαρτία* from *παραβασις* here—*i.e.* they are under a legal liability to a penalty which they have not incurred by any act of their own. It follows that they have incurred it through the act of him who brought that penalty on the race, and who must have appeared and acted as the representative of the race.

The case which the apostle thus adduces may be justly regarded as a decisive one. It is what Lord Bacon would have called an “*instantia crucis*”—a sign-post instance standing, like a cross, at the division of the roads and pointing the traveller decisively which to choose. If penal evil comes on and has at all times from Adam downward come on the merest infants; if they, in fact, are never born otherwise than as subject to penal evil; if from the first moment of their existence they are plunged into an atmosphere of penalty: the conclusion is irresistible that Adam has by his transgression brought sin, *i.e.* legal liability, upon all mankind; that by him have sin and death—legal liability and legal woe—entered our world, and so, in this and in no other way, hath death passed upon all, because in this way all have become guilty or legally liable to penalty. If we resist this conclusion, we are like persons who with their eyes open take a different direction from that which the finger-post distinctly declares to be the right one.

Adam's representative character in relation to his posterity receives still further illustration from the apostle, who goes on to say that in this relation he was “the type (*τυπος*) of Him who is to come.” By type here the apostle means, not mere resemblance, but a resemblance of such a kind that it was fitted and designed to suggest to the mind of the beholder that which it resembled. It is in this sense that the apostle says the O. T. ceremonies were “types

of good things to come ;” there was a certain fitness in them to prefigure and so to suggest to the mind a just idea of future blessings, the blessings of the new economy. In like manner, he says here that Adam prefigured Christ ; he bore to Him such a resemblance that he was fitted to convey an idea or representation of Him. To the same effect is what the apostle says (1 Cor. xv. 45) when he calls Adam and Christ the first and second man ; they were so only in virtue of some resemblance between them which made them stand out from all other partakers of human nature ; as compared with each other they were parallels ; as compared with man kind generally their position was peculiar and special. Now in what lay the resemblance of the two ? Not in person ; not in circumstances ; not in temporal condition ; not in spiritual character ; but in the one point of which the apostle is discoursing in the passage we are considering from the Epistle to the Romans, — their relation, namely, to those federally connected with them respectively, and the effects which their acting when under probation had upon those thus connected with them. In these respects the resemblance between the two is great and marked : the type prefiguring the antitype, just as the stamp on the wax betokens and figures the seal. In consequence of Adam’s acting, sin came upon him, and through him upon all men ; in consequence of Christ’s acting, righteousness and life came upon Him and all that are His. Adam’s transgression entailed penal evil upon men ; Christ’s obedience cuts off the entail of evil and restores to forfeited good. In the one case we come under evil without any transgression of our own ; in the other case we come into the possession of good without any righteousness of our own. The transaction is in both cases a purely forensic or legal one ; but it belongs to the loftier department of law—that in which relations of loyalty and citizenship and privilege are concerned, not that in which the relations of mere equity as between subjects of the kingdom are concerned.

I must content myself with these illustrations of the position that Adam sustained in Paradise a representative character. He was not only the natural head or root of his posterity ; he was also under a constitution or economy where he enjoyed

certain privileges and immunities, and as sustaining which he acted, not for himself alone, but for them. Hence the apostle represents mankind, not as becoming sinners through Adam by means of any natural process like that of imitation, nor as growing to be sinners in consequence of any inherent tendency, such as a vicious germ, an instilled moral poison, or a communicated principle of evil would produce; but as *constituted* (*κατεσταθῆσαν*, Rom. v. 19) sinners. The use of such a term by the apostle ought to decide this question. It is a word which admits of but one explanation. Its primary meaning is that of placing a thing or person in any position or office; and it is generally used in the N. T. in the sense of "appointing," "setting," or "constituting," when used of persons, as when our Lord said, *τις με κατεστησε δικαστην ἐφ' υμᾶς*; "who set or constituted me a judge over you?" (Luke xii. 14), and when the apostle enjoins on Titus to "appoint elders in every city" (Tit. i. 5). In forensic references it is used exactly as in Scotland the term "sist" is used when a prisoner is said to be "sisted" at the bar. Throughout, the idea of extraneous constitution, as distinct from internal, subjective tendency, growth, or becoming, is preserved; so that when the apostle says that through Adam all men have been constituted sinners, he virtually denies that our sinfulness is derived by the transmission of a moral virus from the first man, and fixes our attention on an outward legal arrangement, ordinance, economy, or constitution, as that in virtue of which the sin of Adam affected us. Through his sin the many, the race, descended from him are, in respect of their legal standing, held to be sinners,—just as the descendants of an attainted peer are in consequence of his treason held constitutionally to be traitors.

(d.) We have already virtually answered the fourth question which may be proposed in regard to the subject of investigation now before us, viz., To what extent, and in what way, did Adam's posterity share in his doom? The answer to this is that he brought on them the penalty he had himself incurred as the result of his disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit,—that penalty neither more nor less. This follows as a corollary from the conclusion at which we have arrived, that Adam appeared and acted in

Paradise under a constitution as the federal head and representative of his posterity. Under such an arrangement Adam could not avoid transmitting to his posterity the legal disadvantages and disabilities under which he had fallen, but he could transmit nothing beyond this so as to *impose* it on his posterity. His sons might follow his example, and so be led into personal transgression, but this would be an act of free choice on their part, for which they were personally responsible; or they might derive from him certain personal qualities which might affect their own subsequent conduct, but this result would be purely natural, and not such as would connect any of his remoter posterity with him in respect of legal condition or moral character. What alone he could judicially send down upon them was the legal penalty,—the forfeiture of privilege and the endurance of penal disadvantages which he had brought on himself by his sin. To revert to the illustration already employed, Adam's position, in relation to his descendants, resembled that of the chief of a noble house in reference to those who are to succeed him. By his persistence in loyalty his heir succeeds to all the dignities and privileges he has enjoyed under his patent of nobility; but if he plays the rebel and is attainted, then the attainder he has brought on himself descends on his heir. His personal qualities, good or bad, and his personal possessions, may or may not be transmitted; that depends on circumstances with which his patent of nobility has nothing to do. In like manner was it with Adam and his posterity. He enjoyed Paradise and its privileges, not by natural right, but under a patent of privilege; and when he forfeited this, it was virtually cancelled, and could come into operation again in the case of any of his posterity only by a new act of the sovereign, by a new patent being made out in his favour. Less than this could not result from his act, and more than this could not have been legally inflicted. What came, then, on the race of mankind in consequence of Adam's sin was simply that death which came upon himself—death in the sense formerly explained.

From these considerations we are led to the conclusion that the doctrine of an *imputatio ad pœnam* of Adam's sin to his posterity is that which most satisfactorily meets the

requirements of the case. The sin of Adam has been imputed to the race descended from him, in the sense that because of this sin they are universally subjected to penal disabilities. We do not affirm any mysterious identity between Adam and his posterity whereby they were in some inexplicable way included in him and participated in his sin; nor do we assert that any moral blame attaches to any individual of the race because of our first parents' transgression; nor do we hold that any of the merely *personal* consequences to Adam of his sin have been transmitted to his descendants. We simply maintain that he, acting as their head and representative, forfeited for himself and them the covenant privileges of Paradise,—the “chartered blessings” of man's primordial state. In consequence of this they are outcasts from God's favour, and have no title to heavenly blessings. They can claim nothing but earth, the fruits of which they have to gather by toil and sorrow. They are exposed to all the natural sources of evil by which humanity may be afflicted. They carry in them the seeds of mortality, and are subject to temptation. They have no inherent principle of holiness, and they have no claim on God for supernatural help. They are the descendants of a fallen, dishonoured, and attainted progenitor; and if there is any mitigation of the calamity of their condition, or any prospect of their being restored to their primeval dignity, it can only be through an act of pure grace on the part of the sovereign,—an act alleviating or reversing the attainder their ancestor brought upon them.

Adopting this view of the subject, we avoid the doctrine of the propagation of a vitiated nature from Adam to his posterity. That doctrine is one which it is impossible by any ingenuity to reconcile with just views of man's personal freedom and moral responsibility. If a child is born with a nature morally vitiated, then that child can no more help acting amiss than a man whose eyesight is vitiated can help seeing amiss; and the one is no more the object righteously of blame than the other. Nor is there any need to resort to such a doctrine for the explanation of the fact it is generally adduced to explain, viz., the universal sinfulness of the race; for if it be held that every child enters our



world destitute of any outward safeguard from evil, and of any positive bias towards good, he is in circumstances which render it morally certain that without any positive bias to evil, such as a vitiated nature would produce, he will, in the exercise of his free choice, become, what all men are, a sinner. The centre of his being is *self*; he knows nothing better or to be preferred; he is *αθεος*, without God, from whose favour the race has fallen; he has no desire supernaturally implanted in him to please God; and hence no sooner does God's law come athwart his inclinations than he rises in actual rebellion against it and Him. Thus personal guilt is contracted, and thus the habit of sinning is gradually formed. In this way the fact is accounted for without doing violence to man's moral nature.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### SIN.

#### VII. CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.

The investigations in which we have been engaged are of importance chiefly as tending to secure just views of God's method of dealing with His rational creatures here below, and as accounting for the fact, so notorious to all observers, that all men without exception are sinners. So strange and perplexing has this fact appeared to many, that they have been driven to the most violent hypotheses in order, as they believe, to account for it. Thus men of the highest intelligence, from Augustine downwards, have not shrunk from maintaining that men derive in regular succession from Adam a vitiated nature, a nature not only destitute of positive goodness, but into which a moral *virus* is judicially infused as a penal consequence of Adam's transgression. "We," says Augustine, "were all in him who did this [*i.e.* sinned], and so great was the actual fault that by it universal human nature became vitiated, as is sufficiently indicated by the

misery of the human race: the offence was another's, but by obnoxious succession it is ours."<sup>1</sup> And again, "As by carnal propagation we were in him [Adam] before we were born, as in a parent, as in a root, so the whole tree is poisoned in which we were."<sup>2</sup> And again, "Nature and the corruption of nature are propagated together."<sup>3</sup> So also Calvin says: "Original sin seems to be a hereditary pravity and corruption of our nature diffused over all parts of the soul. . . . Since in all parts of our nature we are vitiated and perverse, on account of such corruption we are deservedly condemned and held convicted before God, with whom only righteousness, innocence, and purity are accepted. Nor is that the obligation of another's fault; for when we say that we have become obnoxious to the divine judgment through the sin of Adam, it is not to be taken as if we, innocent ourselves and not deserving it, bear the blame of his fault; but because through his transgression we were brought under the curse is he said to have bound us. From him, however, not only has punishment come upon us, but a pestilence instilled from him resides in us, to which punishment is due."<sup>4</sup> As we have already seen, this opinion is one of the characteristic traits of the Calvinistic school of divines. Others again, shrinking with recoil from a doctrine which seems to involve the exemption of man from the guilt of becoming a sinner by depriving him of the power of being anything but a sinner, have resorted to the violent hypothesis of the soul's pre-existence, and have taught that in a state of being antecedent to the present each man began his career a pure and sinless being; but each fell, and then passed into this present state, each carrying with him the corrupt nature which his own fall had brought on him. This doctrine, I need not say, is utterly without any foundation in Scripture; nor is it supported by a single fact of consciousness or observation; and in itself it is inadequate, inasmuch as it is burdened with as great a difficulty as that which it aims at removing or avoiding; for if it be strange that all men should become sinners here, it is just as strange that they should all fall and become sinners in this supposed previous state of existence.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. 2, *Operis Imperfecti*.

- *Sermo 14 de Verb. Apost.*, c. xv.

<sup>2</sup> *De Pecc. Orig.* 36.

<sup>4</sup> *Institt.* ii. 1. 8.

But what need is there for resorting to any such hypothesis? Is it not enough that we accept the statement of the apostle, that in Adam all die, and that through him all come under a penal condition in which, of course, they can receive no special, no gracious blessing from God (that is, in their natural state and apart from any remedial provision), but being simply left to natural influences, grow up without God, and seeking only the gratification of their own natural impulses and desires regardless of Him? That infants are in a worse state than this,—that they are under condemnation to eternal death and misery because of Adam's sin, and that they have derived from him, through their parents, a vitiated nature universally, is a position which I cannot hold. I can find no authority for it in Scripture, and in the absence of this no evidence from any other source can substantiate it, even were any such forthcoming.

But whether we have reached a satisfactory result on this point or not, does not, happily, need to affect our subsequent inquiries. Whether we can account for sin by tracing it to its source in our first parents or not, the fact that sin is in the world and attaches to the race universally, so that all men are sinners, remains; and it is this fact which chiefly concerns us. The remark of Johnson to Boswell, as reported by the latter, is quite true: "With respect to original sin," said he, "the inquiry is not necessary; for whatever is the cause of human corruption, men are evidently and confessedly so corrupt that all the laws of heaven and earth are insufficient to restrain them from crime."<sup>1</sup> Taking this as a settled point, the question of most importance which rises up before us is, What are the results or consequences in our world, and especially to the human race, of sin? To the consideration of this point let us now proceed.

#### i. *The Consequences of Sin to Man himself.*

As respects man himself the consequences of sin are these:—

(i.) The whole race is subject to suffering, disease, affliction, sorrow, and ultimately to physical death. That there

<sup>1</sup> Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. iv. p. 130.

is misery of various kinds in our world, and that no being of our race wholly escapes suffering of some kind is patent to all, and cannot have escaped the notice of the most cursory observer. Few also can fail to see that the physical evils under which men suffer stand connected with that moral evil which affects man, with that guilt of which he is conscious, and must be viewed as the penal consequences of this. It may not be possible in every case to trace the connection between the suffering and the offence, and it behoves us to be very cautious how we connect any calamity into which we ourselves or others may have fallen with any particular sin, or class of sins, we or they may have committed, so as to pronounce that the special infliction is a divine judgment because of the special offence; for we command so very limited a range of vision, and are such imperfect judges in many things pertaining to such matters, that it becomes us to beware of hasty and rash conclusions on points of this sort, especially in reference to others. Still, as a general rule, we can have no hesitation in saying that temporal evils are the consequence of sin; and we can in so many cases trace the connection between the offence and the suffering, we see the latter so following the former in course by a natural process, that the induction becomes legitimate by which we conclude this to be a principle of the divine administration here, and that as a general fact man is a sufferer because he is a sinner. What natural analogy thus leads us to consider probable, Scripture seems clearly to teach. There it is not only emphatically affirmed that death, under which term all physical evils are included, entered by sin, but it is expressly said that men as sinners shall eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices (Prov. i. 31). There sinners are assured that their iniquity will find them out—an assertion which has reference to the certainty with which punishment in the shape of suffering follows upon the commission of sin, even though it be hid from the knowledge, and so exempted from the judicial recognition of men. To the same effect is the statement, “His own iniquities shall take the wicked man, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins” (Prov. v. 22). So the prophet was commissioned to proclaim, “Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the

reward of his hands shall be given him" (Isa. iii. 11). To the same effect Zophar the Naamathite, after a lengthened enumeration of evils, concludes, "This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him by God" (Job xx. 29).<sup>1</sup>

Of the sufferings that come upon men as the direct consequence of sin, not the least are those which arise from remorse and self-condemnation. The apostle speaks (Rom. ii. 15) of men's consciences bearing witness to the law, and their thoughts accusing them, or else excusing them. By this he intends that men sit in judgment upon themselves, and according as they see their conduct to be in accordance with the divine law, or a violation of it, they commend themselves or condemn themselves. In the latter case a feeling of remorse invades them; they bitterly censure themselves, and a painful sense of guilt, as it were, bites into their soul. God has made us thus to judge ourselves and thus to feel when we see that we have done wrong; and fallen as man is, he retains his capacity of moral judgment, is able to distinguish right from wrong, has the law written on his heart so that even in the absence of a direct revelation from heaven he can determine the course he ought to pursue, and is thus in a condition to judge himself, and to decide whether he is to be approved or condemned. This judgment he can hardly avoid making of himself, and when he finds that he stands condemned at the bar of his own judgment, he cannot but feel pained, nor can he avoid the dreadful anticipation that the condemnation he pronounces on himself is the prelude to the still severer condemnation of the Almighty Judge. Long indulgence in sin may blunt the edge of this judgment and feeling, and a habit may be acquired of stifling the convictions of conscience; but this cannot continue for ever; the internal monitor will ere long assert its right to speak, and the attempt that has been made to silence it will only make the remorse more poignant when at length conscience utters its judgment. "The conviction," says Philo Judæus, "which dwells in and is connate with every soul as an accuser, blames, accuses, upbraids, and again, as a judge, instructs, admonishes, exhorts to repentance."<sup>2</sup> So also the Rabbins called the

<sup>1</sup> See Butler's *Analogy*, Pt. I. ch. ii.

<sup>2</sup> *De Decal.*, p. 756.

conscience מַשְׁטֵרֵן, "the accuser." A heathen poet<sup>1</sup> could only say,—

"Ille murus aheneus esto :  
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa."

Of the agony arising from conscious guilt the Scripture presents us with a striking instance in the case of Judas, who, when he saw the result of his covetousness and treachery, and felt that he had betrayed his Master to death, brought back the price of his treason to the chief priest, saying, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood," cast down the money in their presence, and went out and hanged himself. Many instances of a similar kind history records; and those who have had to deal with men under conviction of sin know how often the accusations of conscience so oppress men that they are crushed and overwhelmed thereby, and refuse to receive any comfort or relief. There is every reason to believe that from this the chief agony of the state of final retribution will arise.

(ii.) In consequence of sin men are brought into condemnation, and consequently under liability to punishment in a future state of being. As the present is evidently a preparatory state, and as we see in the present state that present sin is followed by consequent suffering and punishment, reason teaches us to anticipate that the sins and vices men commit or indulge in now will render the state that is to follow one to them of penal endurance and suffering. As sin is the transgression of a law, and as every law attaches to that which it prescribes the announcement of certain penalties to be incurred by those who transgress it, we are bound to expect that so it will be with the divine law. Now on this head Scripture leaves no room for doubt. The fixed, unalterable principle of the divine administration which it announces is, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wages of sin is death" (Ezek. xviii. 4; Rom. vi. 23). And lest this death should be understood of some mere temporal calamity, our Lord has been careful to assure us that He, "the Son of Man, shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there

<sup>1</sup> Horace, *Epist.*, i. 1. 60.

shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xiii. 41, 42). And again in His parable of the talents, He represents the king as saying, concerning the unprofitable servant, "Cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xxv. 36). In the account also which He gives of the transactions of the last judgment, He says of the wicked, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Matt. xxv. 40). In perfect accordance with this are the statements of the apostles. Take, for instance, the detailed statement of the apostle in Rom. ii. 5-16, the more condensed but not less clear and emphatic statement in 2 Thess. i. 6-10, or the declaration in Heb. x. 30, 31. Comp. also Matt. iii. 12; Luke iii. 17; Rom. i. 18, 32; 2 Thess. ii. 12; 2 Pet. ii. 9, iii. 7, etc.

In consequence of sin all men are thus under legal condemnation, and there lies before them the prospect of legal penalty to be endured by them. In view of this some have contended that it is altogether improper to speak of man's condition here as one of probation. Where, it has been asked, is there place for probation if men are already, because of sin, under condemnation? Now, it is undoubtedly true that if by a state of probation be meant that man is here on his trial whether he shall become guilty or not, the expression is incorrect, and one the use of which may grievously mislead. Man is not on his probation in this respect. The issue in this case is already decided; the Scripture hath concluded all men under sin; the sentence has gone forth from the Judge of all; and condemnation already rests upon every individual of our race. It is not a question whether man in his natural state shall be acquitted or condemned when he stands before God at last; this question is already decided; judgment has already gone forth against the workers of iniquity; it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). But whilst we cannot in this sense speak of man as in a state of probation, I am not prepared to go the length of saying there is *no* sense in which this may be affirmed of man. It appears to me that we may use this expression both in reference to man as under the religion of nature, and of man as under the offers of the gospel. In a

state of nature man is a moral agent, and he is there so far under probation that the character of his condition hereafter will be materially affected by his conduct here. As the punishment will bear a just proportion to the offence, and as all sins are not of the same enormity, it is obviously a man's interest to keep down the amount of his guilt, both as respects the number and as respects the aggravation of his sins, to the lowest possible degree; and of every man it may be said that he is in this respect on his trial here. He has to take care of himself in this respect. He is the subject of a great moral experiment by which his future condition is very seriously to be affected; and the conduct of this experiment is in his own hands. "In the present state," as Butler remarks, "all which we enjoy, and a great part of what we suffer, is put in our own power." We are thus under God's moral government in a state of probation, even as respects this life; and as our present life has issues in that which is to come, we are here also under probation in reference to the future. Still more distinctly is man in a state of probation for the future when he lives under the offers of the gospel. These come to him as under condemnation with proposals of deliverance; and it is for the man to accept or refuse the offered boon. If he accept, he is pardoned, justified, saved, and blessed; if he reject, his guilt becomes deeper, his condemnation more severe, his doom more awful. Is not this, then, a state of probation? Is not every one who is thus circumstanced one who has, as Butler expresses it, his happiness or misery put very much in his own power? and what is this but to be formally and truly under probation for eternity?

(iii.) In consequence of sin, disorder and pollution have invaded man's soul. While we object to the assertion that man is born and begins his career with a morally vitiated and poisoned nature, we must hold that sin depraves and pollutes and disorders the inner nature of every one who commits it, and that, as the habit of sinning becomes formed, so the power of depravity increases until it acquires all the force of a second nature. It cannot be otherwise. As the little rift in the instrument mars and ultimately destroys the music, so sin, as a violent infraction of the due order of our nature, cannot but spoil and disarrange and ultimately impair our



whole moral constitution. "Given the fact of sin," says Dr. Bushnell, "the fact of a fatal breach in the normal state or constitutional order of the soul follows of necessity. And exactly this we shall see," he continues, "if we look in upon its secret chambers and watch the motions of sin in the confused ferment they raise—the perceptions discoloured, the judgments unable to hold their scales steadily because of the fierce gusts of passion, the thoughts huddling by in crowds of wild suggestion, the imagination haunted by ugly and disgusting shapes, the appetites contesting with reason, the senses victorious over faith, anger blowing the overheated fires of malice, low jealousies sulking in dark angles of the soul, and envies, baser still, hiding under the scum of its green-mantled pools,—all the powers that should be strung in harmony loosened from each other and brewing in hopeless and helpless confusion; the conscience, meantime, thundering wrathfully above and shooting down hot bolts of judgment, and the pallid fears hurrying wildly about with their brimstone torches,—these are the motions of sins, the Tartarean landscape of the soul and its disorders when self-government is gone and the constituent integrity is dissolved."<sup>1</sup>

That in its main lines the picture here given is not overdrawn, man's own consciousness and the experience of the race universally will attest. The testimony of Scripture also is clear and full on this point. In the most emphatic terms it announces the fact of man's depravity. See Gen. vi. 5; Ps. xiv. 1, 2; Isa. liii. 6; Jer. xvii. 9; Matt. xv. 19; Eph. ii. 1, 3; Tit. iii. 3; Rom. vii. 18; Jas. i. 14, 15.

What is represented in the last passage quoted daily observation and experience amply confirm. Every person must see how a man, left to himself, goes on in an ever-deepening course of evil; how the sinner, exempted from restraint, becomes ever more completely drenched in sin; how he abandons himself ever more and more to the dominion of iniquity; how he loses the sense of shame and debasement which the consciousness of guilt first produced upon him; and how he rushes with ever increasing eagerness to enjoy the banquet of sin, until all considerations of decency may be set at naught, and being past feeling, the man gives himself

<sup>1</sup> *Nature and the Supernatural.*

“over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” Self being predominant, the natural desire is for that which pleases self, that which gratifies the lusts and passions that domineer over the soul; and this desire, once gratified, becomes impatient of restraint, and demands gratification with ever-increasing impetuosity. Sin once indulged in reacts on the desire which led to it, and this being thereby rendered more imperious and intense, provokes to further and deeper indulgence.

“Crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops,  
Nec sitim pellit, nisi causa morbi  
Fugerit venis.”<sup>1</sup>

It is customary to speak of this depravity of man as *total*. The phraseology is correct, provided it be justly understood. It is, however, liable to misconception, and not rarely it is wrongly conceived. We shall certainly err if in maintaining man's total depravity we intend thereby to deny to him the possession of anything that is good. His *physical* nature, be it remembered, remains essentially what it was before the Fall, when God pronounced it “good;” and though it may be injured and degraded by sinful indulgence, its original faculties and susceptibilities may be preserved entire. So also with man's *intellectual* nature; in no case is it so bright and powerful as it would be in a sinless state, and in many cases it becomes enfeebled and marred by sin; but in itself it remains as it was originally, so far as its constitutive qualities and powers are concerned. We must admit also that man is the subject of many affections that are good and lovely, and that he does many things which are not only not morally evil, but are praiseworthy as morally excellent. To deny that there is anything good in man, or, what is equivalent, to affirm that his nature is wholly corrupted and depraved, would be to exempt him from responsibility. An eye wholly diseased would be incapable of seeing, and no blame could attach to the man whose eye was so diseased if he failed to see what he ought to see. In like manner, if our whole nature were wholly diseased and corrupted, it would be impossible for us to do what we are required as intelligent and moral agents to do; and thus we should cease to be

<sup>1</sup> Horace, *Carm.*, ii. 2. 14.

blameworthy for not doing it. If sin could thus destroy our moral responsibility, it would at the same time destroy itself, for where there is no responsibility there can be no sin. The triumph of sin over man would thus be the ending of sin in our race. What, then, is meant by saying that men are totally depraved? All that can be properly intended by this is, that the ruling principle of man's mind and heart and life is ungodly. The mainspring of his active being is desire, what the apostle calls *ἐπιθυμία*, and this has either no moral character at all, or it is positively wrong; or, if right in itself, it is allowed to dominate to the exclusion of purer and nobler affections, and so becomes evil. Man's will thus comes to be under an ungodly bias. He is like a machine, the parts of which remain unimpaired, but in which the motive power is disordered, so that the whole action of the machine is depraved. If I say, "My watch is out of order and spoilt," I do not necessarily mean that every wheel is broken, and that it is utterly incapable of right action; I may intend to intimate merely that the mainspring is under a wrong pressure, which makes the watch work irregularly, so that it does not fulfil the purpose for which watches are made. So is it with man. The mechanism of his nature remains entire, and its working is not wholly for evil; but as in losing love to God he has lost the proper motive power of his soul, man totally fails to fulfil the end for which he was made, and spends his energies on that which is not godly, or is partial, fitful, and irregular in his moral activity. "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever;"<sup>1</sup> but this end he, from an ungodly bias, either wholly ignores and rejects, or he determinedly sets himself to oppose and frustrate it. He is thus wholly perverted from the right way; as respects the great end of his being, he is wholly depraved.

(iv.) In consequence of sin, man is in a state of spiritual helplessness. He is so both as respects power to deliver himself from guilt and as respects power to deliver from depravity.

That man is unable to deliver himself from guilt must be admitted by all who form any just estimate of what guilt really is. Even where men are so sunk in ignorance as to

<sup>1</sup> *Shorter Catechism*, quest. 1.

imagine that by gifts and sacrifices, by penances and mortifications, they can procure the favour of God, it is still on the ground that man needs something beyond himself, something that shall relieve his helplessness, something that shall effect what he cannot himself effect, that he expects to obtain deliverance from guilt. He feels that his guilt has to be expiated before it can be forgiven. He feels that he cannot simply go to God and say, "I am guilty; be pleased to forgive me." He feels that something outside of himself must come between him and God ere he can obtain pardon; and the question which ever presses on him is that of old, "Where withal shall I appear before God?" (Mic. vi. 6). Without something that shall be valid as an expiation, he feels that he cannot stand in the presence of God or expect the cancelling of his guilt so as to escape the penal consequences of sin.

Some, indeed, have thought and taught that man may, by a mental state, so place himself in relation with God that God will, as a matter of course, pardon his sin and receive him into favour. Man, it is said, may sincerely and truly repent of his sin, wholly turn from it, unfeignedly renounce, abhor, and forsake it, and thus be in a state of mind which is right, and which will secure for him pardon and acceptance with God. With many this notion obtains, and it exercises a powerful influence for evil over not a few.

As presented in its most plausible form, this doctrine may be stated thus: Man can sincerely repent of his sin, can turn from it, and in the future be good and holy; and as God is omniscient, and can consequently with certainty know when repentance is really genuine and sincere, He can safely, that is, without any risk to His own government and authority, freely forgive the sins of those whom He sees to be truly repentant and reformed.

Now, in the outset, I must remark that I do not see what the element of the divine omniscience has to do here, or how the introduction of it at all affects the question, because the difficulty is not one of *fact*, such as the divine omniscience can remove, but one of *principle*, such as is equally grave under an omniscient as under an imperfect government.

1. It is assumed by those who hold the doctrine we are considering, that man may sincerely and perfectly repent, and

turn from sin to goodness. Let this in the meantime be conceded: the question we have to decide is, Can perfect repentance and reformation cancel past guilt so as to entitle the penitent to pardon and favour with God? Now, without entering at large into this matter at present, I would remark,—

(1.) As God is the perfect moral Governor, and as moral government rests not on force but on perfect rectitude, it is necessary that all His acts should be in righteousness and truth, so as to commend themselves to the moral sense of His intelligent creatures. Now, He has said in His law, under which He administers His government, that sin entitles the transgressor to punishment. His solemn declaration is, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die;” “The wages [the just and adequate reward] of sin is death.” This is God’s law; this is His public declaration to the universe of His intelligent creatures. If, therefore, sin is committed, the right and proper thing is that the penalty shall follow; and this sequence can be righteously suspended or set aside only on some ground that shall preserve the rectitude of the Governor unimpeached,—in other words, that shall accord with the moral nature He has given to His intelligent creatures. The question then comes to be, Does repentance, presumed to be sincere, appear to the moral sense of man to be a sufficient ground for God, as Governor, setting aside the claims of law and failing to keep His own word by preserving a sequence which He has declared to be certain? To this, I think, the moral sense of the race would reply in the negative. Where guilt, *i.e.* legal liability to punishment, has been contracted, the fitting sequence is that the penalty incurred should be inflicted on the transgressor; and where a governor has declared that such is the law under which his subjects live, it would be a departure from rectitude were he to accept repentance on the part of the transgressor as a reason for exempting him from the penalty he has incurred. Mere repentance can never cancel guilt; good conduct in the future can never compensate for violations of law in the past. No judge in any court would for a moment admit such a plea in bar of the sentence which the law required him to pronounce on a criminal. He might be satisfied that the man’s repentance was sincere; he might be convinced that the man so utterly abhorred the crime he

had committed that there was every moral certainty that he would never commit it again. But the offence, nevertheless, would remain, and with that the law's demand that the penalty incurred should be endured; and no judge could ignore or repudiate this without incurring censure and doing injury to the government whose law he was set to administer.

(2.) This consideration is enhanced when what is proposed is not merely the forgiveness of guilt, but along with this the bestowment on the pardoned transgressor of immense benefits, such as even his best efforts, supposing him never to have sinned, could not have secured. If our sense of rectitude revolts from the proposal that God should set aside the claims of His own law and forgive the transgressor, simply because he has turned from his evil ways and resolves henceforth to be a good and obedient subject of the Almighty, surely much more does it revolt from the proposal of such a transgressor being on such grounds introduced to all the privileges of the kingdom of heaven.

(3.) It is to be borne in mind that though we speak of future sinlessness, it is really only the act of repentance or turning from sin in the past that comes into consideration as a ground of forgiveness. The subsequent sinlessness is only what the man is bound to; there is no merit in it that can give it a regressive or retrospective effect. It begins when the pardon is pronounced, and can have no effect in procuring that. For all that has gone before it is dead and inoperative. The question therefore, be it remembered, is restricted to this, Can mere repentance or ceasing to do evil be accepted under a righteous moral government as an adequate reason for the governor departing from his own law and exempting the transgressor from the penalty which, by breaking that law, he has incurred? To this the only answer which the moral sense of man can render is in the negative.

(4.) Those who think repentance a sufficient ground for the pardoning of the sinner must be prepared to maintain that by this the sinner becomes legally and morally *entitled* to pardon and blessing. The question is one of law and government, and in such a case we can proceed only on the ground of right and title; we ask, not what may be by some possibility, or through some act of sovereignty, but what *ought* to be and what

*must* be as determined by legal obligation? Now, no one can maintain that mere repentance, however sincere, can *entitle* a sinner to pardon, so that he can demand of the judge in equity that he shall be acquitted and restored to the enjoyment of privilege. And yet, if this be not maintained, it is simply foolish to assert that repentance furnishes a sufficient ground on which pardon and acquittal can be granted to the man who has transgressed the divine law and come under condemnation.

2. Even assuming, then, that the sinner can of himself truly repent and turn from sin, it is evident that this alone can never avail to secure for him salvation. But can the sinner of himself repent? That physically he is able to do this we must admit, for were this physically impossible no man could be justly blamed for not repenting. But morally and practically it is impossible. Where the disease of sin has once taken hold of a man there is no recuperative energy by which he can throw it off so as to deliver himself from it. Where sin has become a habit it acquires the strength and tenacity of a second nature, and only some power beyond and above nature can free man from its tyranny. As well might you expect a stream of its own accord to reverse its course and return to the fountain whence it sprung. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. xiii. 23).

More than this: Does not the very position that repentance may secure the pardon of sin involve the impossibility of the sinner's actually repenting? The repentance, it is assumed, is real and genuine. But genuine repentance is prompted by hatred of the sin, not by the prospect of forgiveness and favour as the reward of repentance. If, therefore, God were to demand repentance as the means or price of forgiveness, He would necessarily prevent its being the result of hatred of sin. Genuine repentance would thus be precluded; and so in the very act of offering to the sinner pardon on the ground of his repentance God would subvert the ground on which He asked the sinner to stand so as to obtain pardon. Thus pardon would be offered on conditions which the very offer would render impossible.

I have referred to man's inability to deliver himself from

sin, as well as his inability to clear himself from guilt and from condemnation. This has also to be distinctly recognised in the consideration of man's spiritual helplessness. Man is unable to regenerate and renew himself; he is unable to turn from evil to good, from wrong to right, from unholiness to God. He is unable to follow that course of perfect obedience by which alone he can fulfil his obligations as God's creature and subject; he cannot discern as he ought the things of God; he cannot walk so as in all things to please God.

This inability, however, is of a different kind from the other. The inability of man to deliver himself from guilt and condemnation arises from want of power to do what is requisite for the attaining of the object; the inability of man to be good and holy arises from a want of will or inclination to do what he has the power physically to do. Strictly speaking, the inability in this latter case is simply confirmed indisposition to do what is right, arising from spiritual blindness and depravity. Man has not lost the capacity to be holy; he has not ceased to be a free agent, choosing what he prefers, and determining his own acts; he is under no external force preventing him from being holy. The spiritual inability under which he lies is that of a mind set against God, destitute of the principle of spiritual vitality and activity, through carnality and worldliness and sinful indulgence incapable of discerning the beauty of holiness, and so environed and permeated by selfishness that all true love to God is excluded from it. This is a real inability, inasmuch as it hinders and prevents man from being holy, though it does not destroy his capacity for being holy.<sup>1</sup>

## ii. *Consequences of Sin to the World.*

These are the principal results and effects of sin as it affects man. Its baneful influence, however, extends beyond man to the world of which he forms a part. Because of man's transgression and apostasy a curse has come upon the

<sup>1</sup> On this subject see Edwards *On the Will*, especially Part I. sec. 4; Truman's *Essay on Natural and Moral Inability*, edited by Henry Rogers; Fuller's *Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation*, Part III.; *Works*, vol. ii. p. 68; Hodge's *Theology*, vol. ii. p. 257.



world, and the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together in consequence. The world was made for man, and is inseparably linked with the destinies of him who has been placed over it as its proprietor and lord. In his fall it fell ; in his sorrow and disorder it shares. Through him it has become subject to vanity ; and it waits and cries for that deliverance which can come to it only as it comes to him in the glorious manifestation of the sons of God. That it is so the Bible forcibly declares ; and observation and experience amply confirm and illustrate the declaration. “ We see at a glance,” says Dr. Bushnell, “ that, given the fact of sin, what we call nature can be no mere embodiment of God’s beauty and the eternal order of His mind, but must be to some wide extent a realm of deformity and abortion, groaning with the discords of sin and keeping company with it in the guilty pains of its apostasy.” Men speak of the “ order of nature,” but in that part of nature with which man is connected perfect order is not to be found ; rather does disorder everywhere prevail to a greater or less extent. “ Fogs and storms blur the glory of the sky, and foul days, rightly so called, interspace the bright and fair. The earth itself displays vast deserts swept by the horrid simoom ; muddy rivers with their fenny shores, tenanted by hideous alligators ; swamps and morasses, spreading out in provinces of quagmire, and reeking in the steam of death.”<sup>1</sup> Unexpected events disturb the course of things, falsify the calculations and disappoint the hopes of men. Storms and tempests sweep over the earth, altering the atmospheric conditions and producing in many cases widespread ruin and desolation. Inclement seasons retard or hinder the growth of herbs ; famines and pestilences and epidemics desolate nations ; decay lays its wasteful hand, not only on man and his works, but on the solid globe itself. A curse rests on the ground for man’s sake, and only briars and thorns, useless weeds or noxious plants spring spontaneously from it. No where is perfect beauty or symmetry to be found ; rather does deformity and vitiosity more or less mar all visible objects. “ The world is not as truly a realm of beauty as of beauty flecked by injury. The growths are carbuncled and diseased ; and the children have it for a play to fetch a perfect

<sup>1</sup> Bushnell, *Nature and the Supernatural*, p. 192.

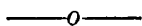
leaf. . . . Even more significant still is the fact, because it is a fact that concerns the honour of our personal organism, that no living man or woman is ever found to be a faultless model of beauty and proportion." There are things, indeed, in the world around us which strike us as beautiful, and the perfections of which poets delight to celebrate; but they will not bear the test of minute examination. Though

"Some flow'rets of Eden men still may inherit,  
The trail of the serpent is over them all."

The glory and loveliness, the serenity and calm of Paradise have for ever passed from our earth; and so has man's sin disordered and injured the world, that before it can be restored to its original excellence and beauty it must pass through the purgation of the last fire.

# PART III.

## CHRISTOLOGY



### CHAPTER I.

#### FIRST DIVISION.—THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

##### PRELIMINARY JESUS THE MESSIAH.

WE now enter upon the third principal division of our subject, which we have designated CHRISTOLOGY.

We have contemplated man in his fallen condition as a sinner, and have sought to ascertain what the Bible reveals concerning that state. We have examined into the nature, the manifestations, the sources, and the consequences (especially to the human race in its relation to God) of sin. After this the mind naturally turns to inquire into the nature and conditions of that salvation from sin which it is the great design of Christianity to unfold. But before we can enter on this there is an intermediate inquiry to which we must bend our attention. The salvation which the Bible reveals as provided for man stands inseparably connected with the person and the work of Jesus Christ the Saviour, by whom alone it has been procured and through whom alone it can be enjoyed. On this point the testimony of Scripture is so clear that no one can peruse the N. T. without perceiving that it is to be received as one of the first and most indubitable truths of Christianity. When His advent was announced by the angel to Joseph the heavenly messenger said, “Thou shalt call His name JESUS [*i.e.* יֵשׁוּעַ, a contracted form of יְהוֹשֻׁעַ — ‘Jehovah’s help or salvation’]; for He shall save His people from their sins.” After His birth He was announced by the

angel to the shepherds of Bethlehem as "A Saviour, Christ the Lord." In the course of His public teaching He repeatedly announced this as the great object of His appearance in the world: "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost;" "The Son of Man is come, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them;" "I come not to judge the world, but to save the world;" "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." And when His apostles went forth as His ambassadors to men, the doctrine they everywhere proclaimed was that, whilst there was in Him salvation for all who would come to Him, there was salvation in none other. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus;" "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Matt. i. 21, xviii. 11; Luke ii. 11, ix. 56; John iii. 17, xii. 47; Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. iii. 11; Acts iv. 12). These passages, and they are in the spirit of the entire N. T., are sufficiently clear, and they indubitably show that the salvation which man needs, and which Christianity offers to him, is in some way essentially connected with the appearance on our earth of the Lord Jesus Christ, and with what He did whilst here. This renders it necessary that before advancing to consider the salvation of man in itself we should consider what Scripture teaches concerning Him by whom it was procured. It is this department of our subject to which the name Christology (from *Χριστος* and *λογος*, meaning the doctrine or science concerning Christ) has been given.

In the narrative of the Gospels we have an account of the birth of Jesus, which happened in the ordinary way appertaining to the human race, though His conception is traced to a direct and miraculous operation of the Divine Spirit. We have preserved to us many incidents of His personal history, and many portions of His teaching as delivered both to promiscuous crowds and within the more silent circle of His disciples. From these we learn that He distinctly claimed to be the Christ or the Messiah promised by God to the

fathers of the Jewish nation, and repeatedly held forth in the ancient Scriptures as the object of expectation and hope to the people of God under the former dispensation ; and we perceive that whilst He exhibited undeniable indications of a true humanity, and frequently spoke of Himself as the Son of Man, He also spoke of Himself as the Son of God, and in terms which are appropriate only to one claiming to be divine. We find also that He continually acted with an independent authority both as a teacher and as a worker of miracles such as no other messenger from God to man assumed, whilst at the same time He ever professed to be God's servant and emissary commissioned to do His work and supremely ambitious of fulfilling all His will. Sometimes these apparently opposite aspects of His nature and standing are in the history brought into close and almost startling juxtaposition. Thus at one moment we see Him a toil-worn wearied man seeking refreshment in sleep from the fatigue He had undergone, and insensible in the depth of His slumber of what was passing around Him ; and the next we see Him rising from His repose and, with a voice of authority before which the elements trembled, hushing the fierce winds and waves that were like to have wrecked the vessel in which He was, so that instantly there was a great calm. Again, behold Him at the grave of Lazarus. Touched by feelings of human tenderness,—love for the friend whose body was within that tomb, and sympathy for his bereft and sorrowing sisters,—Jesus wept : but hardly have the bystanders had time to mark His tears, and say, “ Behold how He loved him ! ” when He moves towards the tomb, and His voice is heard saying, “ Lazarus, come forth ! ” (John xi. 43). And at that voice the grave gives up its dead, and death relaxes his hold on the mortal who had succumbed to his power. And see Him once more in the closing scene of His life here below hanging upon the cross : “ And Jesus said, I thirst ” (John xix. 28). There spoke the man suffering from the burning fever which the cruel agony He was enduring had sent through His frame. “ Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise ” (Luke xxiii. 43) : there spoke the more-than-man, the Being in whose hands are the rewards of the heavenly world, and who can dispense them according to His own royal will.

In the writings of the apostles we find exactly the same claims advanced for their Master, and exactly the same language held regarding Him. They continually assert Him to be the Christ, and they speak of Him as both human and divine in terms which are even more explicit in their doctrinal import than His own words as reported in the Gospels, though fully in accordance with these. We find them also taking up our Lord's declaration concerning the work He had to do, and the bearing of that on the salvation of men, and, with fuller elucidation and more minuteness of detail, explaining that as connected with His official appointment as the Messiah.

Now, from a survey of all these scriptural statements have been elicited the theological dogmas concerning the union of the divine and the human natures in the one person of Jesus; and concerning His office as the Messiah and the work therewith connected which He performed or is still engaged in performing.<sup>1</sup> Our business is to examine the scriptural evidence on which these dogmas rest, for the purpose of ascertaining whether they truly express the harmony of all the Biblical statements relating to the subject.

Our subject thus falls under two heads; the one relating to the Person of Jesus, the other relating to His Offices. Before proceeding, however, to consider either of these, it may

<sup>1</sup> The dogma universally received in the Christian Church for many generations concerning the person of Jesus Christ is that in that one person were united two natures, the divine and the human. In holding this opinion both Romanists and Protestants are agreed. On a point so familiarly known it is unnecessary to quote from the symbols of either party. Opposed to this dogma is that of the Arians, who deny the existence of a *divine* nature in Christ, but hold that He had in union with His human body a soul possessing an antecedent existence, and a superior nature to that of all other creatures; and that of the Socinians or Unitarians, who are philanthropists, maintaining that Jesus Christ was a mere man, and that His divinity consisted simply in His divine commission, and the superior honour which God conferred upon Him as His servant. "Arius acknowledges the flesh [human nature] alone to the concealing of the divinity, and in place of the man within us, that is, the soul, he says that the Logos came to be in the flesh, and dared to apply the perception of the suffering and the resurrection from Hades to the Deity." Athanasius, *contra Apollin.* ii. 3.—"De Christi essentia ita statuo illum esse hominem in virginis utero et sic sine viri ope divini spiritus vi conceptum ac formatum indeque genitum, primum quidem patibilem et mortalem, donec scilicet munus sibi a Deo demandatum in terris obivit, deinde vero, postquam in cœlum ascendit impatibilem et immortalem factum." F. Socinus, *Breviss. Instit.*, p. 654a.

be of advantage to consider the grounds on which it may be asserted that Jesus is the Christ or the Messiah; because until this be made manifest we are not entitled to borrow the statements of the O. T. concerning the person and work of the Messiah, and use them as evidence bearing on the claims and work of Jesus.

Now, on this subject we might content ourselves with assuming, on the authority of our Lord Himself and His apostles, that He was indeed the Christ; for this they repeatedly assert in the plainest terms, and the fact is so interwoven with the whole of what they taught, that no one who receives their doctrine can refuse to receive this as a primary and essential part of it. We find, however, that neither did our Lord nor His apostles content themselves with resting this truth on their mere assertion of it as heaven-commissioned teachers; they furnished reasons for it; they made it the subject of argument; and, as we read concerning Paul, they mightily convinced men of it, opening and alleging that He was the very Christ (Acts xviii. 28, xvii. 3). Now, that which the great Author of Christianity and His inspired followers taught by means of reasoning, and on the ground of alleged evidence, it concerns us to learn and study in the same way; and consequently we shall endeavour to discover, and to state the evidence on which it may be confidently affirmed, that Jesus is the Christ.

The evidence to which our Lord and His followers appealed on this point was the correspondence between the actual facts constituting the personal history of Jesus and the predictions contained in the O. T. concerning the Messiah, especially such as were given to the ancient Church as criteria or tests, by which to try the claims of any one pretending to be the Messiah. It was even to "the Scriptures" that our Lord referred those before whom He laid the evidence in support of His claims as the source whence that evidence could alone be drawn, and it was out of the Scriptures that His apostles alleged the argument by which they so powerfully convinced men of these claims. To these, then, we must make our appeal as the only legitimate source of evidence on this subject.

The argument here is cumulative, and the entire strength

of it becomes manifest only when we have explored the whole body of O. T. predictions, and seen how it finds in the person, the life, the work, and the reign of our Lord Jesus its fulfilment, that we have the evidence for this in all its force before us. As, however, one great object of our present inquiry is to secure legitimate authority for adducing O. T. passages in proof of certain positions regarding the person and work of the Author of Christianity, it is obvious that to gain this end we must hit upon some shorter method than that of going over all the prophecies concerning Christ—to say nothing of the logical difficulty that would start up in our way were we first to use these predictions as proofs that Jesus was the Messiah, and then use them as proofs that being the Messiah He is possessed of certain characteristics of person and work which we wish to ascribe to Him. This would be a reasoning in a circle such as could not be admitted. To avoid this, then, we must select certain criterial passages regarding the Messiah recorded in the O. T., and which admit of being compared with facts in the personal history of our Lord. This comparison will serve to establish the fact that Jesus was the Person actually promised by God to the Jews; and being satisfied of this we may then pass to consider what the Bible generally declares concerning the Person and the work of the Christ.<sup>1</sup>

It is very certain that among the people of the Jews a universal expectation of the advent of the Messiah has prevailed from the earliest period of their nation, and does still prevail. It is equally certain that they ground this upon their own Scriptures, and hence they must have been taught to interpret these in such a way as to produce and sustain this belief. Following their own application of the passages in the O. T., we shall endeavour to show that they afford clear proof that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ.

1. We can determine *a time before which* the Messiah was to come and *after which* He cannot be expected. Here we

<sup>1</sup> The distinction of some of the Germans between the Historical Christ and the Ideal Christ is valid and useful, so far as it respects and expresses the difference between predictions referring to and fulfilled in the man Christ Jesus whilst in this world, and predictions relating to His higher nature, His spiritual work, and His heavenly kingdom.



appeal to such passages as Gen. xlix. 10; Hag. ii. 6-9; Dan. ix. 24, 25.

GEN. xlix. 10:—

“ A sceptre shall not depart from Judah,  
Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,  
Until Shiloh shall come;  
And Him shall the nations obey.”<sup>1</sup>

This does not mean that supremacy should be in the tribe of Judah until the Shiloh and then pass away, but that up to that time it should not pass away. *שִׁלֹה*, from *שָׁלַח*, *quievit*: this, from the form of it, must be the name of either a place or a person. Those who adopt the former view translate “until they shall come to or assemble at Shiloh,” and understand it of the assembling of the Israelites for worship at Shiloh. The passage may be so translated, but that this is its meaning is to the last degree improbable. (1) At the time this prophecy was uttered the Shiloh of the later books had probably no existence, certainly it had no religious pre-eminence over other places, so that Jacob’s words here would have had no meaning to his sons. (2) Israel came to Shiloh *as soon* as they had subdued Canaan; so that the supremacy of Judah was on this view very short-lived, or rather it is thus made to end before it began, for it was not till after the tribes *ceased* to go to Shiloh that any supremacy of royalty existed in the tribe of Judah. Those who understand this of a *person* regard it as a prediction of the Messiah as the Peace-bringer—the “Consolation of Israel.” It was thus that the ancient Jews understood the passage. In the Targum of Onkelos the passage is paraphrased, “until the days of the Messiah,” and with this correspond the Targum Jonathan and the Jerusalem Targum. In the Talmud we read, “Rabbi Johanan asking what was the name of the Messiah, they of the school of Rabbi Schila answer, His name is Shiloh (*שִׁלֹה שְׁמוֹ*), according to that which is written, until Shiloh come.” And with this agrees the remaining part of Jacob’s prediction, which may be viewed as a highly poetical description of the blessings of Messiah’s reign.

Seeing, then, that the Jews admit that this is a prediction

<sup>1</sup>, a rod or sceptre = the emblem of authority or rule.—*מַחֲקֶק*, a legislator or ruler.—*בֵּין רַגְלָיו*, from between his feet. Is this = *מִמֶּנּוּ*?—*עַד כִּי*.

of the Messiah, and seeing the prediction announces that He shall come whilst supremacy and rule and legislation are still possessed by Judah, we can give in the destruction of the Jewish empire a *terminus* posterior to which He cannot be expected, and also near to which He must have appeared.

It may be said, in bar to this, that long before Christ came the supremacy had passed from Judah, and the nation of the Jews, without a king, and subject to a foreign power, had ceased to be in any sense a dominant nation. This is quite true as regards political supremacy and dominion, and if the passage is to be understood of this, it supplies no criterion whatever as to the time when the Shiloh should appear. But it is not of this that the passage can be understood. At no time, even in its palmiest days, did the tribe of Judah sway its sceptre over the nations, or give law to the peoples in a political sense. It is of religious supremacy that this must be understood, and of that law which went forth from Zion. In Judah alone was the succession of the kingdom of God preserved; from it alone was the authoritative word of God sent forth. And this continued until the advent of Christ. As He Himself said, "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John" (Matt. xi. 13). After that a new state of things supervened. The reign of exclusiveness and restriction ceased. The time had come when as little at Jerusalem as at Gerizim were men to worship God. The kingdom was to be free to all nations, and any that willed might enter. Then the supremacy passed from Judah, and the law no longer issued from Jerusalem. From that time forward Judaism became of no account in religion. The Shiloh had come, and to Him thenceforward was the supremacy to belong, and the gathering of the nations to be.

HAG. ii. 7.—This verse appears in A. V. thus: "And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." There is, however, a difficulty in the way of this rendering. The word rendered "desire" (חֲמִדָּה) is in the singular, whilst the verb rendered "shall come" is in the plural (יָבִיאוּ); and these two, it is supposed, can be construed only by the noun being regarded as a collective, or noun of multitude. But in this case it cannot be rendered by

“desire;” it must mean “desired things,” *desiderata*, or *desideranda*, or *desiderabilia*. This, however, brings up a difficulty on the other side, for how can “things” be said to *come*? To come is the act of a person, or at least of an animate being, and cannot be ascribed to inanimate objects. There is, however, a way of escaping these difficulties. In Hebrew, when the subject of a verb is a noun in the construct state, followed by a genitive, the verb sometimes agrees in number with the noun in the genitive. Of this several instances are found in the O. T. Thus, Gen. iv. 10, קוֹל דְּמִי אֵלַי אֶחָדָךְ צֹעֲקִים, “the voice of thy brother’s bloods are crying to me,” where the verb agrees, not with קוֹל, but with דְּמִים; Job xxix. 10, קוֹל נְיָדִים נִחְבְּאוּ, “the voice of the princes were concealed,” where the verb agrees with נְיָדִים, and not with קוֹל. By applying this undoubted idiom of the Hebrew to the passage before us all difficulty disappears; the verb בָּא is in the plural, because it agrees with גּוֹיִם and not with הַמְּדֵת־הַגּוֹיִם, being regarded as one word. The rendering of the A. V. is thus vindicated.<sup>1</sup>

When this translation is accepted there will be little hesitation in admitting that by the “Desire of all nations” is meant the Messiah. Of Him as the promised Deliverer and Peace-bringer it may be truly said, that all nations are, consciously or unconsciously, articulately or in dumb expectancy, desiring Him, waiting to receive Him and be blessed in Him; and of Him alone can this be said. Understood of Him, then, this utterance declares that He was to appear whilst the temple was yet standing; and though this house was very inferior to the former temple in outward splendour, God would so fill it with glory that the glory of the latter house should be really greater than that of the former. This can be understood only of that spiritual glory which the presence of the Messiah in the temple would bring. Nothing, as it appears to me, can be more inept and improbable than the supposition that the glory which the

<sup>1</sup> See the Grammars. “The solution of this seems to be the intimate connection or oneness of two nouns in regimen.” Stuart, p. 193. “The concord in this case may be regarded as logical concord, because regard is had to the logical relation which unites the ideas rather than to the grammatical relation found in the words.” De Sacy, *Gr. Arab.* ii. art. 332.

prophet predicts for the later temple was the glory which the silver and the gold, the earthly material wealth, brought into it would confer; this could never have conferred real glory on God's house, and, in point of fact, there never was any such bringing of wealth to this later temple by the nations of the earth as would, even in point of material splendour, have made it to transcend that which Solomon built. Nor can the semi-Messianic interpretation, according to which the silver and gold which the nations are to bring to the temple symbolize the Gentile converts that were in the times of the Messiah to be brought into the Church, be accepted; for though in the prophets spiritual blessings are sometimes represented under the figure of material riches, it seems utterly incongruous to adopt such a representation here, where a comparison is instituted between the old temple and the new. To say that the latter should surpass in glory the former because the Church should in the times of the Messiah receive large accessions to its converts, and rich spiritual blessing, is to institute a comparison between two things which are not comparable. The things compared by the prophet are not the literal temple and the spiritual Church, but the first temple and the second temple as buildings; and what he says is that the latter, though inferior to the former in material splendour, shall yet possess a greater glory, for into it shall the Desire of all nations come. Understand this of the presence of the Christ in the temple, and all is plain and consistent; but, understood of the accession of Gentile converts to the Church, the whole representation becomes confused and incoherent. It was the very house which the Jews saw before them, and by the comparative meanness of which they were distressed, of which God said, "I will fill this house with glory." If something did not come into that house which made it more glorious than the temple of Solomon, the promise of God was not kept, and the prophecy was not fulfilled.

Here, then, we have the same terminus as before. The Messiah was to come whilst the later temple was still standing. Now, Jesus of Nazareth, claiming to be the Messiah, was brought into that temple in His infancy to be dedicated to God; He was hailed there by pious Jews who were

waiting for "the consolation of Israel" as the promised Deliverer; He Himself claimed it as His "Father's House," and therefore the place where He, as the Son, had the right of occupancy; when He entered Jerusalem in triumph, and the air was rent with the hosannas that hailed Him as the promised Son of David and King of Israel, it was to the temple He advanced; and it was there apparently that He received the intelligence that certain Greeks were desirous of seeing Him,—intelligence that called from Him the exulting exclamation, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." In Jesus, then, this prophecy and promise received its literal fulfilment. But had it not been fulfilled in Him, it would have remained to all time unfulfilled; for the torch of the Roman soldier which commenced the conflagration that laid the temple in ruins rendered it for ever impossible that to that house the "Desire of all nations" should come, and that it should thereby be filled with glory.

MAL. iii. 1.—It may suffice simply to cite this passage as distinctly indicating the same terminus. That the Person here referred to as the Messenger of the Covenant, and the Lord whom the people of God sought and desired, is the Messiah, there can be no doubt. Of Him, therefore, God says that He shall come to His temple. Either, then, He came whilst the temple at Jerusalem was yet standing, or He never has come, and never can come. Rejecting the latter alternative, it follows that the Messiah must have appeared much about the time that Jesus appeared claiming to be the Messiah.

DAN. ix. 25.—This passage is perhaps the most remarkable, as it is the most precise and conclusive of all. We have here a very precise indication of the time when the Messiah should appear and suffer for men; and if we can rightly calculate these sixty-nine weeks, we shall see how far the time indicated synchronizes with the time when our Lord appeared. There is a difficulty here, however, arising from the uncertainty as to *terminus a quo*, the time indicated by the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. Was this the release granted by Cyrus (B.C. 536) to the Jews who chose to return to their own country, or was it the later edict of Artaxerxes granted B.C. 458, and of which we have an account in Nehemiah ii.? There can be little hesitation in concluding

that it was the latter, because it alone could be described as a command to restore and rebuild the city, and as consequent upon it alone was the wall built and the city arranged in streets. Taking the year 458 B.C. then as the starting-point, we have to count from it, first, seven weeks or forty-nine years for the completion of the rebuilding of the city, and then from that we have to count sixty-two weeks or four hundred and thirty-four years to find the time of the Messiah. Now forty-nine years from four hundred and fifty-eight brings us to the year 409 B.C. as the date of the completion of the building of the wall, and this we find was actually the time within which the work was completed, and the record of the book of Nehemiah closed. From this limit a period of four hundred and thirty-four years would bring us to the year twenty-five or twenty-six of the Christian era; and this would be just about the time when our Lord's advent was announced by His forerunner, and He Himself began to show Himself unto Israel. Here, then, we have a strikingly exact coincidence, and in that a fulfilment of a very precise prophecy, and an indubitable proof that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. Sixty-nine weeks or four hundred and eighty-three years were to elapse from the going forth of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince; and we find exactly that time elapsed from the issuing of the decree of Artaxerxes till the appearance of Jesus Christ claiming to be the Messiah. Is it possible to resist the conclusion that He was indeed the Messiah so predicted?

It thus appears that the Messiah was to come at or near about the time of the cessation of the religious supremacy of the Jews, about the time when, as our Lord said to the Jews, the kingdom of God was to be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof (Matt. xxi. 43), before the destruction of the temple, and near about the time of the appearance and crucifixion of Jesus. At this time also we find a prevailing expectation among the pious portion of the Jews—those who waited for the consolation of Israel—that the advent of the promised Messiah was at hand. Now, it is certain that no other appeared at that time, either claiming to be the Messiah or giving the least reason to believe that he was the Messiah. It follows, therefore, with

a strong probability that He was, as He professed to be, the very Christ.

2. We can determine the *family* of which the Messiah was to be born, the *place of His appearance*, and the *manner of His birth*. He was to be of the family of David (Isa. xi. 1; Ps. cxxxii. 11, lxxxix. 3, 4; Jer. xxiii. 5); He was to be born at Bethlehem (Micah v. 2); He was to be Son of a virgin (Isa. vii. 14). So well known was this among the Jews, that the prophet describes the mother of the Messiah definitely as *the virgin* *κατ' ἐξοχην* (הַתְּלִימָה); and Micah speaks of her as "she which travaileth," without any further specification. These are minute criteria, and in the last case a singular one is adduced; as they all met and were fulfilled in Jesus the Son of Mary, who was of the house and lineage of David, and who was by a peculiar concurrence of circumstances at Bethlehem when her Son was born, the probability becomes very strong that He was indeed the Christ.

3. We know what the Messiah was to *teach*, to *do*, and to *suffer* (comp. Deut. xviii. 15, 18. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6, xlii. 1-7, lxi. 1. Isa. liii. 3; Ps. xli. Zech. xi. 12, 13. Ps. xxii. 12, 13, 16, 17, 18. Ps. lxix. 21, xxxiv. 20; Zech. xii. 10. Isa. liii. 9. Ps. xvi. 9, 10, etc.).

(1.) He was to be a prophet like unto Moses, claiming equal if not greater authority, and on the ground of this setting up a new dispensation (Deut. xviii. 18). All the prophets who succeeded Moses were to be merely supporters and subordinates to him. This was to be at least on a par with him, to speak with authority, and to teach the will of God in an independent and original manner. And as the Prophet of the Lord He was to have God's Spirit poured upon Him in unwonted measure (Isa. xlii. 1-4), and was "to bring forth judgment to the Gentiles," and the isles were "to wait for His law."

(2.) He was to perform many notable and beneficent works. He was to open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, to make the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing (Isa. xxxv. 5, 6). He was to "proclaim liberty to the captives, to preach good tidings to the meek or poor, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Isa. lxi. 1, 2).

(3.) He was to suffer. He was to be a man of sorrows and familiar with grief,—despised and rejected of men,—wounded and bruised. He was to be betrayed by His own familiar friend into the hand of His enemies; He was to be valued at and sold for thirty pieces of silver; He was to die through their persecution and amid their mocking; they were to pierce His hands and feet; they were to part His garments, and cast lots on His vesture; they were to give Him gall for His meat, and in His thirst vinegar to drink. Yet God was to keep all His bones so that not one of them should be broken; He was to be with the rich after His death, though His enemies had appointed His grave with the wicked; and He was to be raised again so as not to see corruption, and to be exalted to great glory and honour (Isa. liii. 3 ff.; Ps. xli. 9; Zech. xi. 10, 12; Ps. xxii. 7, 13, 16, 18, xxxiv. 20, lxix. 21; Isa. liii. 9; Ps. xvi. 9, 10).

Now all these met in a most remarkable manner in Jesus. He was a great teacher and prophet, just such as Moses; not a mere supporter of Moses, but acting with an equal and independent authority, so that His enemies tried to charge Him with setting aside Moses and the law. He spoke with an authority that no other prophet ever assumed. "He taught as one having authority" (Matt. vii. 29). Then, as respects His works, they were exactly such as the Messiah had been announced as to perform. When John sent two disciples to Him to say, "Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?" His reply was, "Go tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached" (Luke vii. 20, 22). He healed all manner of diseases and sicknesses, so that the fame of Him went out into all the surrounding region (Matt. iv. 24).

Nor were His sufferings less truly such as had been predicted of the Messiah. He lived in a humble state, and often in extreme poverty (Matt. viii. 20). Men scoffed, and said, "Is not this the carpenter—the artificer—the son of Mary? And they were offended at Him" (Mark vi. 3). He was, as predicted of the Messiah, betrayed by one of His own familiars (Matt. xxvi. 48), was literally sold for thirty pieces of silver (Matt. xxvi. 15), was put to death by crucifixion,



which led to the piercing of His hands and feet (Matt. xxvii. 31), was mocked in His agony by those who stood around (Matt. xxvii. 31), had gall and vinegar given to Him when He said, "I thirst" (John xix. 28), had His body pierced with the heathen spear (John xix. 34), had His garments divided by lots (Matt. xxvii. 35), and after His death was laid in the family tomb of a rich man who begged His body, which had else been cast to the place of malefactors (Matt. xxvii. 57). Raised from the dead, though He really did die, He was not suffered to see corruption (Acts ii. 31). His body did not decay, but was raised again, so that in the possession of full vigour He went in and out among His disciples for forty days, and taught them the things concerning the kingdom which He had come to establish, and the foundations of which He had laid in His sacrificial death (Acts i. 3).

4. Finally, it was foretold of the Messiah that the great body of the Jewish people would not believe in Him, and that it would be among the Gentiles that His kingdom would be set up. "Who," says the prophet, in reference to this, "hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. liii. 1). He was to be despised and rejected of men; counted as one who was outcast from God, and visited with His judgments. But though Israel should not be gathered by Him, He should be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, for He should be a light to the Gentiles, that He might be God's salvation to the ends of the earth (Isa. xlix. 5, 6). How strictly and literally all this was fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth needs not to be pointed out. He came to His own house, and His own people received Him not (John i. 11). Despised, rejected, insulted by them, and at last put to death, He proclaimed Himself the "Light of the World" (John viii. 12); from the cross on which the Jews put Him to death He said He would draw all men unto Him (John xii. 32); and when He sent forth His disciples to preach the gospel of the kingdom, it was from amongst the nations, the Gentiles, that He told them they were to make disciples (Matt. xxviii. 19); and so it was in the Gentile world that the Church first struck its roots so as to become firmly established.

Such are some of the evidences from which it may be

concluded that Jesus is indeed the Messiah promised to the fathers, and of whom the ancient prophets wrote. It has been truly said that "never was such a body of prophecy given and accomplished in any other case." With all confidence, then, may we say, "We know that the Son of God is come," hail Jesus as the true Messiah, and appeal to the O. T. declarations concerning the Messiah for information, when we would know the truth concerning the Person and Work of the Author of Christianity.

[The general proof of the Messiahship of Jesus Christ given in this chapter was followed up by several lectures, in the course of which Dr. Alexander examined in detail the leading passages in the Old Testament which he held to apply to the Messiah, and therefore to Jesus Christ—on the ground of the proof already given that Jesus was the Messiah. As the substance of these lectures has already appeared in his work on *The Connection and Harmony of the Old and New Testaments*, and as considerations of space have to be kept in view, they are here omitted, and the reader is referred to that work for an account of Dr. Alexander's teaching regarding the Messianic predictions. On the same subject Hengstenberg's *Christology of the Old Testament* may also be consulted. The omission of these lectures will probably be all the less a disadvantage, seeing Dr. Alexander relied for support of his positions regarding the person and work of Christ chiefly on passages in the New Testament.—ED.]

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

#### I. THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

Our attention will now be directed to the testimony given in the N. T. concerning the Person of Him whom we have found to be the promised Messiah, and to the work He accomplished on behalf of men.

We shall, first, consider those passages that relate to the divine nature of Christ; secondly, those which set forth His humanity; and thirdly, consider the relations of these two natures in Christ.

Under the first head we shall select those passages in which the names, attributes, works, and worship appropriate to God are applied to Jesus Christ.

## (I.) THE NAMES APPLIED TO CHRIST.

### i. LORD GOD.

Luke i. 16, 17 : “ And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias,” etc.

This passage is important as giving us the testimony of an angel expressly sent from heaven concerning Christ. It is conveyed in the form of a prediction concerning the relation to Him of His forerunner John, on occasion of the announcement of whose birth it was given. It is announced that John was to act the part of a herald, who was to go before and prepare the way for the advent of the great King. Now, in what language is this announcement clothed? In such language as naturally leads us to ascribe divine honours to Christ; for after stating that John should be instrumental in turning many to the Lord their God, he adds immediately, “ And he shall go before *Him*” etc. Now, as the “ *Him* ” here refers to the Lord God immediately before named, and as John was the forerunner of Christ, it is evident that in the mind of the angel the Christ before whom John was to go was identified with the Lord God to whom John was to turn many, etc. De Wette and some other critics of neological tendencies try to evade this conclusion by saying that the meaning is, not that John was to go before the Messiah, but before the Lord God to whom the agency in all that the Messiah did is ascribed. According to this, it is admitted that the antecedent to “ *Him* ” in ver. 17 is the Lord God of ver. 16; but as it is denied that in ver. 16 the Messiah is spoken of at all, the argument which would infer the ascrip-

tion to Him of divine honours from His being identified with the Lord God is thus set aside. This is ingenious, but fallacious; for 1. when the term *ἐνώπιον* is used in reference to God as God, it means, and can only with propriety mean, *in His sight, in His estimation* (comp. ver. 6, *δίκαιοι ἐν. τ. Θεου*, just in the sight or judgment of God; see also ver. 15). But here it is used in the sense of local precedence, as is evident from the entire structure of the sentence, and also from the concluding words, which assert that the design of His going before was to prepare or make ready a people prepared for the Lord. 2. This last expression greatly favours the reference of the words "before Him" to the Messiah. For whom was it that John was to make ready a prepared people? De Wette himself answers, "The way of Jesus Christ," for he explains this concluding clause thus, "to make ready for the Lord a people prepared, *i.e.* ready to welcome His advent." If, then, it was to get ready a people to welcome His advent that John went forth, surely He before whom he went must be the same as He to prepare for the coming of whom he went. 3. John's own declaration after he began to preach to the Jews invariably was that he had been sent before the Christ. "Ye yourselves," said he to his disciples, "bear me witness that I said I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him." When, therefore, the angel in announcing his birth says, "And he shall go before Him," etc., the natural, the necessary conclusion is that he intends thereby his acting as the forerunner of Christ. Meyer says: "*ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ* can, in accordance with the context, be referred only to God (ver. 16). The prophets depict the entrance of the Messianic reign as the coming of Jehovah among His people, so that according to this God Himself is represented by the Messiah. In the person of the coming Messiah Jehovah Himself comes."

We hold the reasoning valid, then, which infers the application to Jesus Christ of the names "Lord God" from the juxtaposition of these two statements of the angel. It may be further observed that this phraseology is in full harmony with the language of the O. T. in reference to the coming and services of John the Baptist. He is there ever

spoken of as sent to prepare the way of Jehovah. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah," etc. (Isa. xl. 3). "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me" (Mal. iii. 1). That these predictions relate to John the Baptist no one doubts who admits the authority of inspiration at all. Here, then, are two things very clear—(1) John was to be sent before to prepare the way of Jehovah; (2) John actually did go before Christ to prepare His way. It follows that Christ was the Jehovah before whom John was to come.

## ii. SON OF GOD.

In many parts of the N. T. Jesus Christ is designated the Son of God. Our Lord Himself frequently uses this designation of Himself. In His discourse with Nicodemus He speaks of Himself as the only-begotten Son whom the Father sent into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him should be saved (John iii. 16, 17). In one of His discourses uttered when He was in Galilee, He said, "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (Matt. xi. 27). Of the man who was born blind He asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" and in answer to the man's inquiry, "Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" our Lord said, "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee" (John ix. 35–37). When Peter, in answer to our Lord's question to the Twelve, "Will ye also go away?" exclaimed, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life: and we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John vi. 67–69), Jesus did not refuse the title thus ascribed to Him; and on an earlier occasion, when, in reply to His question, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," our Lord not only assented, but pronounced on Peter the benediction, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 16, 17). In His great intercessory prayer His

first petition is, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee" (John xvii. 1). And when on His trial the high priest adjured Him by the living God to tell them whether He were the Christ the Son of God, Jesus virtually admitted that this was the case by using the appropriate formula of assent, "Thou hast said:" and so the Jews understood Him; for when He hung on the cross they mocked Him, saying, "He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him: for He said, I am the Son of God" (Matt. xxvii. 43).

The title which our Lord thus assumed and asserted for Himself others of God's servants freely assign to Him. His forerunner John the Baptist "bare record of Him that this is the Son of God" (John i. 34). The evangelist John tells us that the record of Christ's life and doings has been written that men "might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God" (John xx. 31); and in his Epistles he repeatedly by this phrase designates Jesus as the object of Christian faith and confession (1 John iv. 15, iii. 23, v. 5, 13, 20), and as the author of salvation (1 John i. 7, iv. 9, 10, v. 11). When Paul was converted, "straightway he preached Jesus, that this is the Son of God" (Acts ix. 20); in writing to the Romans he says that the gospel unto which he was set apart as an apostle was "concerning God's Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, but was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by His resurrection from the dead" (Rom. i. 3, 4); and in the same Epistle he speaks of serving God "in the gospel of His Son," of men being "reconciled to God by the death of His Son," of God sending "His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin," and of believers being "conformed to the image of God's Son" (Rom. i. 9, v. 10, viii. 3, 29). To the Galatians he says, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says that "God hath in these last times spoken to us by His Son;" declares that we have a great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God; warns men against apostasy from Christ by declaring that those who "fall away crucify the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame," and describes such as

having “trodden under foot the Son of God” (Heb. i. 2, iv. 14, vi. 6, x. 29).

Of a truth, then, Jesus is the Son of God. It concerns us to inquire in what sense He is so designated. This is the more necessary inasmuch as others besides Him are in Scripture called sons of God—angels, for instance, because immediately created by Him, and resembling Him in majesty and purity; and men, who are His sons by immediate creation, as Adam was, and by regeneration, so as to morally resemble Him their Father in heaven. Of this advantage has been taken by those who refuse to admit our Lord’s true Deity, as showing that in calling Him the Son of God nothing more is implied than in the case of those creatures, angelic or human, to whom the same appellation is given in Scripture.

It must be evident, however, that there is a peculiarity in the use of this designation as applied to our Lord which distinguishes it when so applied from all the other uses of it in Scripture. Not only is He emphatically and definitely *the* Son of God, but He is by Himself and others described as the “only-begotten Son of God.” Whatever else may be implied in this, there can be no question that it implies Sonship in a sense absolutely unique and exclusive. Further, when it is said of this only-begotten Son that He is in the bosom of the Father, and that He, coming forth from the bosom of the Father, hath declared, *i.e.* hath made clear, hath clearly revealed to men, God “whom no man hath seen” (John i. 18), one cannot fail to perceive that as a Son He stood to God in a wholly different relation from that in which any creature can stand to Him. His being in the “bosom of the Father” can only mean that He was in such essential and intimate relation to God as is expressed in the declaration in the beginning of John’s Gospel, that He was with God (*προς τον Θεον*); and His declaring to men that Being whom “no man hath seen” can only mean that He was so intimate with the Infinite God that He knew Him in a way no creature could know Him, and could reveal Him to men, not by a revelation made to Himself, but “by a peculiar, self-possessed, and original faculty.”<sup>1</sup>

Further, our Lord speaking of Himself as the Son says, in vindication of His having done a work of healing on the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Pye Smith’s *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, ii. 241.

Sabbath day, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v. 17). The reasoning here evidently is, "God carries on His work on the Sabbath as well as on the other days of the week; and I, as His Son, do as He does, and have the same right to do so as He has." Clearly, therefore, our Lord understood His Sonship as entitling Him to stand on a footing of equality with God; and so also He was understood by those in whose hearing He uttered this declaration; for the Jews, we read, when they heard it, sought to kill Him, because He had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, "thereby making Himself equal with God" (John v. 18). That this was a just conclusion from what our Lord had said was not only implicitly admitted by Him, but He went on to confirm it by asserting, in still plainer words, His unity and equality with the Father: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. . . . For as the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: that all should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father" (John v. 17-23). Our Lord thus not only asserted His right as the Son to work as God works, but He asserted that, as the Son, He was one in purpose and working with the Father, and that to Him was due that honour and homage which belong to God.

It must be evident, then, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in a sense in which no creature can be. The conclusion to which we are in consequence brought is, that by advancing this claim, He for Himself, and His servants for Him, advanced a claim to divine rights and honours for Him. This was how the Jews understood Him when He called Himself "the Son of God;" and it is very noticeable that it was for this and for this alone that the Jewish authorities adjudged Him deserving of death. "We have a law," they said to Pilate, "and by that law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God" (John xix. 23). It was as a blasphemer that they condemned Him to die, according to the



law which declared that "he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord shall be put to death" (Lev. xxiv. 16); and this charge they grounded on His calling Himself the Son of God, thereby, as they contended, making Himself equal with God. "No candid reader," as Whately remarks, "can doubt that the Jews understood Him to claim by this title a divine character, and He Himself must have *known* that they so understood Him. As little can it be doubted that they rightly understood Him. For if He had known that these words were understood differently from His real meaning and yet had not corrected the mistake, He would have been bearing witness against Himself." Either, then, it must be admitted that in calling Himself the Son of God, Jesus claimed for Himself divine honours, claimed equality with God, or it must be concluded that He died, not as a witness for the truth, but as the victim of a mistake which He not only would not take the trouble to correct, but which He in effect sanctioned and authorized as true. Which side of this alternative is to be adopted cannot for a moment be doubted by any mind in which the slightest respect for Jesus as a Teacher is retained; for if He thus allowed the Jews to believe that, by calling Himself the Son of God, He made Himself equal with God when such was not the case, He virtually admitted the charge on which He was condemned to be true, and thus went to the cross, not as a blameless victim, but as one guilty of the most flagrant of crimes.

### iii. SON OF MAN.

This appellation occurs only in the Gospels, and is used only by Jesus Christ Himself, with one exception,—that of Acts vii. 5, 6, where Stephen uses it of the glorified Saviour as seen by him in vision. That the apostles do not use this appellation in their writings may be accounted for by the fact that the object they had in view led them to lay special stress on the divine and supernatural aspect of the Redeemer; or it may be that they felt there was something in it which rendered it an unfitting one for them to use,—as if it beseeemed only Christ Himself to apply to Him such a title. The use of it by Stephen is attributable probably to the fact that he recognised in the Saviour, as presented to his view, the

well-known form of Him whom he had seen and known as He went in and out amongst men on earth.

We have only to look at the manner in which the Saviour uses this title of Himself to be assured that He attached to it an important meaning. It was not a mere equivalent for *man*, not a mere periphrastic way of saying "*I*," as some suggest;<sup>1</sup> it had in it a significance in relation to what the Speaker was as He appeared among men. Nor does the reference seem to be to His human nature simply, as distinct from His divine; for in no case in which it is used does there appear to be any special reason for giving prominence to this aspect of His complex nature. As little can it be regarded as a mere synonym of Messiah; for though it is occasionally used interchangeably with this (Matt. xxvi. 63 ff.; Luke xxii. 67 ff.; John xii. 34), yet it does not follow from this that the two have exactly the same significancy, inasmuch as the same object may be designated by titles which have different meanings.

When we look at our Lord's use of this title on the occasion of His trial, when in answer to the adjuration of the high priest to tell them whether He was "the Christ, the Son of God," He said, "Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. xxvi. 63, 64), we cannot fail to perceive whence this title was derived. In these words our Lord evidently alludes to Dan. vii. 13, where we read: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like unto the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before Him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." That this passage has a Messianic reference all are agreed, and in virtually appropriating it to Himself the Saviour asserted His claims to be the Messiah. But it is to the Messiah not simply as such that the passage refers; it is to Him specially as invested with universal dominion. In its very origin and primary reference, then, the title "Son of Man" is a *royal* name

<sup>1</sup> Olshausen on Acts vii. 5, 6; Neander, *Leben Jesu*, p. 130.

—a name belonging to the Messiah in His glory and majesty, “King of kings, and Lord of lords;” and one reason, probably, why our Lord used it so frequently was to associate His claims as the Messiah with this prophetic description—to indicate that though He appeared among men poor, afflicted, and despised, He was nevertheless the great King whose dominion should embrace all peoples, and last for ever. That this was His design on the occasion referred to hardly admits of a doubt; and the special solemnity of the occasion, and of the circumstances under which our Lord spoke,—put upon His oath as He had been by the high priest,—lend peculiar importance to the declaration which He uttered. Why, it is natural to ask, did our Lord add this declaration to what He had already said in answer to the high priest’s adjuration? Why not content Himself with simply answering in the affirmative the question that had been put to Him? And why, especially, depart from the Messianic title “Son of God,” which had been used by the high priest, to adopt that of “Son of Man”? The answer to these queries seems to be, that He omitted this spontaneous declaration, and made use of this different title, for the express purpose of connecting His appearance, as He then stood at the bar of His enemies, humble, oppressed, and helpless, with the predicted glory of that kingdom which the prophet saw in vision as given to the Son of Man.

This name, then, is a name of dignity and majesty. Whilst, therefore, it undoubtedly relates to our Lord’s humanity (for none but a real partaker of our nature could be with any propriety called “son of man”), it must be held as expressing something beyond that, something higher than that. This, indeed, may be inferred from the mere fact of our Lord’s using it in the presence of men as a *peculiar* and *distinctive* appellation. Had He used the appellation of Himself in relation to God,—as it is frequently used of the prophet Ezekiel,—we should not have been justified in attaching to it any peculiar significancy. But when, standing in the midst of persons every one of whom was in a sense a son of man, He calls Himself “*The* Son of Man” by way of distinction, it is evident that it is not in the ordinary and common, but in some new and peculiar sense that He meant the name to be understood. “Son of

Man" is a title which may be addressed to any man; but "*The Son of Man*" carries with it a claim to something not common to the race—something peculiar to the individual to whom it is applied. This suggests to us that in the humanity of Christ there was something beyond the common, something marvellous and supernatural. He was not this man's son or that man's son; He was the Son of Humanity, the Child of the Race, the crown and consummation of mankind, the true ideal Man in whom were embodied all the perfections and in whom were shut up all the destinies of the race.

The language of Daniel, to which our Lord referred in His answer to the high priest, presents the being whom he saw brought to the Ancient of days under a twofold aspect. On the one hand, he indicates the peculiarity of his condition by saying that "He was *like* unto a son of man,"—words which would have been inappropriate had it been a mere man of whom he was speaking; and, on the other, he indicates Him as the Son of Humanity, its flower, the true man, inasmuch as the kingdoms on the ruins of which the new kingdom of which He was to be the King, though human kingdoms, are yet represented only by brutal symbols; for the first time the nobility of human nature is exhibited in the new kingdom; in the others reigns the flesh, in this the spirit, according to which man is the image of God.<sup>1</sup> We may gain light upon the subject now before us—the proper force and meaning of the title "Son of Man"—from what St. Paul teaches concerning our Lord as the second Adam, and also as the representative man in whose exaltation to the throne of heaven we see a type and pledge of the elevation of man to supremacy over all things.

In presenting Adam and Christ to us as the first and second man, the apostle necessarily has reference to them in their representative character; for in no other respect were they first and second; not in order of time as living upon earth, for between them intervened a long series of men; not in respect of dignity, for in this respect Christ was first and Adam second. But as representatives of the race they stand out from all other men,—Adam the first, Jesus Christ the second. Now the race, as it were, looks back to the

<sup>1</sup> Gess, *Lehre von der Person Christi*, p. 9.

first Adam and finds itself revived in its representative; but it anticipates and longs for another man who shall equally represent it, and by whom it shall be restored. This restoring representative the apostle shows us in Christ. In Him fallen humanity finds not only the pattern of all that moral and spiritual excellence which man, made in the image of God, was at first created to manifest, but also the restorer of man's nature, by whom he is to be recovered from the death of evil and quickened into a new and higher life. In Him, also, he sees the representative and security of the ultimate triumph and glory of the race. Jesus, who for a little time for the suffering of death was made lower than the angels, is now seen exalted to the throne of heaven, and crowned with glory and with honour. In that lies the assurance of man's final supremacy over all the works of God's hands. All power and authority in heaven and earth are committed to Christ, and this He holds and uses for the final redemption of men. They that believe in Him shall be partakers of His glory. They that endure unto the end shall receive the crown of life. They that overcome "shall sit down with Him on His throne, even as He overcame and is set down with the Father on His throne." In Him, therefore, the race sees its restoring representative, hails the consummation of its own perfection, and recognizes the pledge of its final triumph and glory.

Now, if we look at the passages in which the apostle thus presents Christ as the second Adam, the restoring representative of our race, we shall find that he lays stress not so much on the real humanity of Christ as on the presence in His humanity of a higher nature. His being lower than the angels was not the natural consequence of His being of a nature inferior to theirs; it was because He was for a special end temporarily *made* so; and His ability to restore the race which fell in Adam rests on His being the Lord from heaven, the quickening Spirit who had stooped to take upon Him a nature inferior to His own that He might help it. It was, then, because He was more than man that He fulfilled His high functions as the representative of perfect humanity—the restorer and benefactor of the race. He had *assumed* humanity, and therefore, not begotten of any man, He was

emphatically, and in a sense peculiar to Himself, “*The Son of Man*,”—the Man in whom there was by divine power the prototypal and germinal essence of human nature; by whom that nature is redeemed and glorified, and who is “Man in the highest sense, in a sense fully answering to the idea” of manhood.<sup>1</sup>

From this it appears that the title Son of Man can be properly understood only by our ascending above the humanity of our Lord, and taking note of His divinity as tabernacling in His humanity. Indeed, apart from special revelations on the subject, this seems almost to be necessitated by the conditions of the case. No mere man, we may venture to say, *could* be with propriety called “The Son of Man.” Only a superior nature is competent in assuming ours to enclose in His one person all that is essentially characteristic of the race, all that constitutes its glory and its nobleness, and who could undertake for the race so as to act on its behalf and secure the fulfilment of its destinies and its longings,—only such an one could fitly assume such an appellation as this. To Jesus Christ, however, such a title was simply due. He, in His proper person, God with God, took on Him our nature. He took it on Him in all its essential qualities and all its primeval excellences. He showed what it was normally meant to be, and what it was yet capable of becoming even in us the fallen ones and the lost. He, for the first time, did it full justice, and showed what a divine thing it is as it came from the hand of God. In Him alone is humanity truly represented.

Nor is this all. The title Son of Man belonged to Him in virtue of His relation to universal humanity. According to the flesh and by descent He was a Jew, the Son of David; and true to that law of our nature which bids us seek first the welfare of those who are nearest of kin to us, He directed His first efforts of beneficence to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But He, from the first, contemplated the whole world as His field. His benevolent sympathies embraced all classes and tribes of men on the face of the earth; and He recognized it as the consummation of His work to “draw all men unto Him.” He had His special relations to individuals

<sup>1</sup> Neander, *Leben Jesu*, p. 131.

of the race as all partakers of our nature must have ; and He was true to these—true to the claims of friendship as well as to the ties of family ; and yet He could say in relation to the great purpose of His advent, “ Who is my mother, and who are my brethren ? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother ” (Matt. xii. 48–50). Now, He is the only partaker of our nature who stands in this common relation to the race as such. We cannot except even Adam, the common father of all ; for Adam himself is part of that race to which Christ stood thus in relation. Of Him alone can it be said that His knowledge, His sympathies, His love embrace the entire human family from first to last. He alone can range through the entire circle of humanity and offer Himself as a friend and a brother to each individual of our race. To Him alone can every human being go with equal freedom and assurance. Thus connected, not with individuals or with a nation, but with the race as such, He fitly calls Himself “ The Son of Man.”

In fine, He is the Son of Man inasmuch as He is the Heir and Lord of the world. This earth was given to man by God for his inheritance. All things have been put under His feet. As man’s representative He has been constituted heir of all things ; and in His exaltation we have the pledge and assurance of man’s final supremacy. It is as if the son of some princely house that had forfeited its possessions should appear, embodying in himself its qualities and its claims, and should by worthy deeds recover, not for himself alone, but for his family and name, their former dignity and estate. In such an one the whole family would willingly acknowledge itself to be, as it were, concentrated, and on him would its name with special emphasis rest. On this ground, then, as well as those already mentioned, does Christ’s right to the title Son of Man rest.

When we look at the passages in which this appellation is used by Christ of Himself, we shall find the view thus given of its purport and intention confirmed ; for in almost all of them there is a manifest allusion to the peculiar attribute of Christ as possessing a nature higher than the human nature, and as standing in a relation exclusively His own with mankind. Confining ourselves in the meantime to those

which occur in the fourth Gospel, the first which occurs is His declaration to Nathanael (i. 51), "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." Here our Lord intimates that through Him friendly intercourse between God and man should be re-established, and human nature be once more brought into communion with the unfallen powers of heaven. The next passage occurs in our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus (iii. 13), where He says, "No man hath ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." Here He asserts that He had existed antecedently to His appearance on earth, and that as the Son of Man He even, whilst on earth, abode in heaven. In the next passage (ver. 14) He refers to His sacrificial death, where His representative and substitutionary character is by implication involved. The next passage (v. 27) has reference to His being the appointed judge of the world; this office belongs to God, but it is as Man that Christ is to appear to judge mankind; thereby affording a manifestation of God in human nature. In the next passage (vi. 27, 53) Christ speaks of Himself as giving meat to man which endureth unto eternal life, and more particularly as giving Himself to men that they may eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, and so live for ever; where His meaning is that it is by the reception of Him as incarnate for our redemption, and as thereby bringing nigh to us God, the source of all life, that we are recovered from the death of sin, and are restored to spiritual and endless life. Other passages relate to the power of the Son of Man as lifted up on the cross to draw all men unto Him, to His ascension to that place where He was before, and to the glory which is to accrue to Him from the completion of His propitiatory work; in all which passages the allusion to His superior, His superhuman character, and to the specialty of His working on man's behalf, is apparent. We have but glanced at these passages, but the most careful examination of them will only confirm the assertion that the title "Son of Man" cannot be understood as indicating merely our Lord's true humanity, or as merely marking Him out as the Messiah, but always carries in



it an allusion to that which was His peculiar characteristic—His appearing as incarnate God for man's redemption.

#### iv. THE LOGOS.

John i. 1–14.—This Prologue has, as you are aware, been the subject of extensive discussion, and very much learning and ingenuity have been expended upon it. Much of this, I cannot but think, might have been spared had the previous question been duly considered, Whether the evangelist, in what he says about the Word or Logos, here intended to teach an abstract speculative truth,—what Lücke calls a Theologoumenon,—or meant merely to state a fact pertaining to the Person of Jesus Christ. If the former view be adopted, it will, of course, become necessary to enter into the full investigation of the ancient speculations concerning the Logos and the Sophia, that so we may assign to John's words their just and full speculative import. But if the latter view be adopted, we may dispense with such inquiries, and limit ourselves to an exposition of John's own words, simply referring to extraneous speculations as these may help to account for the peculiar phraseology he employs. Now, which of these views we should adopt hardly affords room for doubt. Not only is it not the habit of the sacred writers to indulge in abstract speculation,—all their communications having a marked practicality of aspect,—but it needs only a glance at the tenor of the evangelist's statements to satisfy us that from the very beginning he is on the field, not of speculation, but of fact. Whilst the other evangelists begin the history of Jesus in time, he, giving prominence to His higher nature, begins His history by telling us what He was before time. The statement in the 1st verse—that the Word was in the beginning, etc.—is no more a theologoumenon than is the statement in the 14th verse—that the Word became flesh. Both are simply historical facts—facts pertaining to the Person of whom John is about to write. Without, therefore, doing any injustice to our subject, we may exempt ourselves from the necessity of considering the elaborate and learned attempts which have been made to illustrate this part of the sacred writings from Jewish speculation, and even from heathen philosophy.

(i.) In order to arrive at a just sense of what St. John here teaches, the first question we have to consider is, Does John speak here of a Person, or of something that is not a person ?

In reply to this, some have said that the object of which John speaks is the divine attribute of Reason or Wisdom. But it needs only a slight consideration of his language to satisfy us that this cannot be correct. For 1. the word *λογος* never has the meaning of reason as an attribute ; in the classics it is used to denote the reason or ground of a thing, but never the rational faculty or the attribute of reason in an intelligent agent. When the sacred writers would express the idea of God's attribute of reason or wisdom they used the formula *σοφία* or *πνευμα Θεου*. 2. John says that the Logos was *with God* (*προς τον Θεον*), *was God* (*ην Θεος*, not *Θεου*), and *became flesh* (*σαρξ εγενετο*). It would make the evangelist guilty of an idle tautology to suppose him to affirm that a divine attribute is with God, for this would be simply to say that an attribute of God is an attribute of God ; nor is there any sense in which an attribute of God could be said to be God. How, moreover, could an attribute of God become flesh ? God may communicate to men qualities which shall resemble certain attributes in Himself, such as wisdom, goodness, etc.; but no intelligent writer meaning to convey this idea would speak of the attributes of God thereby becoming incarnate. The evangelist's words naturally lead us to think of a Person. 3. In ver. 15 we have the testimony of John the Baptist concerning the incarnate Logos, and in this he ascribes to Him, as a Person, pre-existence, an ascription which Jesus repeatedly makes to Himself in His discourses (comp. viii. 14, xvii. 5). But if Jesus, who was the Logos become flesh, existed as a person before His incarnation, then the Logos which became flesh must before that have had a personal existence. These considerations leave no room to doubt that by the Logos here John intends a Person.

(ii.) If the Logos here be a person, there can be no doubt that the evangelist identifies Him in some sense with Jesus Christ. This follows from the statement in ver. 14, that "the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us ; and we

beheld His glory as the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,"—a statement which, as every one admits, refers to Jesus Christ. It is implied also in the declaration of John the Baptist in connection with what precedes. In further support of this, if that were needed, we might appeal to 1 John i. 1, where the phrase "Word of Life" is used as a designation of Jesus Christ, and to Rev. xix. 13, where the Faithful and True Witness is named the Word of God. These phrases are not identical with the one before us, but they may competently be adduced as showing that it was in accordance with John's *usus loquendi* to speak of Jesus Christ in his Personality as the Word.

(iii.) It is remarkable that St. John offers no explanation of this term as applied to Christ. He introduces it as one which his readers would at once understand in its application to Jesus Christ without any explanation from him. Now there are only two suppositions, I think, on which this can be accounted for: Either the title was one with which they were familiar as a common and accredited designation of the Messiah; or the term carried in it its own meaning; so that in calling Jesus the Logos, John no more needed to explain himself than when he calls Christ the Life and the Light. Between these two suppositions our choice lies. Now there is one consideration which seems decisive against the former, and that is, that nowhere do we find the Messiah thus designated except by John, nor is there a shadow of evidence that this term was ever known as a designation of the Messiah until it was applied to Jesus Christ by John. It is true, we find in the Jewish Targums the phrase *מימרא דיי*, *the Word of Jehovah*, and such abstract terms as *יקרא* = *כבוד*, *glory*, or *שכינה*, *indwelling*, employed to designate God Himself; but there is no evidence that under this phraseology the ancient Jews ever thought of the Messiah. In the O. T. also we have personifications of divine wisdom, and these reappear in still bolder form in some of the apocryphal works; but these are merely poetical modes of representation, and throw no light upon the application of the term "Word" by John to Jesus Christ in His pre-existent state. Nor is any help to be obtained from the writings of Philo, a Jew nearly contemporary with our

Lord ; for though his writings are full of speculations about the Logos, it is, to say the least, very doubtful if he in any case ascribes personality to the Logos, and it is very certain that he never applies this term to the Messiah. With him the Logos was a fine speculation—a theosophic mode of representing certain philosophic conceptions as to the relation of God to the created universe. There is therefore no evidence whatever that the Christians to whom John wrote were familiar with this as a designation of the Messiah, and so would understand it in consequence of such familiarity without any explanation.

We revert, therefore, to the other hypothesis, that this word carries its own meaning with it ; in other words, that the simple idea presented to the mind by this word is so truly descriptive of Jesus Christ that it may be used without any qualification as a designation of Him, just as the words life, light, manna, passover, peace, etc., elsewhere are used. But this throws us upon the inquiry, In what sense is Jesus Christ the Word ? for it must be allowed that the term does not so immediately yield up its meaning as do some of those other terms with which we have compared it. Now, in reply to this I think the oldest answer is still the best. “The Son,” says Origen, “may be the Word because He announces the hidden things of His Father ;”<sup>1</sup> or, as another of the Fathers gives it, because He is the interpreter of the will of God. The idea here is, that as a word is the interpreter of the hidden invisible spirit of man, so Jesus, coming forth from the bosom of the Father, of Him whom no man hath seen at any time, has revealed Him to us. Words bridge over the chasm between spirit and spirit, and form a medium of communication between mind and mind. They are winged messengers that come from that which sense cannot descry, and through the medium of sense convey to others knowledge of that hidden power that sent them forth. They are thus emphatically revealers of the invisible, palpable exponents to us of what, but for them, must ever have remained hidden from us, being supersensible. In like manner has Jesus Christ made known and expounded God to us. In Himself God is utterly beyond our knowledge ; we cannot by search-

<sup>1</sup> *In Joan.*, Tom. i. § 42.

ing find Him out ; and it is only as He reveals Himself to us that we can have any just thought of Him at all. But of all the revelations of Himself which He has given to men, none is so full, so clear, so impressive, as that which He has given in the Person of His Son. Here all the other rays of light which God has sent forth to illuminate our darkness are concentrated in one blaze of glory. Here all the other words which God hath spoken to men are gathered up and condensed into one grand and all-embracing utterance, which therefore becomes emphatically *The Word*—the living personal manifestation of God to men.

It has been objected to this explanation that it takes λόγος as equivalent to λεγων, for which there is no authority. But this objection is valid only on the assumption that it is merely by His speaking, by His teaching, that Jesus is the revealer or manifester of God. The objection disappears when we regard Jesus as Himself in His Person the revelation and manifestation of God. He is thus the λογος, not as ὁ λεγων, but as Himself the apocalypse and revelation of the Invisible.

The explanation thus given of the term as here used of the higher nature of our Lord seems to me preferable to that suggested by Beza, who takes λογος as equivalent to λεγομενος, and understands the term of Christ as the Person spoken of, the subject of prediction and promise. For such an interpretation there is no authority in the usage of the language; the metonymy thus supposed is in itself harsh; and, as there were other modes of describing the Messiah as the object of promise, both more natural and more accordant with use, it is altogether improbable that John, had he intended to convey that idea, would have departed from such accustomed forms of expression to employ one so much less appropriate and intelligible.

The interpretation proposed, besides having the advantage of not depending for its support upon any extraneous source, such as would imply, on the part of the evangelist, acquaintance with speculations to which he was not likely to have turned his attention, or would impute to him a tacit sanction of modes of representing divine things which his own doctrine would openly condemn, has also the great advantage of being

in full accordance with Biblical representations and modes of thought. The attentive reader of the O. T. cannot have failed to observe how there runs through the writings which it contains a distinction between God as He is in Himself,—hidden, invisible, unsearchable, incomprehensible; and God as He is in relation to His creatures,—revealed, manifested, declared. Sometimes this is conveyed very distinctly and unmistakably, as by the appearances of the Angel of Jehovah (מלאך-יהוה), who is both Himself Jehovah and yet distinct from Jehovah—a representation which can be rendered intelligible only on the supposition of a distinction between God as revealed and God as concealed. In other cases the same idea is presented by certain forms of expression which presuppose it, and are explicable only on the assumption of it. Such, for instance, is the frequently-recurring expression, the “Name of God”—an expression which indicates something distinct from God as God, but to which, nevertheless, personal and divine qualities are ascribed; for men are commanded to put their trust in God’s name, God serves men by His name, God puts His name in a person or place, the result of which is that God is in that person or place; and many other similar usages, which can be explained satisfactorily only on the supposition that the name of God is God, not as He is in Himself, but as He is revealed to men. Such also is the distinction made between the “face of God,” which no man can behold, and His “back,” which Moses was permitted, in compliance with his earnest request, to see. As the countenance is the index of the soul, the spiritual part, so to speak, of the body, the face of God is His inner essential glory, His essence as a Spirit; and as the back part of a man is purely material, and subject to the scrutiny of the senses, so this is used by God to denote what of Him may be revealed, and by being revealed may be known by His creatures. What that is He Himself expressly declares when, in the same connection, in answer to the prayer of Moses, “Show me Thy glory,” God says, “I will make all my goodness [properly, *beauty, majesty*<sup>1</sup>] to pass before thee, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee.” This was what Moses could see, and this—the divine name or

<sup>1</sup> The word in the original is **טוב**, *tub*, not **טוב**. See Ex. xxxiii. 19.

revelation of God, the beauty, the manifested perfection of God—He would make to pass before him; and it is of this that God speaks as His back, because it could be made known to men in contradistinction to His face, His essential being, which no man could see and live. These instances may suffice to show that the idea of a distinction between God as He is in Himself and God as revealed to His creatures could not but be familiar to an attentive reader of the ancient Jewish Scriptures; so that St. John, in representing the great Revealer of God as with God and as God, would not overstep the limits of enlightened Jewish thought and intelligence.

Still more manifestly is this representation of Jesus Christ as the Revealer of the Father in harmony with N. T. statements and forms of expression. We find, for instance, that it was under this character that our Lord was introduced to the Jews by His forerunner, John the Baptist. "No man hath seen God at any time," said he; "the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." These words carry one back to the scene at Horeb, already referred to, and to the declaration there made to Moses, that God was both incomprehensible and capable of being known; and they announce that in Jesus the Christ was the grand revelation of God—the supreme manifestation of the invisible—the presentation to men of one whose proper dwelling-place is in the bosom of God, and who is there even while revealing God to men on earth. Wholly in accordance, also, with the representation here given is our Lord's own statement to Nicodemus, that He, the Son of Man, had come down from heaven and yet was even then in heaven (John iii. 1-3)—a statement which is intelligible only upon the supposition of a distinction such as the evangelist indicates at the outset of his Gospel. We may compare also such a passage as that in Heb. i. 13, where God is represented as speaking to us by His Son, who is described as the radiance (*απαύγασμα*) of this glory, and the express image or representation (*χαρακτήρ*) of His Person—a figurative representation, but the meaning of which obviously is, that as we acquire our knowledge of a luminous body like the sun by the radiance that streams from it, and of a seal by the

impression it leaves on the wax, so we obtain our knowledge of Him whom we cannot ourselves see or immediately know through the medium of Him whom He hath sent as His Revealer. It is in accordance with the same mode of representation that St. Paul speaks of Jesus Christ as the image of the invisible God, and as having been in His pre-existent state "in the form of God;" as on earth, after His incarnation, He manifested God to men in His Person as well as in His teaching, so in heaven, before His incarnation, He had a form peculiar to Deity, and which presented to the view of angels—who, being finite beings, can no more than we gaze on the essential glory of God—an appreciable revelation of the Infinite and Invisible.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

#### (II.) DIVINE ATTRIBUTES AND WORSHIP APPLIED TO JESUS CHRIST.

##### i. OMNIPRESENCE.

Matt. xviii. 20 : "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." These words were spoken by our Lord for the purpose of denning His Church as a body exercising spiritual power, and at the same time of pointing out whence the authority belonging to His Church in the exercise of that power is derived. His Church is wherever two or three are gathered in His name, and that Church has power to pronounce final decisions because He is in the midst of them when so assembled. In giving this declaration our Lord plainly assumes to Himself the attribute of OMNIPRESENCE, for only an omnipresent being can fulfil what is implied in this promise.

That the Saviour *intended* His words to be so understood appears evident from the fact that He here promises to be to His followers exactly what God promised to His people of old :



“In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and will bless thee.” If this promise involves omnipresence, not less does that of Christ to His disciples.

It makes no difference what view we adopt as to the mode in which He would fulfil this promise, whether by a personal presence or by a communication of His Spirit to His assembled disciples; for as we know not how God is omnipresent, we cannot pretend to say which of these two modes is alone compatible with this attribute. All that we are safe in affirming is, that as God promised to be with His children of old in all places where His name was recorded, so Christ promised to be in the midst of His followers wherever two or three of them were gathered together; and the latter of these is no less an assumption of omnipresence than the former. Whether the author of the promise is to fulfil it by being in some sense personally present, or by exercising an influence on those assembled, is a question that carries us into regions beyond our powers of investigation. All we know is, that to be in any true sense whatever in the midst of every assembly whenever and wheresoever gathered together in the name of Christ, and so by implication to be present at the same moment in myriads of such scattered over the face of the globe, is what none but God can accomplish.

But, reply the opponents of our Lord's proper Deity, it is not in a *true* sense, but only in a figurative one that Christ promises to be in the midst of those gathered together in His name. This is the resource of all who find it inconvenient to accept Scripture in its plain and obvious meaning; but it is one which a candid and sincere inquirer will be very slow to adopt. No doubt Scripture uses figures, and our Lord occasionally employs them; but that He does so in any particular case is a position for which some evidence is requisite before any one is entitled to assume it. In the present instance no such evidence is adducible. On the contrary, everything in the circumstances and in the form of our Lord's statement leads to the conclusion that His words are to be taken in their plain, literal, and obvious meaning. If ever there was an occasion on which it behoved Him to speak plainly it was this; for here He was laying down principles by which the whole polity and discipline of His

Church was to be influenced till the end of time. A mistake as to the very basis of all Church authority might be unspeakably mischievous, and it certainly behoved the Founder of the Church to avoid all fruitful sources of mistake in the form in which His principles were inculcated. The presumption, then, is that this is not a figurative statement; and, at any rate, that it is so is not to be conceded without proof. But, let us ask, if this language be figurative, what is the literal truth couched under the figure? To this the reply is, "That Christ was present with His disciples by that authority which He had delegated, and by the powers which He had communicated to perform miracles in His name." These are the words of the "Annotator" on the *Improved Version*, and they strikingly show how readily those who try to put false glosses on Scripture are betrayed into admissions fatal to their own system, for can anything be more absurd than to hold that a mere man has power to communicate to other men the faculty of working miracles in his name? What is this but to ascribe omnipotence to Jesus Christ, and that *a fortiori*; for if it would imply omnipotence for a being to perform miracles himself in his own name, how much more when that being communicates to others the power of working miracles in his name? Here, then, is the strange position in which this unlucky "Annotator" has placed himself. In order to preclude a passage being so interpreted as to prove that Jesus Christ is possessed of the attribute of omnipresence, he ascribes to Him omnipotence, and thinks that he has thereby shut Him out from divine honours. An antagonist who thus replaces with the left hand as much as he takes away with the right is at least harmless, if he be not respectable. But, passing this, there is another gross absurdity in this interpretation of the "Annotator." He overlooks the fact that our Lord's words are uttered for the purpose of pointing out the source of that authority which His Church possesses; and accordingly he falls into the blunder of making our Lord adduce that authority as the source of itself. Our Lord's argument virtually is: Every body, however small, assembled in my name is invested with authority from me to exercise discipline, because I am there to sanction and sustain them. Now this is clear and intelligible. But, substitute for our

Lord's assertion concerning His presence what the Annotator says this assertion means, and what does our Lord's reasoning become? Why, this: Every body, however small, assembled in my name has authority from me to exercise discipline because of the authority I have given it. If this be not making a thing the reason of itself, it is giving to our Lord's word a meaning so jejune and feeble as to render them altogether unworthy of Him. But enough of this. Such parodies on Scripture are worthy of being noticed only for the sake of showing how pitiful are the resources of error when it tries to hide or obscure the clear light of Scripture.

Before passing from this passage it may be worth while to observe that similar modes of expression to those used by our Lord were in use among the Jews to convey the idea of the divine presence with the servants and worshippers of God. Thus, in the *Pirke Aboth* (iii. 1) it is said, "Two who sit at table and converse concerning the law, the Shekinah rests on them, according to Mal. iii. 16;" "If two or three sit in judgment, the Shekinah is with them;" and many other instances collected by Schottgen and Wetstein.<sup>1</sup>

Closely allied in import with the passage we have been considering is our Lord's farewell assurance to His people, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20. The language here is altogether divine: "I am with you." If you compare this with the words of Nicodemus, "No man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him," the full force and meaning of the assurance will be apparent: "I send you forth to do great deeds—deeds such as no man can perform; but be not dismayed, for lo *I* am with you." What is this but to assume the divine prerogative? It is only in keeping with this when He adds a claim to omnipresence in the assurance He gives to them that His being with them shall continue "always, even to the end of the world." It is a vain and shallow attempt to get rid of this to explain the end of the world as

<sup>1</sup> There is a curious passage in the *Kuran* evidently borrowed from these Jewish modes of speech. It is in the 58th Sura: "God knoweth what is in heaven and what is on earth; for there cannot be three in an assembly but He will make a fourth; nor five but He will be the sixth; and whether they be many or few, God is with them."

meaning the end of the Jewish dispensation, for 1. the words cannot by any fair interpretation carry that meaning; taken in connection with frequent usage of them by our Lord in His previous discourses with His disciples, they can only mean the completion of the present state of things—the state of time; and hence De Wette says on them, “comp. chap. xxiv. 3, according to which we must understand here the period of the second coming of Jesus;” after that, as Alford admirably remarks, “He will be no more, properly speaking, *with us*, but we *with Him* (John xvii. 24) where He is” (*Greek Testament, in loco*). 2. Even this interpretation, if admitted, would not serve the purpose of those who adduce it, for the words of Christ would still contain an assumption of the divine attribute of omnipresence, inasmuch as to be with His people all the days during which the Jewish dispensation was to last, in whatever part of the world they were, was as incompatible with the conditions of a creature existence as His being with them to the end of time. As in creation the making of an insect is as much an evidence of divine power as the making of a man, so omnipresence for a year is as much an evidence of Deity as omnipresence for a millennium. “In infinito est nullum majus et minus.”

In His conference with Nicodemus our Lord uses the remarkable statement: “No man hath ascended into heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven” (John iii. 13). Our Lord uttered this as illustrative of His claims to teach *επουράνια*, or heavenly truths. We need not stop to inquire whether the ascending up into heaven of which our Lord here speaks refers proleptically to His ascension, or is to be taken metaphorically as significative of familiarity with heavenly things. The latter, it must be confessed, seems the more natural interpretation. But it will not follow from this that the coming down from heaven means no more than the communicating of things supernaturally revealed, for in no case is the phrase so used, and the mere fact of its being put in antithesis to the ascending does not prove that it must be understood in exactly the same way. Even De Wette admits that there is a reference here to the doctrine of the supernatural origin of Jesus Christ, and that the phrase denotes the abiding actual revelation of

God in Christ, whilst the *αναβαινειν* denotes only the ideal intercourse of the intelligent spirit with God. He had not only obtained divine knowledge from God, but the source of that divine knowledge had, as it were, "come down, and was dwelling in Him." Hence what follows, "who is in heaven," not "who *was* in heaven," but "who *is*"—a phrase which De Wette compares with *ο ων εις τον κολπον του πατρος* (i. 18), which denotes intimate and essential union with God. The phrase before us can mean nothing less than that He brought heaven with Him to earth; heaven was about Him, all its light, its joy, its purity, to those who could with a spiritual eye discern it.

In this passage the pre-existence and omnipresence of Christ are undoubtedly involved: the former is affirmed in the clearest manner in John viii. 58, "Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." "That Jesus here," says De Wette, "ascribes to Himself pre-existence is certain." He adds, however, that "it is only in an ideal sense." What he intends by this I cannot say, for he carefully discriminates it from the mere nominal sense of Socinus and Grotius. The only explanation he gives is "ideal as contrasted with His actual appearance on earth." If by this is meant a state of spiritual existence as opposed to one manifested in bodily form, we may accept it as substantially correct, though most unfortunately expressed. Lücke says that all unbiassed exegesis of these words must recognize in them a declaration of the essential pre-existence of Christ. Even Kuinoel argues for this meaning of the words against the glosses of Socinus and the parodies of Paulus. These it may suffice to mention; they refute themselves. Socinus: "Before Abraham became Abraham, *i.e.* a father of many nations, I am or have become the Messiah." Wetstein: "Before Abraham was, I am or was the Christ, *i.e.* in the decree and promise of God." Paulus: "Before Abraham was born I am He whose advent Abraham foresaw and was glad." All these, as Alford justly remarks, "are little better than dishonest quibbles." Our Lord's words admit of but one meaning—"Before Abraham was born, or came into existence, I am." Mark the distinction between *γενεσθαι* as applied to Abraham and *ειμι* as applied to Christ. Notice

also the use of the *present* εἰμι. Πρὶν Ἀβρααμ γενέσθαι, before Abraham came into being. Abraham had become; there was a time when he was not, and a time when he began to be. But ἐγὼ εἰμι, I am. Here is an assertion of simple absolute existence. This ἐγὼ εἰμι is parallel to the אֲנִי הוּא of the O. T., the affirmation of Jehovah concerning Himself. This is plainly the assertion, not only of pre-existence, but of that independent and absolute existence which God alone has. Our Lord does not say, "Before Abraham was, I was;" but, "Before Abraham came into being, I am." "He claims pre-existence indeed; but He does not merely claim pre-existence, He unveils a consciousness of Eternal Being. He speaks as one on whom time has no effect, and for whom it has no meaning. He is the I AM of ancient Israel; He knows no past as He knows no future; He is unbeginning, unending Being."<sup>1</sup> Jesus thus asserts for Himself a peculiar attribute of God, that of eternal existence; and so the Jews understood Him; for no sooner had He uttered this solemn declaration than they took up stones to cast at Him, regarding Him as a blasphemer, and deserving to receive the penalty which their law adjudged to such. Had they mistaken His meaning, our Lord was bound to set them right, and He would certainly have done so, and not have suffered Himself to rest under so dreadful a charge. But He offered no explanation such as would have appeased their wrath; He simply withdrew Himself from them, leaving with them the belief that He had asserted for Himself a quality which belongs only to God. At a later period we find our Lord solemnly asserting for Himself eternal existence in language which elsewhere is used of the supreme God. When He appeared to the beloved disciple in Patmos, and John, overwhelmed by the glory of the vision, fell at His feet as dead, the Lord laid His right hand on him, and said, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen" (Rev. i. 17, 18). Only a few verses before in the same chapter we find God the Father saying of Himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord God, He that is, and that was, and that is to come, the

<sup>1</sup> Liddon's *Bampton Lect.*, p. 188, 2nd ed.

Almighty" (ver. 8); and presently our Lord appears on the scene, and says of Himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." It cannot admit of a doubt that our Lord here asserts for Himself that eternity of being which is the proper attribute of God.

## ii. OMNIPOTENCE.

Our Lord, before He left His disciples to ascend into heaven, said to them, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). This is an assumption by our Lord to Himself of omnipotence. It is true He says this is "given" to Him; but this does not diminish the greatness of the claim. It was given to Him as the Mediator, the Christ; but ere it could be given to Him He must have had a capacity to receive it. This no mere creature has or can have, and so far as Jesus was partaker of a created nature, so far He was incapable of receiving all power in heaven and in earth. There must therefore be in Him a nature superhuman, superangelic, a nature essentially divine; else was this solemn assertion of His a mere empty boast.

What our Lord thus claimed for Himself His apostles proclaimed to men as belonging to Him. "We look," says St. Paul, "for the Saviour from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change the body of our humiliation, and conform it to the body of His glory, according to the energy whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. iii. 21). "Such language," Dr. Wardlaw justly observes, "cannot with propriety be used respecting any being who is not possessed of *omnipotence*; and He who is possessed of omnipotence can be no other than the true God."<sup>1</sup>

## iii. OMNISCIENCE.

"I am He," said our Lord Himself, "which searcheth the reins and hearts" (Rev. ii. 23), words which are the echo of those which God uses when He says, "I, Jehovah, search the heart and try the reins" (Jer. xvii. 10); in both cases the speaker asserts for Himself omniscience as His peculiar attribute. In accordance with this, John tells us that "Jesus did not commit Himself to them (*i.e.* the persons mentioned in

<sup>1</sup> *Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 132.

the preceding context, who pretended to be convinced by His miracles), because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify to Him of man; for He knew what was in man" (John ii. 24, 25). Here is ascribed to Jesus Christ a knowledge which surpasses that of any creature. He knew what was *in* man, the internal, unexpressed thoughts and feelings of men, that of which no outward sign gave any indication; and this He knew not by communication from another, as a prophet might by revelation from God, but of Himself (*αυτος*); nor was this intelligence limited to individuals, it extended to all men; He knew what was in man, in man universally, in any man, and in every man. So also Simon Peter on a memorable occasion, in answer to our Lord's question, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" exclaimed, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee," — a plain acknowledgment of his Master's omniscience, which our Lord, by not repudiating, implicitly authenticates. It will not do to say that the phrase to "know all things" is merely a strong way of expressing the possession of extensive knowledge; for the apostle's argument plainly is, "Lord, Thou knowest *this* thing, because Thou knowest *every* thing;" and further, as it was of the state of his feeling towards Christ that Peter spoke, it was only on the assumption that the knowledge of Christ extended to an acquaintance with the secrets of the heart that his appeal to Christ's knowledge had any meaning. If he did not mean to say, "Lord, Thy knowledge is universal, nothing, not even the secrets of men's hearts, is unknown to Thee, and therefore Thou knowest that I love Thee," his argument was fallacious, and his appeal nugatory.

#### iv. DIVINE WORSHIP.

As our Lord thus allowed His disciples to ascribe to Him divine attributes, so He also allowed them to offer to Him divine honours. I do not adduce cases in which it is said that persons worshipped our Lord, because the word worship includes all sorts of homage, from acts of simple respectful courtesy up to acts of reverent devotion, such as can be with propriety offered only to God; and we have no means of determining, in most cases, what kind and degree of homage



was offered to our Lord by those who are said to have worshipped Him. At the same time, in some of these instances there is, as Dr. Wardlaw has observed, "so strong a resemblance, so very near an approach, to divine worship, that we should have expected a creature, . . . tenderly alive to a sense of his infinite inferiority, and jealous of the glory of God that sent him, to have said on such occasions, as the Apostle Peter did to Cornelius, 'Stand up, I myself also am a man;' or as the angel to John when he fell at his feet to worship him, 'See thou do it not—worship God.' Nothing of this kind, however, is to be found in the life of Christ as recorded by the evangelists. He accepts all the homage that is offered Him without a hint of its impropriety, or the slightest monitory intimation of His equality in nature with the persons by whom it is paid."<sup>1</sup>

But if we may not lay stress on these acts of homage offered to our Lord when on earth, it is otherwise with those cases in which divine worship is either obviously offered to Jesus Christ, or authorized as offered to Him in His exalted state. We find, for instance, the apostle Paul saying that when he was afflicted with the thorn in the flesh he "besought the Lord thrice" that it might depart from him; and that it is Christ to whom he thus prayed is rendered certain by what he adds: "And He," *i.e.* the Lord to whom he prayed, "said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength (*δυναμις*) is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the strength (*δυναμις*) of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9). It does not admit of a doubt that He who gave the assurance to the apostle in answer to his prayer was the Lord to whom the apostle prayed; and that this was the Lord Jesus Christ the apostle's joyful exclamation at the close of the passage makes equally certain.

When St. Paul offered this prayer he may have thought of a scene he had himself witnessed at an earlier period, while he was yet an unbeliever in Christ. As the multitude were stoning Stephen in his presence, and in a sense under his authority, the sufferer, who with eyes uplifted to heaven had seen the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand

<sup>1</sup> *Socinian Controversy*, p. 164.

of God, invoked Him, and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep" (Acts vii. 59, 60). Here was an act of worship offered to Christ of a kind the most solemn that can be conceived. A dying man commends his soul to Christ and beseeches Him to receive it, and at the same time implores forgiveness for his murderers. Could such a prayer be offered to a creature? Would any sane man offer such a prayer to any one whom he did not believe to be truly God, by whom alone the spirit can be received after death, and who alone can forgive sins?

Stephen is described as invoking or calling upon (*ἐπικαλουμένος*). In the A. V. the word "God" is supplied: "Calling upon God;" but this is quite unauthorized, and it is obviously improper, for the object of Stephen's invocation was the Being whom he addressed, and that was the Lord Jesus. In thus invoking Christ the protomartyr exhibited what is in the N. T. presented as a distinguishing and characteristic mark of the Christians. They are specially described as those who call upon the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. When Ananias was commanded by the Lord to go to Saul after the vision on the road to Damascus, he sought to excuse himself by pleading that he had "heard how much evil this man had done to the saints, and how he had authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name," *i.e.* the name of Christ; where the term "saints" and the phrase "that call on Thy name" are alike descriptive of the Christians as such. So Ananias, when at length he went to Saul, summoned him thus, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," *i.e.* performing the distinctively Christian act by praying to Jesus as Lord. In full accordance with this is the language of the apostle in addressing his letter to the Church at Corinth: "To the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (1 Cor. i. 2), *i.e.* all true Christians wherever they may be. Nothing, then, can be more certain than that to worship Christ and to pray to Him were distinctively characteristic of the primi-

tive Christians, and were acts authorized and commended to them by those who were their teachers sent by Christ Himself.

Instances also occur in the writings of the apostles in which Jesus Christ is associated with God the Father as the object of prayer. "Now God Himself, even our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you," says St. Paul in writing to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. iii. 11); and again, in his Second Epistle to the same Church (ii. 16, 17), he exclaims: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." So also in such utterances as, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you;" "Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour;" "Grace and peace be unto you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,"—utterances which are found in almost the same form in nearly all Paul's Epistles,—we have prayers for spiritual blessings addressed to Jesus Christ, and for the most part to Him along with God the Father. Can it be supposed for a moment that any creature, however exalted, would thus be associated with the Almighty as the object of prayer, and not only associated with Him, but sometimes, in the order of address, put before Him?

As little can we suppose that an inspired teacher would put down in writing those doxologies and ascriptions of praise to Christ which we find in the N. T., were he not regarded by the writer as Divine. "To whom," exclaims Paul, after naming Jesus Christ, "be glory for ever and ever. Amen." "Grow in grace," says Peter, "and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen." "Unto Him that loved us," says John, "and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Such expressions of adoration and praise are identical with those elsewhere in Scripture addressed to God. Can we doubt that the apostles, in addressing them to Jesus Christ, did so in the full belief that He is truly God? And when we come to that grand vision of the celestial glory which John saw when

heaven was opened to him, and he heard its worship, and learn how there angelic choirs and the hosts of the redeemed join in saying in a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. v. 11), it can only be the blindness of prejudice which prevents any one from seeing that the Being who is thus represented as receiving such lofty homage, such boundless praise, from the highest and holiest creatures, as the object of the sublime worship of heaven, must be nothing less than in the highest sense Divine.<sup>1</sup>

In this vision of the heavenly glory John saw the angels joining with the redeemed from amongst men—represented by the four and twenty elders—in worshipping Christ. In other parts of Scripture angels are represented as worshipping the God-man. When God brought His Son into the world He said, "Let all the angels of God worship Him" (Heb. i. 6); and when He had finished His work on earth, when He had by Himself purged our sins by His blood, and had been exalted to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, far above all principality and power, He had a name given to Him "which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11). Such confession on the bended knee is an act of solemn adoration and worship. Here angels and men meet in one common service, and their adoring hymn of praise is re-echoed through creation. "And every creature," says St. John, "which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever." "Can we," asks Dr. Wardlaw, "after reading such a passage as this, retain a doubt whether the Being who is thus represented as receiving the very same expressions of

<sup>1</sup> "You may in vain endeavour," says Canon Liddon, "satisfactorily to solve the questions which encompass such points as the number of the beast or the era of the millennium; but you cannot for one moment doubt who is meant by 'the Lamb,' or what is the character of the worship that is so solemnly offered to Him," *Bampton Lecture*, p. 375, 2nd ed.

adoration and praise with the Eternal Jehovah—of unqualified adoration, of everlasting praise—be Himself more than a creature?” Surely, as the same writer elsewhere says, “He cannot be a creature whom all creatures adore.”

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

#### (III.) DIVINE WORKS ASCRIBED TO JESUS CHRIST.

We now proceed to consider the works which are in the N. T. ascribed to Jesus Christ as peculiar to Him and characteristic of Him.

##### i. CREATION.

(i.) In the O. T., as we have seen, the Messiah appears under widely differing aspects—sometimes as a sufferer, enduring meekly and patiently the severest afflictions, which He has done nothing personally to merit; sometimes exercising the greatest power and authority, which is represented as His rightful property; and sometimes dispensing the most benignant influences, by which men are blessed in Him. Entirely accordant with this is the view given in the N. T. of Jesus Christ, whom we at one time see subjected to privations, engaged in almost servile labour, and exposed to reproach, indignity, and suffering; at another represented as doing the greatest works by His own power, and sustaining dignities which no created being could be rendered capable of sustaining.

Of the former class of passages it may suffice to mention His subjection to His parents, in connection with the whole scene narrated by Luke (ii. 41–52); His temptation of the devil, as recorded by Matthew (iv. 1–11); His working as a *τεκτων*, or artificer; His going about as a teacher and a preacher of the kingdom of God; His submission to the insults and injuries of His enemies; and His death. All of these are works (including under that term all that is the result of voluntary agency) which indicate a nature in essence the same as our own.

The other class of passages will require a more careful examination and a fuller elucidation.

The first we mention is John i. 3: "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." With this we may take ver. 10, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him." It is of importance to remark in the outset that the verb used in these verses, and translated "was" or "were made," is the same in both; so that if any alteration is proposed in the translation of it, justice requires that the same alteration should be made on both verses; and further, if any proposed alteration will not suit both verses so as to make sense, it must be rejected as not a just translation. Keeping this in view we may, as a mere matter of philology, set aside at once the Socinian renderings of the verb in these passages. In the former passage they render *εγενετο*, *done*: "All things were done by Him; and without Him was not anything done that was done." But this will not suit the second passage, for we cannot say, "The world was done by Him." Feeling this they translate *εγενετο* here "enlightened," supplying the word *πεφωτισμενος* from the preceding verse to eke out this meaning. But whilst, on the one hand, this artifice is utterly inadmissible, and that on two grounds, 1. because it is incredible that any writer meaning to ascribe a particular action to a person of whom he wrote should leave the very word by which alone that action would be expressed to be *understood* by the reader, and 2. because it supposes a construction which is not admissible, *εγενετο πεφωτισμενος* not being Greek; so, on the other hand, it destroys the parallelism between the two passages, and for this reason, were there nothing else against it, must be rejected. The only allowable meaning of *εγενετο* which will suit both places is that which our translators have given, and this of itself is a strong reason in its favour. But it is objected by Unitarians that the verb *γινωμαι* never signifies to create or bring something out of nothing, and that consequently to give it such a meaning here is illegitimate. To this it is enough to reply that we do not give it such a meaning here; we simply affirm to it the meaning which properly belongs to it, viz. that of becoming or coming into existence either

absolutely or in some particular state. That this is its proper meaning, and that this, in some of its modifications, will suit all the usages of the word, is ruled by the universal consent of all the proper authorities on such a question. Now, that which comes into existence through the agency of another being is beyond all question *produced* by that being, and hence though γίνομαι never signifies "I create," it may be so used as to be equivalent to "I am created." When, therefore, it is said here τα πάντα ἐγένετο, though the strict rendering of these words taken by themselves is "All things came into being," yet when δι' αὐτοῦ is added we may lawfully render them "all things were made or produced by Him," inasmuch as the words, "All things came into being through Him," mean as much as this, and can mean nothing less.

The comparison of these two verses enables us at once to dispose of another Socinian gloss by which ver. 3 is made to affirm merely that the Logos made all moral excellences and virtues; for even granting that this *might* be the meaning of ver. 3, yet the comparison with κόσμος, which can have no such meaning, shows that it is inadmissible here.

But supposing these philological difficulties overcome, let us ask what meaning would the Socinian substitute for what is the plain and natural meaning of the passage as it stands? To this the reply is, that the reference here is to the new or Christian dispensation, and that the assertion is that all things done in it were done by Christ—that He is the author of all the moral excellences and privileges that are to be enjoyed there. To this it may suffice to reply—1. That the supposition of an allusion here to the new dispensation is altogether gratuitous. There is nothing in the context to lead to such a supposition or to justify it. John is evidently speaking of what happened anterior to all dispensations, and it would be quite irrelevant in the midst of this to introduce a remark as to the agency of the Logos in the latest of these. 2. The phrase τα πάντα, when used thus absolutely, invariably means the universe or entire system of things; compare 1 Cor. viii. 6, "There is to us one God, the Father, of whom are τα πάντα," etc.; Col. i. 16, "For by Him were all things (τα πάντα) created, both things in heaven and things on earth, visible and invisible," etc. 3. This interpretation

entirely disturbs the connection between this 3rd verse and ver. 2, or renders it of no force. In the latter we read, "The same was in the beginning with God," and then the writer goes on to say, "All things," etc. The natural inference from the juxtaposition of these verses is that the one states the time at which the events specified in the other took place; it was in the beginning, when the Logos was with God, that He made all things. This is intelligible and important, if by the making of all things be meant the creation of the universe; but what does it mean if by that is intended the setting in order of the Gospel dispensation? Does "the beginning" here mean the beginning of that dispensation? If so, in what sense was Christ then with God? or how can it be said that He performed all things connected with that dispensation in the beginning of it, seeing it is His agency that carries on that dispensation to the end of time? If, on the other hand, by "beginning" here we understand the commencement of created existence, how can Jesus Christ as a mere man be said to have been then with God? or in what sense did He then do all things that are done in that dispensation? On neither supposition can it be shown that the statement of the evangelist is intelligible on the Socinian interpretation of ver. 3.

I deem it quite unnecessary to dwell on the attempt of some Unitarians to render their passage thus, "All things are done or made for His sake." In offering this translation they go in the face of one of the most clearly ascertained canons as to the usage and force of the preposition *διὰ*. The unanimous consent of all grammarians and lexicographers is that *διὰ* with the genitive never signifies "on account of" or "for the sake of;" but invariably "by means of." We may therefore say that such a rendering as that proposed here by Unitarians is simply impossible; the words do not admit of it.

We conclude, then, that this passage ascribes the creation of all things to the Logos or Word, the same which became incarnate in the person of Jesus Himself. In other passages of the N. T. the same truth is taught, if possible still more explicitly. Thus in Col. i. 16, 17, it is said, "For by Him are all things created, those which are in the heavens and those which are upon the earth, things visible and things



invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews also cites in reference to Jesus Christ a passage from the O. T. relating to the creative power of the Most High: "And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest; yea, all of them shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and of Thy years there is no end." In the former of these passages creation, the creation of all things, is ascribed to Jesus Christ, and that by the use of the verb which properly designates this act, *κτιζω*; He is specially described as the Creator of all intelligent and moral beings, however dignified their condition and however honourable their place in God's universe; and He is represented as the Proprietor and Sustainer of all the things He has framed. So distinct and unequivocal a testimony to the fact of our Lord's being the Creator of the universe ought for ever to settle that point with all who profess to take the Bible as their rule of faith. Unitarians, however, attempt to wrest this as they do also the other Scriptures so as to destroy its testimony in favour of Christ's divine power. They resort here also to their favourite expedient of referring such passages to the new order of things introduced by Christ as the head of the Christian dispensation; they translate *εκτισθη*, "arranged" or "ordered;" and they understand the whole of Christ's mediatorial power and authority. But on this supposition what are we to make of the various orders of beings here enumerated? Were they all set in order or arranged by Christ in virtue of His mediatorial power? Were angels in heaven and those lofty intelligences here designated thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, formed into new orders, or placed in new positions by Christ after He ascended to His throne? And if so, what has all this to do with Paul's design in this passage, which is obviously to assign a reason (*ὅτι*) for his preceding statement that Jesus Christ was the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation? Understand him here of the creation of all things, and the

connection of his statement is clear enough, "He is first-born of all creation, for by Him all things were created; and He is the image of God, for as Creator He shines out in the brightness of His Father's glory."<sup>1</sup> But if by the creation here spoken of be intended the "arrangement" effected by Christ as Mediator, it is difficult to say how the latter statement contains any reason illustrative or confirmatory of the former. To meet these difficulties and objections an expedient has been resorted to so extravagant as to show, on the one hand, the desperate extremity of those who resort to it; on the other, the unscrupulous eagerness with which Unitarians will resort to any hypothesis, however forced and incredible, rather than admit the plain testimony of Scripture in favour of the divine power of Christ. They say that by "thrones," etc., here are to be understood certain fictitious beings who were supposed by the Jews to preside over kingdoms; and that by Christ's creating them is to be understood the mighty revolutions He was to effect among the nations they were supposed to preside over. According to this interpretation, then, the apostle, meaning only to say that Christ was the image of God inasmuch as He produced a mighty revolution among the kingdoms of the earth, chooses to intimate this by saying that Christ created powers that never existed at all except in the fantastic fictions of Oriental theosophy. Can any one seriously believe this? If so, what must he think of Paul as a writer or a teacher?

Such violent expedients to mystify a very plain passage refute themselves. The testimony of the apostle is plain and unequivocal. Whether *τα πάντα* be taken in its wide sense as denoting "the totality of creation,"<sup>2</sup> or in the more restricted sense for which Dr. Pye Smith argues, as referring only to the intelligent and moral part of creation, the statement of Paul can be accepted for nothing less than an explicit assertion of the creating power of Christ—a power by which He evinced His supremacy to all creation, and showed Himself the image of the invisible God. In this sense all the ancient Greek fathers, who should best have known the force of words in their own tongue, understood the passage.

With respect to the passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews,

<sup>1</sup> Eadie, *in loco*.

<sup>2</sup> Winer's *Grammar*, p. 128, Eng. Tr.

there can be no doubt that the writer of that Epistle meant to apply to Jesus Christ the language which he there cites from Ps. cii.; and if so, he offers a most indubitable testimony to His power as Creator. He not only applied to Him a passage which celebrates the praises of God as the Creator, but the wording of that passage is such as to exclude the usual subterfuge of Unitarians by specifying the heavens and the earth as the objects on which His creative power was exercised. Precluded by this from suggesting their favourite hypothesis of a moral creation as effected by Christ through His religion, they have no expedient but to deny the accuracy of the writer in applying his quotations to the Son. They thus pass over to the ground of the infidel; for if it be insinuated that the writer of this part of Scripture has erred in so important and essential a part of his argument as this, the divine authority of his writing is virtually impugned, and all weight is taken from his statements as decisive of what is revealed truth. With those who take this ground it is obvious that we can have no further argument whilst engaged in an investigation which presupposes the divine authority of the canonical Scriptures.

(ii.) On the ground of these and other parallel testimonies, then, we hold it to be a part of the truth revealed to us by God in the Bible that the Lord Jesus Christ created the universe. Let us now ask what light this fact casts on the question as to His higher nature? And here it is obvious to remark,—

1. That such a fact plainly implies His pre-existence. This is so obvious as to need no illustration. If Jesus Christ created the universe, then undoubtedly He existed not only before He was born of the Virgin Mary, but before any part of the existing universe was in being. This extends His pre-existence to a period so remote as to surpass our powers of calculation, and to seem to us virtually an eternity.

2. It seems fair to argue that if He was with God in the beginning, and if by Him all things were made or created, He Himself must possess an uncreated being. If in the beginning He was, *i.e.* already existed, then He must have existed before the beginning; and if He existed before the beginning of creation, He must Himself be uncreated, otherwise creation must have begun with Him, which would be a contradiction in terms. We reach the same result by reason-

ing from the other fact in this statement, viz. that the Son created all things. For either He Himself is included in the "all things" or He is not: if He is, then He must have created Himself, which is absurd; if He is not, then His must be an uncreated nature.

3. The ascription to Him of creative power is of itself an assertion of His Deity. For to create is what God alone can do. We have no more precise and definite view of God than is supplied us by this, that He is the Creator of all things. Hence we have our most impressive convictions of His Being and Godhead—of His infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. It would seem to disturb the simplest elements of reason if we were to maintain that a Being could create in the proper sense of that term and yet not be God.

But it has been asked, May not God create mediately as well as immediately; and is not what the Scripture ascribes to Jesus Christ, not the fruit and immediate creation, which properly belongs to God, but only that subordinate and instrumental creation which as God's servant and delegate He accomplished? This is the Arian hypothesis, which, admitting the pre-existence of Christ and His superiority to all other creatures, yet holds Him to be originally but a creature, though of so exalted a kind that Jehovah associated Him with Himself, and employed Him as His delegate in creating the world. The reasonings already offered touching the pre-existence of Christ and His being represented as the Creator of all things may partly suffice to show the futility of this hypothesis; but as it admits of a more copious refutation, it may be proper to enter a little more particularly into the subject.

In attempting to base this hypothesis on Scripture, the main proof on which its advocates rely is the use of the preposition *διὰ* in the passages which relate to the creation of the world by Jesus Christ. This particle, they argue, when used in reference to agency denotes invariably, not the primary, but the mediate or instrumental agency. Hence, say they, as the Scripture only affirms that the world was made by means or through Jesus Christ, the only legitimate meaning we can put on the statement is that the Father employed the Son as His subordinate, and delegated to Him that power by which He was able to create the universe; and this the more

especially that it is expressly said that by or through Him God made the world. On this I remark,—

(1.) That it is not true that Scripture always uses the preposition *διὰ* when speaking of Christ's agency in creation. In one of the passages already considered by us, that from Col. i. 16, the preposition used is *ἐν*, and that in connection with the verb *ἐκτίσθη*. The force of this is to indicate that the Son not only created, but originated the creation; it was in Him as the building is in the architect; it was His divine plan and conception, as well as His work. No words can more explicitly ascribe to Christ primary as distinguished from instrumental agency in this matter.

(2.) Though the word usually employed to express the agency of the Son in creation is *δια*, it does not follow, even from this, that His agency was merely instrumental, for *δια* is sometimes used to express primary as well as instrumental agency. Of this instances may be adduced from both classical and Biblical sources, and it is now generally admitted by grammarians and lexicographers.<sup>1</sup> So far, then, as the mere use of this word is concerned nothing is determined. *δια Χριστου* or *υἱου* may mean either that Christ was the primary or that He was the instrumental agent in creation.

(3.) We must therefore inquire whether there be anything in the nature of the case that shall determine for us the point which philology leaves thus open. And here it is obvious to remark that the nature of the case is such as to include entirely the idea of delegation or mere instrumentality. A privilege, or office, or duty may be delegated, but natural power cannot be delegated; that must inhere in the party if he is to perform the work entrusted to him, or it must be specially communicated to him by God. But there are certain powers which cannot be communicated—powers which even God cannot communicate; and of these the power of creating

<sup>1</sup> “As to the distinction between *δι’ αὐτου* and *υπ’ αὐτου*, *per quam* and *ex quo*, or the like, it can be of very little service to your cause. The preposition *δια* with a genitive after it is frequently used, as well in Scripture as in ecclesiastical writers, to express the *efficient* cause, as much as *ὑπο*, *ἐκ*, or *προς*, or any other. So that the argument drawn from the use of the prepositions is very poor and trifling, as was long since observed by Basil the Great, who very handsomely exposes its author and inventor, Aetius, for it.” Waterland, *Defence of some Queries*, etc., p. 185.

is one. That is a faculty inherent in God, and which does not admit of being communicated to another. He who possesses it must have it by inherent and essential right, *i.e.* he must be God. As, then, Jesus Christ did create the universe, and as the faculty of creating is one essentially belonging to God and incommunicable to a creature, it matters not by what phraseology the fact may be stated; the nature of the case determines His act to be that of God.

From such reasonings as these some very respectable theologians, and among the rest Dr. Hill, have shrunk as presumptuous. "It appears to me," says Hill, "upon all occasions most unbecoming and presumptuous for us to say what God can do and what He cannot do." Now, that we may transgress in this way is undoubtedly true, and it may be accepted as a wise caution that we should be very careful of the ground we assume in making such assertions. But that there is no case in which we may confidently affirm that a given work is such as God alone can perform, is surely to assert what is utterly extravagant and untenable. In that case we could never with certainty argue the divine existence and attributes from the works of nature, for to all such arguments it might be replied on this ground, "It is not for us to say that none but God could do such things." This objection, like many others of a similar nature, whilst seeming to reverence the Divine Majesty, in reality strikes at the root of all reverence and all religion. And it is as unreasonable as it is mischievous. There are surely some divine acts that are peculiar to God, some things that He alone can do, and some powers which He cannot communicate to His creatures. Were it not so, there would be nothing *essentially* to differentiate God from His creatures; and it would be possible to conceive of a creature gradually growing into God by the successive communication to him of divine powers. From this frightful absurdity we can guard ourselves only by maintaining what Dr. Hill has denied, that there are some things which, without presumption and in the most devout and reverent spirit, we may say God cannot do.

Now, among these things we place the communicating to a creature of the power of creation. If this be possible, then, as Dr. Priestley has himself admitted, there is no other attribute

and power of God which may not be communicated ; so that even a created God would cease to be a contradiction. But, argues Dr. Hill, “ we see that in the ordinary course of Providence He withdraws Himself, and employs the ministry of other beings, and we believe that at the first appearance of the gospel men were enabled by the divine power residing in them to perform miracles, *i.e.* such works as man cannot do,” etc. One cannot help expressing surprise that a man like Dr. Hill should have allowed himself to write anything like this. He has displayed as gross an instance of what logicians call *ignoratio elenchi* as one need wish to see. It is no doubt true that God is often pleased to employ His creatures as the agents and instruments of His will ; but because God employs a creature to do what his natural faculties or opportunities fit him for doing, are we to be shut out from saying that God cannot employ a creature to do what no creature possesses the faculty of doing ? Or shall we say that because God may employ a creature to do something within the reach of a creature to accomplish, therefore He can convey to a creature the power of doing what none but God Himself can do ? Then, as respects miracles, we may ask Dr. Hill how he discovered that the divine power by which the apostles wrought these “ resided in them ” ? This is assumed, not only gratuitously, but in the face of the express statements of the apostles themselves, that it was not they, but God, who wrought the miracle. All that the apostles did was simply to obey the divine impulse which told them that God would exert His divine power in a particular case and way. Beyond this they had no power ; the power was not of man, but of God ; it was not because divine power was lodged in them that they did these wonderful works ; it was, as Nicodemus rightly judged, because God was “ with them ; ” or, as the historian of the apostles expresses it, because “ God gave testimony to the word of His grace,” etc. Miracles, then, afford no proof whatever that a divine power can be communicated to a creature, and to compare Christ’s creating energy to the agency of the apostles in miracles is virtually to deny it altogether ; in that case the whole of His share in creation was the mere utterance of the fiat that intimated the forthputting of a power which He could neither use nor command.

Whilst, however, the conclusion at which we have arrived appears perfectly sound, it seems necessary to remark that it hardly embraces the whole case. It must be admitted as worthy of notice that, whilst the sacred writers all but universally use the word *διά* to express the agency of the Son in creation, they never employ the preposition *υπο*, the preposition properly expressive of direct and primary agency. This is a fact which it behoves us not to overlook. Such a constant usage *means* something, and it concerns us to discover what it means. That it does not mean what the Arians imputed to it our previous remarks have shown. But there is a mode of stating the doctrine on this subject used by some of the Christian Fathers which seems to meet the peculiarity just referred to, and which is quite in accordance with Trinitarian theology. These Fathers distinguished between what they call the *ἐξουσία αὐθεντική* of the Father and the *ἐξουσία τῶν ἰδίων δημιουργημάτων*, by which they intended the distinction between the absolute power of God and the power exercised by the Son in His mediatorial capacity. Now, it was in this capacity that He created the world; so that the original source of creation was the Father as representing the One Godhead. The agent in it was the Son as Mediator. It is thus true that God created the universe through the Son, and yet it does not follow that the Son possessed any inferior power, or put forth less than a divine energy in that matter. “The Father having willed that all things should be made, the Son formed all things by the command of the Father; that so the command might preserve the original power to the Father; and the Son, on the other hand, might have the power of His own administrations; so that neither should the Father be estranged from the mastership of His own works, nor the Son reign over what had been wrought by another, but over what had been by Himself.” Cyrill, *Catechism*, i. 11.

Besides the work of creation, Scripture ascribes to Jesus Christ the

## ii. SUSTENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK OF CREATED BEING.

In Col. i. 17 it is said of Him, “And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” The word translated



here “consist” is *συνεστηκε*. It is part of a verb which properly signifies “to stand together with,” or “to make to stand together with,” and is hence used in reference to the constitution of things, both to express the original creation of these, and to express the continued conservation of them. By some the former sense is given to this passage; but taken in connection with what precedes, the latter seems the preferable. Jesus Christ, as the Creator of all things,—the Being in, through, and for whom all creation has been formed,—has been set before us in the preceding verse. It was not needful, therefore, to repeat here that He had constituted all things. But as He might have constituted them without continuing to uphold them, there is a propriety in the apostle’s adding here that by Him all things are sustained. The passage so taken may be illustrated by a passage of the pseudo-Aristotle, *De Mundo*, c. 6: “*ἐκ Θεοῦ τὰ πάντα καὶ δια Θεοῦ συνεστηκε*—Of God are all things, and by God they consist, or are sustained.” So Paul here says that all things are made by Christ, and that all things continue to be kept by Him in their proper place, order, and utility. It is worthy of notice that Paul here again uses the preposition *ἐν*, “in Him all things consist.” The force of this is thus given by Olshausen: “*ἐν* refers to the *present* sustentation of the world, which is ever in the Son, inasmuch as He upholds and sustains the world by His word (Heb. i. 3), and as the sustentation may be regarded as a continuous creation.” The passage here referred to by Olshausen from the Epistle to the Hebrews affords another proof of the fact that the world is sustained by Christ. The whole passage runs thus: “Who being the radiance or effulgence of His glory, and the express image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” That the person here spoken of is our Lord Jesus Christ there can be no room for question; and that it is He who is said to uphold all things by the word of His power, will appear evident to all impartial readers, more especially those who consult the original, where the word for “his” is the one properly meaning “his own” (not *αυτου* but *αυτου*), so that the proper rendering of the passage is, “upholding all things

by the word of His own power." To all such, therefore, the attempt of Belsham to make the apostle say that the power by which Jesus Christ upheld all things was not His own but God's, changing the text from *αυτου* to *αυτου*, and making the antecedent to this the remote *Θεος* rather than the proximate *ος*, will appear in its true character, and be treated by them with the contempt it deserves.

Understood of Jesus Christ, this verse ascribes to Him the upholding of all things by the word of His power. The expressive words, "of His power" (*ηγμα της δυναμεως αυτου*), may be understood here as if the genitive had the force of an adjective—"His powerful word." By this He upholds all things. The word rendered "upholding" (*φερων*) is from a verb which signifies "to bear," "to carry," "to sustain." It conveys the idea of one taking up something and carrying it. In the passage before us it could not be better translated than it is in the Authorized Version.

The explicit testimony of these two passages, both of which beyond all doubt refer to the physical creation, is sufficient to justify us in ascribing to Christ the sustentation of the universe. How vast is the work thus ascribed to Him! What boundless knowledge, what exhaustless resources, what ceaseless care, what prodigious power must be in the possession of the Being who is entrusted with the safety of the universe, and on whom the whole enormous fabric rests! For such an office, attributes and resources not less than those demanded for creation are requisite. And, in truth, the upholding of all things is, as Olshausen justly remarks, "a continuous creation." A derived being is necessarily a dependent being. That which was not self-existent at first never can become self-existent merely by continuing to exist. Brought into being by another, it remains dependent on the power of that other for the continuance of its being; and if he were to let it go, it would instantly relapse into its original nonentity. The preservation of creation is therefore virtually a continual repetition of the original act of creation. It is fit, therefore, that it should be in the hands of Him by whom originally all things were made. Hence Scripture teaches us to ascribe to God the preservation as we ascribe to Him the creation of all

things. "Lord, Thou preservest man and beast" (Ps. xxxvi. 6). "Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth. They continue this day according to Thine ordinances: for all are Thy servants" (Ps. cxix. 90, 91). "Thou, even Thou, art Jehovah alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee" (Neh. ix. 6). In these passages the government and the preservation of creation are set forth as peculiar works of Jehovah, such as He alone is competent to perform, and such as draw towards Him the adoration and praise of the whole host of heaven. But in the verses we have been considering it is to the Son, to Jesus Christ, that this work is ascribed. In Him the universe holds together, and by Him it is held up; and that not through any vast and complicated agency, but simply by the word of His power—that same word which He uttered when He spoke creation into being, and gave order and harmony to the vast system of things. Here all is in perfect keeping. Christ the Creator,—Christ the Sustainer of all things. To Him, therefore, must we yield the honours due only to God. We must reverence Him as alone Jehovah, and adore Him as Lord of all.

### iii. GOVERNMENT AND JUDGMENT.

This work is distinctly asserted by Christ Himself as belonging to Him. "All power," said He, "is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. . . . He hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man" (John v. 22, 27). "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all His holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory. And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Then shall He say also to them

on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into everlasting life" (Matt. xxv. 31-46).

To these statements others found in different parts of Scripture correspond. In the O. T. the Messiah is continually represented as the Great, the Righteous, the Universal, the eternal Ruler: the government is upon His shoulder; His throne is for ever and ever; and of His dominion there shall be no end or limit. In the N. T. His apostles speak on this subject thus: "He is Lord of all" (Acts x. 36); "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living" (Rom. xiv. 9); "God hath raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 20-23). The same thing is implied in His sitting at the right hand of God, as intimated in such passages as the following: "God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11); "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. xv. 25). And with reference to Jesus Christ as the final Judge of all, His apostles are equally explicit: "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 31); "He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and dead" (Acts x. 42); "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ" (Rom. xiv. 10); "I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus

Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom" (2 Tim. iv. 1).

These testimonies are sufficiently clear and explicit; and if they are to be taken literally,—if what they state concerning Jesus Christ is to be taken as an actual fact,—then, beyond all doubt or question, He is to be viewed as now occupying the throne of heaven, as exercising universal empire, as Proprietor and Ruler of all things, as holding in His hand the fate of nations and the destiny of individuals, and as about to appear before an assembled universe as the Judge of all—the living and the dead. Now, acts like these are necessarily the acts of a Divine Being. They imply omniscient providence, omnipotent control, and independent sovereignty. Nothing less will suffice for the government of the universe and the righteous judgment of intelligent creatures. Socinians, it is true, speak here, as in instances already noted by us, of delegated powers and authority. But such talk is as vain in the case before us as in the others we have considered. Some of the passages quoted, it is admitted, speak of God's having *given* to Christ the government of the universe, and of His having ordained Him to be Judge of all; but these passages receive their sufficient explanation from a reference to the mediatorial character of the Redeemer and His official relation thence arising to the Father. They predicate nothing as to His *personal* qualities, nor could this be without gross absurdity supposed. The nature of the case is, again, such as to preclude the supposition of a delegated or conferred personal fitness for the office: omniscience cannot be communicated; omnipotence cannot be transferred; and a communicated independent sovereignty is a contradiction in terms. The very fact that God has appointed Jesus Christ in His mediatorial capacity to such high offices implies that *essentially*, and apart altogether from any economical or mediatorial arrangement, He possesses power to occupy Jehovah's throne and exercise the functions of the Infinite and Eternal.

Equally vain is the cavil of some of the Unitarians, drawn from the fact that, after all, the universe is limited, and the number of beings to be judged at the last day is also limited,

and that consequently we are not entitled from that to argue the infinitude of Christ's knowledge or power; for if an objection of this sort were valid, it would be impossible for us to show evidence of any of the divine attributes from the divine doings, seeing all the manifestations of the divine agency within the sphere of the actual are and must be limited. Besides, this is not a question of degree, but of kind. Finite power does not become infinite simply by multiplying the number of objects on which it is exercised, any more than finite knowledge becomes omniscience simply by multiplying the number of objects it embraces. There is a kind of power and a kind of knowledge to which we irresistibly attach the quality of divine, however limited the range in point of number of the objects on which it is exerted. The power which creates an insect is as truly divine as the power which creates an angel. The knowledge which can embrace the secrets of all hearts, and provide for the interests of all beings, and administer unerring judgment on the complicated moral agencies of all intelligences belonging to one world, is as much divine as the knowledge which should do the same for an infinitude of worlds. In fact, to talk of degrees in such matters is simply absurd, for the simple conception of the divine is that it admits of no degrees; and unless this be kept strictly in view, it will be impossible not only to prove the Deity of Christ, but to furnish any proof of a Deity at all.

All this proceeds on the assumption that these passages are to be understood literally. To this, however, some Unitarians object. These descriptions, they say, of the sovereignty of Christ refer merely to the prevalence of His religion in the world, and the references to Him as Judge of all are mere figurative intimations that His doctrine is to form the rule or standard of judgment at last. It is difficult to believe that any man can seriously accept this interpretation of these passages. If such statements as have been quoted are to be treated as mere figures, what, we may ask, are to be accepted as realities? If Christ's rule and government, if the judgment of the world by Him are mere figures, what security have we for the reality of that heaven which He has gone to

prepare for us, or of that salvation which He has offered to secure? And if these representations are only figures, how strange are these figures! If Christ's sovereignty mean merely the influence of His truth in the hearts of men, what is meant by His reigning over all things in heaven above as well as in the earth beneath? what by "angels and principalities and powers" being subject to Him? what by every knee bowing to Him, every tongue confessing that He is Lord? And if, as we read, the time is coming when Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, what is the sense of this, if by His kingdom be meant the influence of His religion on the minds of men? Is this some day to cease? And will the cessation of it be the consummation of the manifestation of God as the King of Heaven? This would land us in the absurdity of supposing that the entire economy of redemption had been instituted by God for the attainment of an end which could be attained only by the final cessation of that through which alone this redemption takes effect. We may venture to say that the common sense of men will indignantly reject all such manifest tricks and artifices of interpretation, the clear object of which is to force out of Scripture a seeming sanction to what Scripture most plainly does not teach.

It does not seem necessary to prosecute further this examination of passages bearing on the question of the Person of Christ. Only a portion of the evidence accruing from this source as to the true and proper Deity of our Lord has been adduced. But enough has been presented to show what is the general tenor of the teaching of Scripture on this subject. It is not too much to affirm that to this "all the prophets give witness," and this all the apostles of our Lord, as well as our Lord Himself, unequivocally affirm. In next lecture it will be my endeavour to present in a condensed form and connectedly this evidence in its argumentative force. We shall thus see on what a solid and irrefragable basis rests the belief of the Catholic Church in the true and proper Deity of Him whom she adores as her Founder and Head, and how Christians of all times may with heart and soul join in the

hymn with which the early Christians were wont each evening to worship Christ:—

“ Ἀξίως εἰ ἐν πᾶσι καιρῶσι  
ὑμνεῖσθαι φωναῖς ὁσίοις,  
Τῷ Θεῷ, ζῶνι ὁ διδούς.  
διὸ ὁ κόσμος σε δοξάζει.”<sup>1</sup>

“ Worthy art Thou at all times to be sung  
With undefiled tongue,  
Son of our God, Giver of Life, Alone !  
Therefore in all the world, Thy glories,  
Lord, they own.”<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER V.

### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

#### (IV.) GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

Besides the evidence arising directly from the ascription throughout the Bible to Jesus Christ of the names, attributes, works, and worship appropriate to God, there are certain considerations of a general nature which may be adduced in corroboration of the conclusion to which that evidence leads—that Jesus Christ is truly and properly divine. These considerations are based on some of the statements of the sacred writers which have no *direct* or *immediate* bearing on our Lord's divine nature, but which seem tacitly and necessarily to imply that truth, inasmuch as it is only by assuming it that these statements can appear otherwise than absurd or extravagant.

In urging such considerations, it is assumed as a principle of common sense that no serious writer will voluntarily use language which he knows to be absurd, bombastical, or extravagant; that where any writer in whose sagacity and good sense we have confidence uses strong and vehement expressions, we are bound to ask whether there be nothing present at the time to the writer's mind, though not actually expressed by

<sup>1</sup> The whole hymn is given in Routh's *Reliquiæ Sacrae*, iii. 515.

<sup>2</sup> *Lyra Apostol.*, No. 63.



him, which led to or will justify the language he has used ; and that when we find from other parts of his writings he did hold and teach the doctrine which fully accounts for the language he has used, we cannot but believe that that doctrine was fully present to his mind at the time he wrote the statements referred to. The inference arising from this in relation to this doctrine itself is that it was one familiar to the mind of the writer, was held by him as of undoubted truth, was held by him as so generally acknowledged that to announce it was not necessary in the circumstances, and that at the same time it so underlay other matters of which he had occasion to write that it unconsciously moulded his language and regulated his sentiments in referring to them. As all *undesigned* indications of a truth are calculated to come with peculiar force upon the mind, we cannot but attach to these incidental implications of our Lord's Deity a special importance as proofs of that truth. The following particulars are offered in support and illustration of this position :—

i. The apostles invariably represent the *humanity* of our Lord as being in itself a marvellous thing. The simple facts that He should have been a man, that He should have been born, that He should have had a woman for His mother, that He should have grown in wisdom and stature, that He should have lived in circumstances of poverty and toil, that He should have been persecuted, and that He should have died, are all, in the judgment of His followers, so many marvels at which we cannot sufficiently wonder. With them it is not His Divine nature and perfections that are the objects of admiration ; it is His humanity at which they stand in amazement. Is this to be accounted for otherwise than on the supposition that they esteemed Him in original and proper nature as divine, and that what filled them with wonder was that He, the Divine, should condescend to become man ?

ii. The apostles represent the sending of Christ into the world as an act of unparalleled love on the part of God to man—as a costly expression of God's benevolence towards His creatures. Now in what respect did the mission of Christ so differ from the mission of any of the prophets which God had sent to His people as to be a proof of God's love such as they could not parallel, and as to cost Him (so to speak)

what they did not cost Him ? Is there any way of accounting for this but by the supposition that Jesus Christ was not only dearer to God than any of the messengers He had sent, but dearer than any creature can be ? that whilst they were but servants this was His Son, in a sense altogether peculiar, a sense involving a oneness of nature with God ?

iii. The apostles always speak of Christ's coming into the world as an act of unexampled condescension and love on His part. Suppose Him a creature, what meaning can we attach to this ? Where was the condescension implied in His being born, and coming to dwell as a man among His fellows ? Who ever heard of a child condescending to be born ? of a man showing unexampled love by coming to live on earth with other men ? Either the language is absurd, or He of whom it is used was more than man.

iv. The apostles represent Christ's life on earth as a becoming poor on the part of Him who had been rich, as an emptying Himself of His glory, and such like expressions. Is there any sense in such representations if His pre-existence in a state of glory be not assumed ?

v. The apostles uniformly give utterance to the strongest and warmest expressions of gratitude, admiration, and love when they speak of what they owe to their Master for His interposition on behalf of man. Much may be allowed to the enthusiasm of scholars in celebrating the praises of an honoured and beloved instructor ; but the language in which the New Testament writers speak of Christ transcends all reasonable bounds, and becomes absolutely senseless, if not profane, if He was no more than a mere creature. We can account for such men indulging in such language only on the ground that, fully recognising His divinity, they felt that no language could be too strong to express the emotions of reverence, adoration, and gratitude with which the contemplations of His grace towards man inspired them.

vi. The sacred writers represent our Lord as speaking of the sublimest things with the ease and familiarity of one to whom such things were native. An apostle, brought to contemplate heavenly things, is prostrated and rendered speechless ; Jesus speaks of heavenly things as one whose it is to dwell amongst them as His own—with the ease, simplicity,

and naturalness with which the native of a palace might speak of the splendours and majesty of a court. It is easy to see how this falls in with the hypothesis of His original Deity ; whilst, on the opposite hypothesis, it is, to say the least, singular, if not unaccountable.

vii. The striking religious solitude of Jesus Christ, as represented by the evangelists, is remarkable in connection with our present inquiry. He alone, of all God's servants, appears capable of sustaining His spiritual life by Himself. He is never found asking counsel of any one ; He never supplicates help from any one ; never asks any one to pray for Him ; never Himself unites in prayer with any one. Such solitariness in one so gentle and loving and companionable is a strange thing, to be fully accounted for only by the fact that to Him belonged a nature which rendered religious companionship with mere mortals impossible.

viii. Jesus Christ is represented as claiming from His followers a homage, a devotion, and a love which no being but God is entitled to claim. To His claims those of parents, of brother and sister, of friend, of life itself, must yield. Who is He that asks such devotion, that asserts such supremacy as this ? If He is not God, His language in this case is inexcusable, and His pretensions immoral.

ix. As the birth of Jesus was supernatural, so His exaltation after His resurrection was such as no mere creature could have received. To pass into the heavens and in bodily form sit down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, a partaker of the glory and authority of God, is an honour such as only a Divine Being in human nature was capable of receiving.

These considerations not only fall in with the assumption of our Lord's supreme divinity, but it is only on that assumption that all the statements and representations referred to can be reconciled with the sobriety and truthfulness of the sacred writers. When, in connection with this, it is remembered that such modes of speech and representations pervade the sacred writings ; that they proceed from men who were fully aware of the responsibility of the work in which they were engaged, and of the necessity of taking heed to every word they uttered in teaching their doctrines to men ; that such

language and such representations were calculated to frustrate one main end of their mission, if the being to whom they are applied was not divine, inasmuch as, whilst they were sent forth to denounce idolatry, they might lead men to offer divine honours to a creature ; that though denouncing blasphemy as the most heinous of sins, they constantly attribute to their Master words and attributes which, if He is not divine, involve both them and Him in the guilt of blasphemy, and that the ascription to Jesus Christ of divine names, attributes, and honours is wholly their own act, the very idea having been originated by them, and resting wholly on their mode of speaking concerning Him, so that their uttering it is both a gratuitous and an unaccountable piece of folly or dishonesty on their part, if Jesus Christ was not wholly divine,—it seems to the last degree improbable that the sacred writers did not intend to teach that the Messiah was to be, and that Jesus, as the Christ, was a Divine Person in human nature. If Jesus Christ were a mere man, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that never was there a set of writers who more systematically or perseveringly used language calculated to deceive and mislead their readers, and that in a case where error is fatal, and to be misled is to be ruined.

It is reported of the great painter Fra Angelico that he never painted the head of the Saviour but on bended knee. It would be well if professed critics and theologians studied the revelation of Him in the Bible in a like reverent spirit. It is only thus that the Divine can be really apprehended and appreciated. When men approach the Divine without reverence they are sure to misread the signs, to become vain in their imaginations, and amid the mists of their own foolish and darkened minds to substitute for the truth of God a poor, contracted, and erroneous conception of their own.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

## II. THE HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

We have seen how distinctly and with what abundant evidence Scripture asserts the true and proper Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. It no less distinctly, though with less copiousness of iteration, asserts His true and proper humanity. To this subject we now turn. Important as it is, it will not occupy us long. What we have to consider here is, on the one hand, the reality of our Lord's humanity; and, on the other, the peculiarities which distinguish Him from all other men.

That our Lord possessed a real and proper human nature was at an early period called in question by some whose speculative tendencies would not allow them to receive in simplicity of faith the revealed doctrine concerning the union of the divine and human natures in His one person. Fully convinced that He was divine, they refused to believe that He was also human; and hence they attempted to maintain that His humanity was not real—that it was only a phantasma, or that it was not of the same quality with that of man. Tertullian describes the two views thus: “Erraverunt in ipsa carne ejus, aut nullius veritatis contententes eam (unde phantasma dicitur), aut propriæ qualitatis” (*De Resurrec. Carnis*, 2). Those who held these views both passed alike under the name of Docketæ, *i.e.* δοκηται, or Apparitionists, from the Greek δοκειν, to seem, to appear. Strictly speaking, the Docketæ were those who thought Christ's humanity only apparent or phantasmal; it was Marcion and Valentinus who denied that His humanity possessed the proper quality; the former holding that Jesus Christ suddenly came down from heaven in a body fashioned there, and of a different nature from that of man; the latter maintaining that, though He was apparently born of the Virgin Mary, He merely made use of her as a channel through which He passed into the world,

“just as water passes through a pipe” (καθάπερ ὕδωρ διασωλήνος ὁδεύει).<sup>1</sup> These views were in general resisted by Christians as heretical and dangerous; for, as Novatian says, they concluded that if Jesus was a mere phantasm and not a reality, none of the things which He performed could have been really done by Him (“nihil verum eorum quæ gessit fecerit, si ipse phantasma et non veritas fuit,” *De Trin.* c. 10). But there were several of the orthodox Fathers who, whilst they maintained the reality of Christ’s humanity, yet sought to modify and qualify that assertion by various restrictions. Thus Clement of Alexandria<sup>2</sup> maintained that the body of Jesus was not sustained by ordinary means, but by the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost, and said that to suppose that the body of the Saviour required for its sustenance the ordinary means would be ridiculous (γελως αὐ εἶη). Origen, though strenuously opposed to Dokeric views, yet attributed to our Lord’s humanity qualities which would have essentially removed it from the ordinary nature of man.<sup>3</sup> In opposition to all such modifications as well as to the grossest Dokerism, we have to maintain the real and proper humanity of Jesus Christ—that He was *verus homo* as well as *verus Deus*.

(I.) The evidence in support of this position from Scripture may be stated thus:—

i. He is spoken of by names appropriate to one possessing really and truly the nature of man. He is expressly called “the man Christ Jesus.” In speaking of Himself He uses the expression “a man that hath told you the truth.” He again and again calls Himself the “Son of Man.” It is said of Him that He became flesh; and He is called the first born son of Mary. With these literal and prosaic designations proper to His humanity may be joined such figurative designations as “the seed of the woman,” “the seed of Abraham,” the “rod or sprout from the root of Jesse,” and such like, which are well-known designations of the Messiah, and which are appropriated to Jesus as the Christ. By the use of such

<sup>1</sup> Theodoret, *Ep.* 145, *Opp.* tom. iv. p. 1248; Tertullian, *Adv. Valent.* c. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Strom.* vi. 9, p. 775, ed. Potter, *Pædag.* i. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *C. Cels.* iv. 19, vii. 16; *Comment. in Matt.* p. 966c, etc.

names and appellations the sacred writers and our Lord Himself evidently intended to teach us to regard Him as a real partaker of our nature.

ii. It is expressly said that when He became flesh He took upon Him a nature the same as ours. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same" (Heb. ii. 14). Whether we understand "the children" here (*τα παιδια*) as meaning infants, or as denoting human beings, or as designating the people of Christ, does not greatly matter for our present argument. In any case, the parties so designated are human beings by whose participation of flesh and blood is meant the possession of the nature peculiar and appropriate to man; not, as Tholuck and Grotius represent it, the body as opposed to the soul, or the mortal as opposed to the glorified body, but the human nature as contrasted with the incorporeal uncreated God [Ebrard]; and as the apostle says that Jesus Christ not only partook of these same, but partook of them *παραπλησίως*, that is, not merely after the *similitude* of theirs, but after the same *manner* or *kind* as theirs, it follows that He was really and truly a partaker of human nature. As the ancient Fathers remark on *παραπλησίως* that it signifies *ου δοκητως· ἀλλ' ἀληθινως, ου φανταστικως ἀλλ' ὄντως*, and it almost seems as if the apostle had inserted this adverb in order to guard beforehand against the Dohetic heresy. Certain it is that his words clearly assert that our Lord Jesus Christ took upon Him the substance of our nature, and was really a man, though not merely a man.

With this we may compare what John says (1 Ep. iv. 2, 3): "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist." By the phrase here used, *εν σαρκι εληλυθότα*, the apostle intends the possession by Jesus Christ of a real and proper humanity (comp. Lücke, *in loc.*, and *Introd.* p. 72 ff.; De Wette, *in loc.*, etc.); and upon the admission of this he lays stress as an essential of Christianity. Nor can this be wondered at; for, as Lücke remarks, "if Christ has not been a man and our brother, the Messiah remained a mere toy of the

imagination and a phantom ; thus the redemption by Him is only ideal and imaginary ; it has no reality or existence within the sphere of humanity, and man cannot appropriate it to himself as his own. It therefore clearly follows that he who denies the *ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθεναι* of Christ is an anti christ ; he abolishes the essence of the Christian faith and annihilates it " (*Introd.* p. 78).

iii. The two parts essential to human nature are distinctly ascribed to Jesus Christ in Scripture. These are a body and a reasonable soul, the union of which constitute a real man. Our Lord had both. He Himself speaks frequently of both as pertaining to Him : " This is my body," said He in instituting the Lord's Supper ; and though these words are to be understood symbolically, being uttered of the bread which *represents* His body in that ordinance and not of His very body itself, yet this very fact contains a special evidence of the reality of His body ; for how could bread, a concrete mass, represent His body if that had been a mere phantasm ? So He spoke of Mary as having come to anoint His body for the burial ; and after His resurrection He said to His doubting and agitated disciples, " Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have " (Luke xxiv. 39), —a passage which Ignatius quotes against the Doketæ as affirming the reality of our Lord's corporeal nature, and that He was not *δαιμονιον ασωματον* [*Ad Smyrn.* § 3]. Of His soul He spoke when He said, " The Son of Man came to give His life (*ψυχὴν*, His soul ; comp. *יְצַדִּיק*, Isa. liii. 10) a ransom for many " (Matt. xx. 28) ; when He exclaimed, " My soul is troubled, and what shall I say ? " and again, " My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death ; " and when on the cross He said, " Father, into Thy hand I commit my spirit." With equal clearness do His followers speak of His body, and of His soul or spirit. " He spake concerning the temple of His body," is the remark of the historian when correcting the mistake of the Jews as to our Lord's meaning when He said, " Destroy this temple, and in three days I shall build it up again " (John ii. 19, 21). Paul speaks of " the body of His flesh " (Col. i. 22), and of His having opened for us " a new and living way through the veil, that is to say, His flesh " (Heb. x. 20). And the sacred writers continually speak of



His blood, and of other parts of the animal body as realities subsisting in Him. They speak also of the "mind" that was in Him, and ascribe to Him faculties such as belong to and characterize the spiritual nature of man. Our Lord then had both a body and a soul, the union of which constituted Him a true and proper man. Hence in some of the creeds of the Reformation it was formally asserted that "*anima Domini Jesu Christi non absque sensu et ratione, ut Apollinaris sentiebat, neque caro absque anima, ut Eunomius docebat; sed anima cum ratione sua et caro cum sensibus suis.*"<sup>1</sup>

iv. The affections and attributes of a true man are ascribed to Him. As a child He grew both in stature and in intelligence (Luke ii. 40, 52); He was susceptible of domestic and social influences, loving His parents and being obedient to them; and He acquired knowledge both of men and things by the ordinary processes of learning and experience. As a man He exhibited all the ordinary features of humanity. He had the ordinary appetites of man, was susceptible of hunger and thirst and weariness, and sought to relieve His wants by food and drink and sleep, as all men do. He had a large share of the sufferings and sorrows that ordinarily befall men here, and they affected Him just as they affect us, so far as physical influences are concerned. He had the ordinary sympathies and affections of men, seeking the society of those He loved, sharing in their griefs and joys, and craving their affections in return. He had the ordinary susceptibilities of men, feeling pain and sorrow and anguish, shrinking from death and agony with the recoil natural to man, and seeking refuge and help where all good men seek them, in prayer to God. He had a moral nature like ours, being under law to God, obedient to the rule of righteousness and truth, but at the same time capable of being solicited by temptations from the paths of piety and godliness, though ever without effect. And, in fine, He had that great peculiarity which only a being possessed of a true animal nature can have—the possibility of dying; so that when He said upon the cross, "It is finished!" His body and soul were separated from each other, and, while the former was laid in the tomb, the latter "returned to God who gave it." By all

<sup>1</sup> Helvetic Confession.

these affections and attributes He showed that He was in deed and in truth a partaker of the same nature with us.

Seeing, then, that Scripture unqualifiedly designates Him a man, and calls Him the son of a woman, and describes His birth of her as that of the same nature with that of an ordinary child; and seeing that He is formally described as having assumed our nature and appeared in human flesh; and seeing He exhibited all the essential attributes and qualities and tendencies which peculiarly distinguish man, the conclusion cannot be legitimately avoided that our Lord Jesus Christ was really and truly a man, in very deed bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. The application of every appropriate test evinces this. "A being," says Dr. Pye Smith, "who acts and speaks, and is addressed as a man, and who exhibits all the properties which distinguish man from other beings, must be a *real* MAN. To such a being, possessing the nature and essential attributes of a man, it is correct to ascribe a *proper* humanity, even if it should be the fact that by the possession of a different class of properties which are known to be the attributes of another nature this other nature should appear to be preternaturally conjoined with that being."<sup>1</sup> Though not *ψιλὸς ἀνθρώπος*, He was *ἀληθινὸς ἄνθρωπος*.

(II.) The ancient heretics, who denied or called in question the true and proper humanity of our Lord, sought support for their views in some of the statements of Scripture.

i. They appealed to the appearance of the Angel of Jehovah and of ordinary angels under the human form, as recorded in various parts of both Testaments. But (i.) such instances only prove the *possibility* of spiritual agents appearing in the human form without actually possessing a human nature; they do not at all indicate that the appearance of Jesus Christ was of this kind. (ii.) No analogy can subsist between appearances assumed for a brief period, and such a life-long existence as that of Jesus Christ upon this earth. (iii.) Though some of the angels seem to have partaken of food when they came down in human form to earth, yet it does not appear that this was done in any case in obedience to the calls of hunger, or for the sake of sustaining the nature they

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. p. 95.

had assumed. (iv.) In no case is such language used concerning any of these angels as that "he was a man," that "he became flesh," and that in order to be made like unto us, who partake of flesh and blood, he likewise took part in the same; and (v.) the objects for which angels appeared in human form were such as might be accomplished by a mere apparition, whereas those for which Christ appeared could be accomplished only by a real man. "Let those," says Tertullian, "who refer the flesh of Christ to the example of angels, saying it was not born, *i.e.* not really flesh, compare the reasons for which Christ came into the world with those for which angels came. None of these angels descended that he might be crucified, might experience death, might be raised from the dead. But if there was no such reason for angels becoming incorporate, there was no need for their assuming flesh by being born; they came not to die, therefore they needed not to be born. But as Christ was sent to die, He behoved to be born, for he who is not born does not use to die."<sup>1</sup> In short, as Gerhard remarks, "If you attentively inquire, you will find that the incarnation of Christ and the manifestations of angels differed in respect of all causes, efficient, material, formal, and final."

ii. An appeal was made by the Docketists and Valentinians to such expressions as those of Paul in Rom. viii. 3, where Christ is said to have been sent *ἐν ὁμοιωματι σαρκος*, in the likeness of flesh, and in Phil. ii. 7, where He is said to have been found *ἐν σχήματι*, in fashion as a man. With regard to the former of these, it may suffice to remark that Paul's whole expression is *ἐν ὁμοιωματι σαρκος ἁμαρτίας*, in the likeness of flesh *of sin*; the meaning of which is that He came, not in sinful flesh, but only in the likeness of it; that this flesh was "*similis peccatrici non tamen peccatrix*," as Gerhard expresses it; and consequently there is nothing here to invalidate the belief that physically the flesh He assumed was the same as ours. What is excluded by this phrase is not the reality of human nature, but the stain and blot of sin. As Tertullian tersely expresses it, "*Similitudo ad peccati titulum pertinet non ad substantiæ mendacium.*" With regard to the latter passage, all turns on the meaning of the word *σχῆμα*. Now, that this signifies fashion, form,

<sup>1</sup> *De Carne Christi.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

or outward habit or condition, cannot be denied, but it surely does not follow that because Christ is said to have been found in outward form and conditions as a man, His humanity was nothing *but* an outward form, a mere shadow. And besides, would not such a statement have been fatal to the apostle's object in this passage? His design is to hold up Jesus Christ as an example to His followers; His example lay in His acting *σχήματι ὡς ἀνθρώπος*, as became a man; but if He was not really a man, if His humanity was a mere shadow, of what use is His example to us, and how can it be binding on us? If *we* are to do just as Christ did, then as His humiliation was not a real but only an apparent one, and His obedience to the Father a mere shadow, it must then be by a feigned humility and pretended obedience that we are to serve God.

It would serve no good end whatever to recapitulate and refute all the notions which the restless ingenuity of the ancient heretics started upon the subject of our Lord's human nature. Suffice it that we have seen from Scripture abundant reason to believe in the reality and integrity of that nature as in deed and truth constituting Him "the man Christ Jesus."<sup>1</sup>

(III.) But though the human nature of Christ was in substance the same as ours, it had its own properties and peculiarities. Among these theologians specify the following:—

i. His extraordinary conception. His birth was the same as that of other men, but He was conceived of the Holy Ghost in the womb of His virgin mother. When the angel announced to her that she was to be the mother of the Messiah, he said, "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" (Luke i. 35). And when Joseph, her espoused husband, was minded to put her away, under the impression that she had been unfaithful to her vows, an angel was sent to say to him, "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." These passages distinctly announce the fact of a miraculous conception, so that the humanity of

<sup>1</sup> As the Helvetic Confession expresses it, He is "*juxta humanam naturam nobis hominibus consubstantialeni.*"

Jesus Christ was derived wholly from His mother, or, as the Athanasian Creed expresses it, He was “man, of the substance of His mother, born into the world.” In this aspect His humanity differed from that of all other men; it was not, like that of Adam, immediately created by God; it was not, like that of all Adam’s descendants, begotten by the agency of man. Beyond the mere fact, however, it behoves us not to inquire; suffice it that in that we have an assurance that, from the very first, His humanity had in it something supernatural, and that from the beginning it was without stain or spot.

ii. Our Lord, though in human nature, was without sin. He came, indeed, *εν ομοιωματι σαρκος ἁμαρτίας*, but “His fellowship with humanity, suffering on account of sin, was in Him simply a fellowship of suffering, not a fellowship of sin.”<sup>1</sup> He was free from all sin, whether of nature or practice. He emphatically “knew no sin” (2 Cor. v. 21). He could challenge His enemies, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?” (John viii. 46). He “did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth” (1 Pet. ii. 22). He was, as He is, “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners” (Heb. vii. 26). Than this statement none could be more clear and unqualified. It declares Him to have been *οσιος*, pure in the sight of God; *ακακος*, blameless in relation to men, without *κακια* or wickedness, without vice or inclination to do harm; *ἁμίαντος*, without stain or spot, defect or blemish; *κεχωρισμενος απο των ἁμαρτωλων*, separated from sinners, having no communion with them as sinners, or participation in their sin. Nor is it merely true of Him historically that He did not sin, it is also to be affirmed of Him that He was impeccable—not, indeed, in a physical sense, which would be negative of His moral freedom, but in a moral sense, as one whose nature was so set against sin that evil had no power over Him to lead Him away.

iii. He was as a man not only exempt from all sin, but He was pre-eminently endowed with all moral graces and excellences. He was not only such a man as the world never saw before, but He became in moral excellence “higher than the heavens” (Heb. vii. 26), *i.e.* He exhibited a moral

<sup>1</sup> Nitzsch, *Christliche Lehre*, p. 265.

and spiritual lustre to which even the holy angels do not attain. By universal admission, even on the part of some who reject His religion and deny His highest claims, He stands not only pre-eminent but alone in the majesty, the symmetry, the beauty of His character. In Him we see everything that can dignify or adorn the character in absolute perfection and in perfect harmony. His character is as unique as it is beautiful; "nought but itself can be its parallel." Holy from the womb, in the congenial soil of His heart all virtues sprang up and flourished spontaneously. Perhaps what strikes us most is the extraordinary *combination* of excellences which His character displays. Meekness and majesty, firmness and gentleness, zeal and prudence, composure and warmth, patience and sensibility, submissiveness and dignity, sublime sanctity and tender sympathy, piety that rose to the loftiest devotion, and benevolence that could stoop to the meanest sufferer, intense abhorrence of sin and profound compassion for the sinner, mingle their varied rays in the tissue of our Saviour's character, and produce a combination of virtues that fill the mind with wonder and delight. And, amid all this variety, there is the most perfect equipoise. He had not only all the entireness, He had also all the symmetry of virtue.<sup>1</sup>

iv. To all moral our Lord added all intellectual excellence. "The perfection of the soul," says Quenstedt, "is threefold—of the understanding, of the will, of the appetite." As our Lord was perfectly pure in all His affections and perfectly right in all His volitions, so He was perfect in His intelligence and understanding. How marvellous was His wisdom and knowledge! Called to perform a most difficult and delicate task, the introducing of a new religion among a people enthusiastically attached to the outward forms of that which they had received by tradition from their fathers, but dead to all spiritual interests, He presents the extraordinary spectacle of one who never made a mistake, who never had to retract, modify, or excuse a single utterance, who spoke so as to extort the admiration of His bitterest enemies, who were constrained to say, "Never man spake like this man." Noticeable also is the wisdom He displayed in the choice of

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Alexander's *Christ and Christianity*, Part II. ch. i.

His disciples—men remarkable for their honest, sincere, and truthful spirit, but at the same time men not to be drawn into any wild, delusive scheme, or to persevere in any course to their own hurt, unless fully certified that it was a course to which they were bound by a regard to truth and rectitude to adhere. See Him also in conflict with His subtle and keen opponents, never committing Himself to an adversary, never foiled by craft or worsted in argument, never failing to say the right thing at the fitting time, and ever covering with confusion those who sought to entangle Him in His talk. To His power as a teacher we cannot here properly refer, for as He Himself avowed that His doctrine was not His, but the Father's who had sent Him, the greatness of His doctrine cannot be appealed to as evidence of the greatness of His intellect, inasmuch as under this aspect He, as sent by God, stands on the same footing with the other prophets who came and spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ; though at the same time in the manner and method of His teaching, in the skill with which He adapted His teaching to the capacities and needs of those to whom He spoke, and the ease and simplicity with which He set forth the profoundest truths and unfolded heavenly things to those whose minds were conversant only with things of the earth, we have striking proof of the high intellectual capacity with which as a man He was endowed. So striking and so manifold are the manifestations of intellectual power furnished by the recorded sayings and doings of Christ during His ministry on earth, that they show that in the Man Christ Jesus there was an intellect not only of the highest order, but altogether peculiar and unparalleled among the children of men.

v. There is reason to believe that our Lord's bodily person corresponded to His mental and moral perfection. Scripture, indeed, says nothing directly on this point ; but there are incidental notices which lead us to believe that His countenance was exceedingly prepossessing, and that He was literally, as the Psalmist described Him prophetically, "fairer than the sons of men." There must, we may well believe, have been something extraordinarily attractive and winning in that countenance which led the mothers of Israel to place their

infants in His arms, and made the infants cling to Him and feel safe in His embrace,—something very charming in the look of Him on whom as He passed along the women of His nation showered their admiration and exclaimed, “Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps that Thou hast sucked!” something very striking and impressive in the mien of Him on whom, after He had done a very common thing, a thing which was done by other men every day, “the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fastened on Him.” No authentic portrait of our Lord has come down to us; there were none among the Jews who could do for Him what the artists of Greece and Rome have done for the illustrious among their countrymen; or, if there had been among the Jews those who either on canvas, or in gems, or marble, could have depicted His countenance and form, there were none who would not have thought it scorn to exercise their art on One whom the rulers of their nation rejected and contemned. Two medallions exist professing to be likenesses of Christ; but they are the productions of a later age, and are of no authority except as they may preserve a traditional reminiscence of the personal appearance of our Lord. The legends of an impression of the likeness of His countenance left by our Lord on the cloth with which He was wont to wipe His face, and which He sent to Abgarus, king of Edessa, of an impression of His likeness on the head-dress of Veronica which she handed to Him as He was passing to Calvary that He might wipe the blood from His brow, and received back from Him with His image imprinted upon it, and of the likeness said to have been left on the linen in which He had been wrapped in the sepulchre, are mere fables, the inventions of a superstitious and credulous age. A tradition, however, seems to have prevailed among the early Christians as to our Lord’s personal appearance; and though St. Augustine expressly says that of His appearance we are wholly ignorant, and that the likenesses of Him vary according to the fancy of the artist, there does appear to have been a generally accepted belief as to His appearance, and this has been embodied in that typical resemblance which all painters more or less closely follow in their pictures of Christ. Certain it is that a tradition was handed down through the



Middle Ages which was probably derived from the earliest period. It is preserved by Nicephorus, who lived in the end of the 14th and beginning of the 15th century, and in another form in a pretended letter of Lentulus, a Roman, who is supposed to have visited Jerusalem in the time of our Lord, and to have seen Him. Neither of these is of any value except as they preserve to us what was the traditionary belief both of the Eastern and Western Churches regarding our Lord's appearance. The two descriptions do not agree in all points ; but both present to us the picture of one in whom grace and dignity, physical beauty, and the marks of mental supremacy and excellence, are strikingly displayed.<sup>1</sup> The subject is one not of supreme importance, for it matters little comparatively what was the aspect of that outward guise under which the Divine Word was pleased to veil His essential glory. But as it is His prerogative in all things to have the pre-eminence, it is pleasant as well as proper to think that He had this as well in bodily appearance and form as in mind and spirit. Of one thing we may be sure, that as His miraculous birth precluded all hereditary predisposition to infirmity, disease, or blemish, and His calm, serene, pure, and sinless life preserved Him from all the degrading and injurious influences of passion or appetite ; and as the constant predominance of gentle, loving, and noble emotions would exert a moulding influence on His features, there would be nothing arising from Himself to mar or deface the native beauty of that "Holy Thing" that was born of the Virgin. It is not undeserving of notice that though the evangelists represent our Lord as in many respects a sufferer, and as subject to weariness and often to want, there is no hint given or statement made which would lead us to believe that He ever was sick, or suffered from any disease. From all bodily ailments He seems to have been perfectly free. The only sense in which He bare our sicknesses was that He took sickness off men and carried it away from them. Not in the grave only did the Holy One of God see no corruption, but all through His life on earth no seed of corruption, no element of disorder or decay, impaired the

<sup>1</sup> Both these are given by Geikie in his *Life of Christ*, vol. i. pp. 455, 456, where more on this subject will be found.

vigour or marred the beauty of that human body He had condescended to assume. All things considered, the strong presumption is that the old divines were right when they included “*perfectio corporis*” among the characteristics of our Lord’s humanity.

Jesus Christ was thus Perfect Man as well as Very God. Whilst He presented to men a manifestation of God, so that they who came nighest to Him and beheld His glory saw in Him the glory of the only-begotten Son of the Father, He moved among men as the Perfection of Humanity, and presented to the view of the intelligent universe man as he was at first made in the image and likeness of Him by whom he was created.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

#### III. RELATIONS OF THE DIVINE AND HUMAN NATURES IN CHRIST.

We have seen that the Lord Jesus Christ is set before us in Scripture as truly and properly divine, and also as truly and properly human. We have now to inquire in what relation these two representations stand to each other.

As there are not two Christs, and as it is of one and the same person that both these representations are given, we can come to no other conclusion than that a *twofold* nature belonged to the one Christ. It is impossible to conceive of a simple nature in such a case. Either there were two persons altogether, one divine and the other human, or the divine nature and the human were united in the one person of Jesus Christ. But the former is excluded by the language of Scripture, which assigns both these characters to the one Messiah or Christ; therefore only the latter remains possible. Hence the doctrine, commonly received in all the orthodox Churches, of the union of two natures in the one person of

the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> We thus advance a step. We have seen that He is *Θεός*; we have seen that He is *ἄνθρωπος*; we now see that He is *θεῖον ἄνθρωπος*.

We hold, then, as pertaining to the person of the Redeemer a duality of natures, a unity of person. And here it may be as well to define the sense in which these terms are used by theologians. A nature (*natura*, *φύσις*, *οὐσία*, *μορφή*) is a subject endowed with certain qualities and faculties; a Person (*persona*, *υποστάσις*, *υφιστάμενον*, *προσωπον*) is a subject intelligent and self-subsisting. We say that the nature of God is different from that of man, because the peculiar qualities and faculties of the two subjects are different; and we speak of God as a Person because we conceive of Him as an intelligent existence, subsisting *per se*, and not either the soul of the world, or the substance of the world, as the Pantheists teach. We say, therefore, that Jesus Christ is possessed of the divine and human natures, because to Him, as subject, the properties and qualities of both are ascribed; and we say He has these in one person, because He, as the subject of these, subsists *per se*, and is one intelligence.

(I.) Now, respecting the relation of these two natures to each other, the following things may be observed:—

i. That the union was effected by the divine uniting itself to the human. It is better to express it thus than to say that the divine nature *assumed* the human into union with it. The language of Scripture is, that the Logos *became* flesh (*σαρξ ἐγένετο*); that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was *made* (*γενόμενον*) of a woman; that as those whom He came to

<sup>1</sup> “Sunt igitur duæ naturæ, divina et humana, in unitate personæ inseparabiliter conjunctæ.” *Conf. Aug.* art. 3.

“Siquidem ita conjunctam unitamque humanitati divinitatem asserimus, ut sua utrique naturæ solida proprietas maneat, et tamen ex duabus illis unus Christus constituatur.” Calvin, *Institutio Christianæ Religionis*, lib. II. xiv. 1.

“Two whole and perfect natures, that is, the Godhead and the manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man.” *Art. 2 of the Church of England*.

See also Westminster Confession of Faith, chap. viii. § 2: “The Son of God, the Second Person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon Him man’s nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance.”

redeem had in common flesh and blood, He also *shared* (μετεσχε) flesh and blood; that He was the second Adam, the man Christ Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, etc. The only passage that seems to authorize or favour the phraseology that our Lord *took* on Him or assumed human nature is Heb. ii. 16 as it appears in the A. V., where we read, "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels, but took on Him the seed of Abraham," which may be taken to mean that He assumed the nature belonging to the seed of Abraham. But in the Greek there is nothing about *nature*, either of angels or men. This is a supplement of our translators, and a most unhappy one. Had the apostle meant to affirm anything concerning the nature of our Lord, he would have specified Adam, and not Abraham, as the type which He assumed. The proper rendering is, "He took not on Him the *help* of angels, but He took on Him the help," etc.

We are justified, however, by these passages in affirming that in Jesus Christ there was a true incarnation of God. It was not an *αποθεωσις* or deification that took place in Him; it was an *ἐνάνθρωπησις*, or man-becoming, an incarnation (*ἐνσάρκωσις*), or an incorporation (*ἐνσωμάτωσις*).

ii. This personal union of two natures in the one Christ is a union entirely *sui generis*, and cannot be compared to any with which we are familiar. It is not an essential union, as if the two natures coalesced into one, which, like a chemical compound, was somewhat different from either, as Eutyches taught. Nor is it, as Cerinthus and Nestorius taught, a simple apposition of the one nature to the other, as if they were joined merely superficially, like two separate objects that are mechanically agglutinated. Nor is it a mixing of the two natures, so that they are confused the one with the other. Nor is it a merely mystical or moral union, in virtue of which the one nature always acts in unison with the other. It is a union of which all that we can say is—(i.) that it is *personal*; (ii.) that it is *real*, *i.e.* that the two partake of each other, so that each has in common with the other what is proper to it, yet ever so as that the divine shall permeate and appropriate the human, not the human the divine; (iii.) that it is *supernatural*, and as to the mode of it altogether surpassing our comprehension. Some of the Fathers and older

theologians have sought to illustrate it by the union of the soul and body in man, or by the union of fire and matter in a red-hot iron. "In Jesus Christ," says Augustine, "the *λογος* and the man constitute but one person, as in mankind generally the soul and the body constitute but one" (*Ep.* 102 [169]). "If anything among things human can be found resembling so great a mystery, that which seems the most apposite similitude is that drawn from man, whom we see to consist of two substances, of which neither is so mixed with the other that it does not retain the property of its own nature. For neither is the body the soul, nor the soul the body" (Calvin, *Inst.* lib. II. xiv. § 1). In the *Confession of Faith*, the union is thus described:—"So that two whole perfect natures, the Godhead and the Manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion: Which Person is very God and very Man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and Man." But these similitudes can in no degree help us to comprehend the mode in which the divine and the human natures subsist in Christ. They only show us that two distinct subsistences may be intimately united without being mixed or confused, without losing their individuality, or being merely appended to each other. They help us also to account for a result of this personal union of the two natures in Christ to which we have now to advert, and in reference to which both Augustine and Calvin adduce their illustration.

iii. I remark then, thirdly, that in consequence of this personal union of the divine nature and the human in Jesus Christ, statements are made concerning the concrete person which are strictly true only of one or other of the natures therein united. This is technically called "*communio naturarum*," and is in reality inseparable from that reality of union between the two of which we have already spoken. "A man, for example," says Augustine, in continuation of the passage before cited, "is a philosopher only in virtue of his mind; nevertheless it is customary and lawful to say this philosopher has been killed, is dead and is buried, though all these are incident to a man only in virtue of his body, and not at all in virtue of that which made him a philosopher.

It is the same with Jesus Christ; and just as, on the one hand, it is said of Him that He is the Son of God and King of Glory, and other similar statements which are true of Him as the Logos; so, on the other hand, it is said of Him that He was crucified, though we know that this happened to Him through means of His body, and not by reason of that which made Him King of Glory." "In speaking of the soul by itself," says Calvin, "we affirm of it what cannot befall the body, and of the body again we say what by no means suits the soul; and of the whole man what cannot be taken without absurdity either of the soul by itself or of the body by itself. In fine, the properties of the soul are transferred to the body, and those of the body to the soul, whilst, nevertheless, he who consists of these is one man and not more. Such modes of speaking indicate that there is in man one person composed of two conjoined, and that there are two diverse natures which constitute this. So the Scriptures speak of Christ; they sometimes attribute to Him what properly ought to be referred to His humanity, sometimes what peculiarly belongs to His divinity, sometimes what is appropriate to the two natures conjoined, and can be sufficiently understood of neither apart. And that conjunction of the twofold nature which is in Christ they so reverently regard that at times they communicate the one with the other, which trope the ancients called *ἰδιωματων κοινωνία*." <sup>1</sup> In illustration of these statements Calvin appeals to the following passages: John viii. 58, "Before Abraham was, I am," where Christ, speaking in human nature, affirms what was true of Him only in His higher or divine nature. So also when Paul calls Him *πρωτοτοκος πάσης κτίσεως* (Col. i. 15), or when He Himself says that He had glory with the Father before the world was (John xvii. 5), language is used of His concrete being which is strictly true only of His divine nature. On the other hand, when He is called the servant of God; when it is said of Him that He grew in wisdom and in favour with God and man (Luke iii. 52); when He Himself says that He did not His own will, but that of His Father in heaven (John vi. 38), language is used of His whole being which is strictly true only of His

<sup>1</sup> *Inst.* II. c. xiv. § 1.

human nature. We have instances also of this communion of properties in such statements as that God purchased His Church "with His own blood" (supposing Θεός to be the correct reading here) (Acts xx. 28); that the Jews crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. ii. 8); that the hands of the apostles had "handled the word of life;" "that God gave His life for us" (1 John i. 1 and iii. 16): in all of which that is ascribed to the divine nature of Christ which could happen strictly only to His human. And, on the other hand, when Christ, speaking in the flesh, called Himself the Son of Man "who is in heaven" (John iii. 13), He used of His human nature language which is strictly true only of His divine. But the clearest passages, says Calvin, on this head are those, of which there are several in the Gospel of John, which comprehend both natures together. Thus when it is said, that to Him has it been given to remit sins (John i. 29), to raise whom He wills, to bestow righteousness, sanctification, and salvation; that He has been appointed to judge the quick and the dead (v. 22-29); that He is the Light of the world (viii. 12), the true Vine (xv. 1), and the Door of the fold (x. 7); that He sits at the right hand of God (Heb. i. 3), and such like the true key to which, Calvin says, is the personal union of the divine and human nature in the one Christ, such expressions and statements can be understood neither of one simply divine nor of one simply human; they receive the proper explanation only when understood of one who united the divine and the human in one person.

Calvin speaks of these modes of expression as tropes or figures. By this he intends that they are analogical modes of expressing what we cannot directly and immediately comprehend. By the Lutheran divines, however, they have been taken as expressing a real consequent of the personal union of the two natures in Jesus Christ, and on this they have raised their doctrine of a "communicatio idiomatum," and have attempted a systematic statement of the subject for which Scripture furnishes no ground, and which carries them much beyond the bounds of sober inquiry. They divide what they call the idiomatic properties into three genera. The first includes those in which the properties of the divine nature or of the human are ascribed to the whole person of Christ,

which is denominated from one or other of these natures. This comprehends all such instances as those already referred to, and embraces the whole of what can be safely said on the subject. But they add to this a second genus, which they call “genus majestaticum,” under which they class those instances in which the divine nature of the Son communicates its own proper glory to the human,—a class which, as distinct from the former, has plainly no existence; and a third, which they denominate a “communicatio apotelesmaturum,” and describe as that by which in official acts each nature does what is proper to it with communication of the other; which also, as distinct from the first, is without authority or meaning. These distinctions are rejected by the Reformed Churches, and have been relinquished by most later Lutheran divines. “The Symbolical theory,” says Staudlin, “transgresses the bounds of its object, which is to give a sound illustration and the facts of the incarnation, and errs by the determination of definitions which have interest only from the standpoint of a bygone philosophy, and can satisfy only from that point of view.”

In the Epistle to the Philippians (ii. 6 ff.) the apostle describes Jesus Christ as having emptied or despoiled Himself (*εαυτον κενωσεν*) when He appeared as a man on earth. In another place, also, he describes Him as though originally rich for our sakes becoming poor (2 Cor. viii. 9). Such statements undoubtedly mean that our Lord underwent a great change, and descended from that lofty position and state which properly belonged to Him to one far lower, in which He was humbled and suffered. But we must beware of being led to the conclusion that in this *kenosis*, or emptying, there was any change in essential properties, or the laying aside of any of the peculiar attributes of Deity. There was a change of state, but this does not involve a change of nature. The relinquishment of dignity and majesty is not the giving up of inherent qualities or properties. What our Lord gave up was, as His own words teach us, that glory, that manifested majesty and splendour, which He had with the Father before the world was, and which, relinquished for a time, He was to resume when His work on earth was finished. What He did not retain was the form of God, the *μορφή του Θεου*, the manifestation of God, the apparent glory and dignity of God; but in



laying aside this He did not in the least relinquish or change the *ουσία*, the essence and nature of God. The riches which He possessed before His incarnation were His not He, and in relinquishing them and becoming poor for our sakes He gave up no personal quality, relinquished none of His essential properties. They therefore are not to be followed who teach that the *κενωσις*, or *exinanitio*, or emptying of the Logos, took place in the sphere of His relative perfections, such as omniscience, omnipotence, etc., though not in that of His immanent perfections, such as blessedness, goodness, etc. In all that constitutes Deity, in all the essential perfections of Deity, He came when He was made of a woman, made under the law. In Him dwelt then, as in Him dwells now, all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

iv. Finally, the union of the divine and human natures in the one Christ is constant and eternal. It is constant, *i.e.* as the human nature never existed apart from the divine in Christ, so all through His mediatorial working it was as God-man that He acted. The union was from the first moment of the formation of His humanity in the womb of the Virgin, and continued all through His life on earth, and continues still in His exalted state. This union will continue for ever. Christ, the apostle says, is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life (Heb. vii. 16). As He is to be for ever with His people, preserving, sustaining, leading, and blessing them in heaven, His mediatorial agency cannot cease, nor that union of natures, in virtue of which He is Mediator, come to an end.

(II.) Turning from these speculations to the sure ground of Scripture, we have there abundant reason, as we have seen, for receiving this fundamental article of our faith, that Jesus Christ the author of our redemption is God-man, two natures in one person, and that all that was done by the one Christ was by Him in this twofold nature in some sense, though in what sense we do not pretend to explain. This, like all the other doctrines of the Bible, is set forth chiefly for its practical utility, and though theoretically it may be burdened with difficulties, it is practically a doctrine full of comfort and encouragement. The practical and religious importance of the doctrine may be stated as follows :—

(i.) The high dignity which is thereby conferred upon Christianity as a system of religion. It is not a mere speculation, nor a form of religious philosophy, nor a conjectural response to the deep religious longings of the soul: it is based upon a great divine fact—the incarnation of the divine nature in the human, so that He who was the former of man becomes his reformer.

(ii.) The high honour thus put upon human nature, seeing God did not disdain to assume it into union with His own, and to elevate it to the throne of heaven. Here we see human nature only in ruins, and covered with defilement, and the spectacle may well fill us with humiliation and shame. But our hopes revive, our confidence is restored, our depression is revoked, when we behold humanity, true real humanity, in union with true real Deity in the Person of Jesus Christ. We feel that, fallen as we are, our nature in itself is yet worthy of being the companion of the Divine. We stand amid ruins, it is true, but they are the ruins of a noble temple in which the Deity did not disdain to dwell, and which is capable of being restored, so as once more to be a fit dwelling for the Most High.

(iii.) The model afforded in the perfect humanity of Christ of that moral and spiritual excellence to which our nature is capable of being brought. When we realize the fact that Jesus Christ was very man as well as very God, we see in Him what man was made to be, what man through grace may become, and what every believer in Christ is destined to become in the perfected state. In Him we see all goodness embodied, and humanity once more adorned with all the beauty of holiness. He who came to restore virtue to earth and to glorify God in that nature in which He had been insulted and dishonoured, showed in that nature a pattern of virtue so comprehensive that we have only to let this mind be in us which was also in Him when He humbled Himself for our salvation in order to clothe ourselves with all the moral excellence of which our nature is capable. “He hath animated,” says Chalmers, “the moralities of our terrestrial condition with the breath and spirit of the upper sanctuary, and hath thereby shown that our condition, humble as it is, admits an impress upon it of a celestial character, and

so of being elevated to celestial glory. When I see in the person of Jesus Christ how the everyday virtues and commonest occasions of life were throughout impregnated with the very spirit of the Divinity, I think I can better understand, when told to resemble Him, what it is to be filled with the whole fulness of God.”<sup>1</sup>

(iv.) The manifestation thus given of the transcendent love of God, in that He Himself came down and took upon Him our nature, and suffered for our redemption. Suppose in our walks among the abodes of the poor and outcast we were to come on one whose high intelligence proclaimed him a man fit to give law to thought, whose pure and blameless life was a marvel and a lesson to all around him, whose whole time was occupied in plans and acts of benevolence, and who stood out from all men we had ever seen before, alike by the grandeur and the simplicity of his life: should we not wonder that one so fitted to grace the loftiest sphere should be found in one of the lowliest, that one so qualified to command should be content to serve? But suppose we should hear that this man was actually born to move in the very highest circles of society,—that it belonged to him of right to hold the sceptre of empire,—and that he had of his own free choice relinquished the splendours and privileges of royalty, had denuded himself of rank and wealth, and had gone down to live among the poor and wretched that thereby he might the more effectually reach them and rescue them from misery: with what emotions of astonishment and admiration should we not be filled as we contemplated so transcendent a pattern of condescension and benevolence! But what is this to what is presented to us in Jesus Christ? When the Divine Word became flesh, He descended to a nature infinitely lower than His own; the Creator came down to submit to the conditions of the nature He had created; the King eternal and immortal condescended to claim fraternity with beings whose foundation is in the dust, and who perish before the moth; the Being who inherited eternity, and whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, submitted to dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and to shut up His glories in a tenement of dust. Here surely was a love that

<sup>1</sup> See Chalmers' *Institutes of Theology, Supplementary Lectures*, Lect. iii. p. 457.

passeth knowledge, a condescension that cannot be measured, a manifestation of benevolence such as exceeds all human experience and comprehension. It is the great manifestation of Him who is Love ; a lesson of God which we may receive though we cannot fully grasp it, even as we receive the sun light without being able to appropriate the orb whence it streams.

(v.) The confidence thus inspired in us as dependent on Jesus Christ for redemption in that we know Him to be divine, and therefore sufficient to save us ; to be human, and therefore able to sympathize with us and to compassionate us. Whilst He sits on heaven's throne and is worshipped there as Lord of all, He is at the same time the merciful and faithful High Priest of His Church, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and in that He Himself hath suffered is able to succour them that are tried.

(vi.) When taken in connection with the work which the Redeemer of man had to accomplish in order to man's redemption, the importance of this union of the divine and human natures in Christ becomes most conspicuous. Without this He could not have stood in our place and made atonement for us. It was necessary that our Sacrifice should put on our nature in order that He really might become our Representative, in order that He might really enter into all our circumstances, and in order that our sin might be punished, and the law we had broken magnified in the same nature in which the sin had been committed and the law transgressed. It was equally necessary that He should be divine in order that His sacrifice should have dignity and worth sufficient to afford satisfaction to the divine justice, and lay a solid basis for our acceptance with God.

For all these reasons it was necessary that the Redeemer of man should be God "manifest in the flesh." Let us be grateful both for the fact itself and for the abundant evidence which assures us of its truth ; and let us, well established in this fundamental doctrine, ever give it its own place in all our expositions of Christianity, nor yield it up in its scriptural integrity at the bidding of either a false philosophy or a carnal self-righteousness. Thus shall we best promote the end of that ministry to which we have devoted our lives ; thus shall

we best sustain the divine life in our own souls; and thus shall we best prepare ourselves, and those over whom we may have influence in religious matters, for the higher exercises of the heavenly world where the God-man Mediator sits enthroned, the centre of all authority and the source of all blessing, and where a ceaseless chorus of worship resounds to the praise of the Lamb that was slain.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### CHRISTOLOGY.

#### SECOND DIVISION.—THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

##### PRELIMINARY THE OFFICES OF CHRIST AS MEDIATOR.

1. Those who apprehend and accept the revealed doctrine of the incarnation will be prepared to find that some great end was intended to be answered by this transcendent fact. God does nothing in vain; nor does He ever employ means without an adequate and commensurate end. When, consequently, we behold Him sending His Son into the world—when we learn that the Son emptied Himself of His glory, assuming our nature and making Himself of no reputation—when we are taught to adore Him as God manifest in the flesh, yet submitting to poverty, indignity, sorrow, suffering, and death; we are constrained to believe that some end of immense importance was contemplated by the divine mind as to be attained by means so vast and so unparalleled. Hence arises the inquiry into the design and end of our Lord's incarnation and manifestation in our world, and this leads on to the subject of the offices of the Redeemer.

The Scriptures abundantly testify that the great design of our Lord's appearance here was to reconcile man to God, to repair the breach which sin had created between the Creator and His creature, and to deliver man from the evils under which sin had brought him. "This is a faithful saying," says

the Apostle Paul, "and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). He "suffered for us, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us unto God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). Through Him we have the reconciliation—the *καταλλαγή* or at-one-ment (Rom. v. 11). On this point the testimony of Scripture is full and unanimous; so that it must be admitted on all hands that in some sense the appearance of Jesus Christ in our world was a divinely-appointed scheme for the deliverance of man from that state of evil under which sin had brought him.

Now, there are three great processes through which man must pass in order that this end may be fully secured to him. In the first place, he must be restored from that state of legal disability under which sin has brought him; in the second place, he must be delivered from that state of error and ignorance into which sin has plunged him; and thirdly, he must be placed under such a wise and salutary discipline as shall conduce to the healthy development of his spiritual faculties and capacities, so as that he may ultimately fulfil the high functions for which he is destined as a redeemed sinner. Through these processes man must pass, and of these Jesus Christ, as the Redeemer of man, has the management. Hence the threefold office with which He has been invested, —that of a Priest, that of a Prophet, and that of a King. As a Priest, He removes from man the legal disabilities which forbid his approach unto God; as a Prophet, He disperses the ignorance that misleads men to their destruction, and teaches them that truth which enlightens and saves; and as a King, He subjects them to that wise and well-ordered discipline by which they shall be best fitted for those high places to which He, of His royal bounty, shall raise them.

It is in consequence of this, His official character, that the Redeemer is specially designated the MESSIAH or CHRIST, *i.e.* THE ANOINTED. Under the ancient dispensation it was ordained that priests, prophets, and kings should be set apart or consecrated to their office by being anointed with oil. Nor was this a mere formal ceremony; it had under it a deep symbolical meaning. Oil, as the physical support of light, and as the refresher and sustainer of life, was among the Hebrews the selected and appropriate symbol of the Divine Spirit.

Now, as it is from the agency of that Spirit that all fitness for such offices as those with which the ancient functionaries in the Jewish commonwealth were invested must come, they were anointed with oil to indicate this, and at the same time as a pledge that God would give them that fitness which they needed. They were thus symbolical Messiahs or Christs; and, as what they were typically Jesus was really, He, on whom the Spirit was poured without measure, was emphatically *the* Messiah or Christ, the divinely-designated and divinely-qualified Priest, Prophet, and King of His Church.

These three functions, which are thus to be regarded as not merely assumed by the Saviour, but as constituting the work which the Father had given Him to do, comprise what has been called the mediatorial or redemptorial office of Christ (*officium mediatorium vel redemptorium*). This has been thus defined by Hollaz: "The mediatorial office of Christ is that by which He acts as Mediator between an offended God and man the sinner; confirming by His blood and death a covenant between both, publishing it thus sanctioned by His gospel, and offering it to the sinner, and by most potent government confirming and conserving what is thus offered." The mediatorial office of Christ comprehends all that by the Father's counsel and appointment He has done or is yet engaged in doing for the salvation of men; and it falls, from the very nature of the case, under the three branches which theologians have signalized as the Prophetic, the Priestly, and the Kingly.

2. The formal announcement of this distinction is due to the theologians of the Reformation. We find it only vaguely hinted at or only partially carried out in the writings of earlier divines. The prominence attached by the Ebionites to the *teaching* of Christ, and the light in which some were disposed to view His first advent as valuable chiefly because predictive of and preparatory for His second, constrained those who took juster views of His whole work to bring forward and insist upon His sacerdotal functions and propitiatory work as not less essentially a part of the truth revealed concerning Him. Tertullian in one passage<sup>1</sup> comes very near the enunciation of the dogma of Christ's threefold office when he says, "est illa Dei voluntas quam Dominus administravit

<sup>1</sup> *De Orat.* 4.

*prædicando, operando, sustinendo*” where the “*prædicatio*” may be referred to the Lord’s work as a Prophet, the “*operatio*” to His work as a King endowed with all power, and the “*sustentatio*” to His endurance for us as our Priest and Sacrifice. But the very form of the phraseology used by Tertullian indicates how far he was from having any firm dogma of the three acts as proper official functions of the Redeemer. Augustine repeatedly speaks of Christ as a Priest and a King, and says expressly<sup>1</sup> that He was in this respect the Christ, the only King and Priest of His Church; but he nowhere formally enunciates this dogma. Eusebius comes still nearer to a dogmatic enunciation of this truth in a part of his invaluable *Demonstratio Evangelica*,<sup>2</sup> where he inquires why our Lord received the name *Χριστος*, or anointed, and answers this by a reference to the usage of the Jews in the anointing to office of their prophets, priests, and kings; but still we do not find here that precision or clearness which would justify us in concluding that Eusebius had the truth before his mind in the form of a recognised dogma. In another of his works, his *Ecclesiastical History*,<sup>3</sup> we find the dogma enunciated as clearly as we are accustomed to enunciate it, so far as words go. Speaking of the ancient prophets, priests, and kings, he says: “All these had a reference to the true Christ, the divine and heavenly Logos, the alone High Priest of all, and only King of all creation, and alone of prophets the Chief Prophet of the Father.” Were it certain that Eusebius attached the same meaning to these terms, especially to the term “priest,” that we do, this statement must be admitted as containing an indubitable enunciation of the theological dogma now under consideration; and, under any circumstances, it must be allowed to be a somewhat remarkable passage, standing alone as it does in early Christian literature as a formal expression of a dogma which was not currently received in the Church till many centuries afterwards.

Not a little was contributed towards the formation of this dogma by the great theologian of the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas. In his great treatise on theology we have a clear and full development of the priestly office and work of the

<sup>1</sup> In Ps. xvi.

<sup>2</sup> Book iv. c. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Book i. c. 3.



Mediator. But he says nothing of our Lord's prophetic or kingly office, nor does the dogma in the form in which we have it seem to have been before his mind.

We do not find any traces of this distribution of the work of Christ in the writings of Luther or in the early formularies of the Lutheran Church; and though Melancthon seems to have been aware of it, he gives it no place in his own theological system. The first to announce it formally, and to assign to it its due importance, was Calvin, who in his *Institutes*<sup>1</sup> has a chapter entitled, "Ut sciamus, quorsum missus fuerit Christus a Patre, et quid nobis attulerit, tria potissimum spectanda in eo esse, munus propheticum, regnum et sacerdotium," in which he explains this distribution, and insists on its importance. Since his time this has been adopted as one of the commonplaces of theology by divines of all schools, Lutheran and Arminian as well as Calvinistic; though some Lutheran divines of considerable name (as, *e.g.*, Reinhard, Döderlein, Ernesti, Storr, and Bretschneider) have rejected it.

3. The reasons for this rejection have been stated most fully by Ernesti in a dissertation on this subject contained in his *Opuscula Theologica*. It is entitled "De officio Christi triplice." He strives to show that the division in question is a purely artificial one; that the terms prophet, priest, and king, though used of the Saviour in Scripture, are not used in the sense which this division would ascribe to them; that it is impossible to discriminate the one function clearly from the other in the work of Christ; and that, as the terms are used in Scripture in a tropical sense as applied to Christ, it tends only to error and confusion to attempt to fix them down to precise meanings designatory of particular parts of the Saviour's working on behalf of men.

In reply to this it may be said,—

(1.) That even if it were granted that there were no essential distinctions in the work of Christ,—that that work was one individual whole, and that what we call His different offices are merely different relations of His one work on our behalf,—still, as He thus is admitted to occupy different positions, and to perform different acts relatively to us, it may be found convenient, and seems perfectly legitimate, to view these

<sup>1</sup> Book ii. c. 15.

differences of relation under separate heads as different functions of the one Saviour. It may be that when these offices are fully explained, the one shall be found to involve the other; and yet, in their general aspect, they may come out into so many practical differences that it shall be of advantage to the student that he should view them separately as different parts of the work of Christ,—just as in science it is held legitimate and found useful to view as distinct phenomena what in ultimate analysis may be found resolvable into one fundamental law.

(2.) It cannot be questioned that the division represents faithfully the three classes into which the acts of Christ on behalf of His people may be divided. This is not an *arbitrary* selection of three from among the many figurative and symbolical descriptions or appellations of the Saviour which are found in Scripture. On the contrary, not only are the offices of teaching truth, acting as a peace-maker between God and man, and ruling and protecting His people, specifically distinct from each other, but under one or other of these may all the representations of the Saviour's work which are found in Scripture be reduced. The classification, therefore, is a *real* one; and in that case the only question that can arise is one respecting the propriety of the nomenclature employed to express it. Reduced to these terms, the question becomes one of little moment; for if the threefold division be itself adopted as real it matters little, comparatively, how it be expressed. The advantage of adopting the nomenclature in use is that it is already found in Scripture, and is at once simple and comprehensive.

(3.) By preserving this arrangement we preserve the analogy between the Jewish state and the kingdom of Christ. The former of these was the type of the latter, and it is of importance that this relation of the two to each other should be preserved and kept in view. Now, the ancient dispensation was administered by an official agency consisting of prophets, priests, and kings; these three offices comprised the *whole* executive agency of the Theocracy; and men were appointed to fill them by being anointed. They were thus, as already observed, typical Messiahs or Christs, and it is because the Saviour came to do really for the

Church what these offices did for it typically that He is emphatically *the* Messiah, the Christ. This seems to render it of no small importance that such a division should be retained, were it for nothing else than to keep before our minds the fact that Jesus was the reality of which these ancient offices were but the type. We shall thus be led to juster views of the actual nature of His work by viewing it closely in its analogy with the official work of the servants of God under the Theocracy; for even to us it may be of use to arrive at the knowledge of spiritual things through the medium of outward shadows and symbols, or at least in connection with them. Besides, as Schleiermacher remarks, "it is befitting that we should preserve a continuity with these original representations, because the first formation of Christian thought was based on the connection of the new kingdom of God with the old. We can thus show that our conceptions agree with those which the early Christians formed whilst they regarded the offices of Christ as potentiated transferences of those by means of which the divine rule (the Theocracy) was displayed under the ancient covenant."<sup>1</sup> . . . "The kings," he continues, "were the proper vicegerents of the God of Israel; to them was entrusted the government for the sustenance of the people, and, when necessary, for the renewing and improving of the community. The priests were the guardians of the temple and the holy things, and had to sustain immediate relation to God, as they presented prayers and sacrifice before Him, and brought back from Him for givenness and blessing. The prophets were extraordinary messengers called and sent of God, belonging to both the other two and mediating between them, but not so abiding as they, for it was only in moments of urgency that the prophet came forth, now from amongst one of these powers, now from the midst of the people, for the purpose of either warning one of the ordained powers against turning into an evil way, or of reviving the former spirit in those who were sinking into a dead formalism. Now, to make clear the relation of the kingdom of heaven to that ancient theocracy was Christ, on whom all depends, set forth as uniting these three in Himself."

<sup>1</sup> *Christliche Glaube*, ii. p. 113, § 102.

(4.) It is only as we obtain just views of Christ's work under these three relations of teaching, atoning, and ruling, that we fully and correctly apprehend that work. If our Saviour was to effect the *καταλλαγή* at all, He must act both with God for us and with us for God, thereby really and effectually bringing both together. Now, He had to act with God for us by satisfying for us and interceding for us; and He had to act with us for God by revealing God to us and teaching us the ways and will of God, and also by powerfully recovering us from the tyranny of sin and evil, and governing and guiding us to full restoration to the image and service of God. These three acts are indispensable to the completeness of His work—essential to its success in any degree; and if in our estimate of that work we omit any one of these, we not only impair our conception of the whole, but we fundamentally depart from the truth concerning His work. The recognition of Christ, therefore, as Prophet, Priest, and King, seems essential to Christianity. On this head Schleiermacher has some just and striking remarks. "If," says he, "of these three functions any one is attributed to the Saviour to the omission of the others, or if any one is wholly excluded, all that is peculiar in Christianity is imperilled. For, suppose one were to vindicate to Christ the prophetic office alone, this would mean that His agency was limited to the teaching and enforcing of a manner of life prescribed before Him or without Him, and of a relation to God founded on something independent of Him; and with this, it is clear, there would be a reducing of all that is peculiarly Christian. In like manner, if the two constructive operations be ascribed to Him, but the prophetic, that of immediately acting on and rousing the intelligence, be excluded, it is impossible to see how, in the absence of the operation of the living word, the kingdom of God can be established otherwise than by some magical process. If, again, the kingly function be excluded, the other two taken together, however closely they unite each redeemed person with the Redeemer, will, because of the want of a commonwealth, introduce only an unhappy and, indeed, unchristian separatism. And, in fine, if the priestly function be overlooked whilst the other two are retained, then the prophetic agency will relate to the kingly alone, and in

that case, if we remain true to the type which lies at the basis, there will disappear all that is properly of religious import. On the other hand, if Christ be represented only as High Priest, it will become almost impossible to evade the magical view of His agency; just as when His kingly office alone is held valid, and when consequently Christ is viewed merely as forming and conducting His Church, the immediate relation of individuals to the Saviour is imperilled, and we are thrown, to say the least, into the sphere of the Romish Church, which makes this relation depend from the Church and those who have the rule therein. Where such a coherence exists," he adds, "there arises a presumption that what is so united constitutes one complete whole."<sup>1</sup>

On these grounds I think it desirable to adhere to this now generally-accredited classification. Some have attempted to go beyond these grounds and to show that the proposed classification is formally announced in Scripture; but in this they have not met with much success. Beyond showing that the Messiah is represented in Scripture as a King, as a Prophet, and as a Priest, in separate passages and in different connections, they have not done anything that can be accepted as supplying Biblical authority for this classification, and this it is obvious, amounts to nothing as a proof that the Bible *directly* authorizes this classification as an expression exhaustive of our Saviour's work on our behalf; for the mere use of these terms in application to Christ no more proves from Scripture that His whole work is summed up in these functions than the application to Him of the term "surety" or "brother" or "witness" would prove that His work was summed up in the functions which these terms express. Of some passages, indeed, it must be admitted that by means of this classification we are enabled to give a felicitous illustration; as, *e.g.*, when Turretine<sup>2</sup> explains the passage, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," thus: "Via ducens, Veritas docens, Vita salvans: Via in Sacerdotio, dum per sanguinem suum viam vobis fecit in cœlum (Heb. x. 10); Veritas in Prophetis, qui verbum Evangelii, quod sola est veritas salutaris, nobis revelat; Vita in Regno, quo nos per efficaciam suam vivificat et protegit; Via in morte,

<sup>1</sup> *Glaubensl.* ii. p. 114, § 102. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Theol. Elenct.* ii. p. 426.

Veritas in verbo, Vita in Spiritu ;” but it is absurd to say that the passage itself enunciates this ; this is rather a meaning put on it than lying simply in it.

But though we distinguish for convenience’ sake these three functions of our Lord’s mediatorial work, it must be ever borne in mind that these are so united in Christ that in all His actings on our behalf they are conjoined. “Eadem actio,” says Turretine, “a tribus simul prodit, quod rei admirabilitatem non parum auget.” “The Cross,” he goes on to say,—“the Cross of Christ, which is the *Altar of the Priest*, on which He offered Himself as a victim to God, is also the *School of the Prophet*, in which He teaches us the mystery of salvation, whence the gospel is called the word of the Cross, and the *trophy of the King*, in which He triumphed over Principalities and Powers. The gospel is the Law of the Prophet (Isa. ii. 2), the Sceptre of the King (Ps. cx. 2), the Sword of the Priest, by which He pierces to the dividing asunder of even the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. iv. 12), and an altar on which ought to be laid the sacrifice of our faith. Thus the Spirit, which as the Spirit of wisdom is the effect of prophecy, is as the Spirit of consolation the fruit of the priesthood, and as the Spirit of strength and glory is the gift of the King.”<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### I. THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST.

We now proceed to the more particular consideration of our Lord’s mediatorial work. We begin with His PRIESTHOOD.

##### (I.) THE PRIESTLY OFFICE.

The Priestly Office of the Redeemer comprises that part of His work which has to do with the restoration of peace

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Elenct.* ii. p. 428, loc. 14, qu. 5.

and amity between God and man. Its end is the procuring of salvation for the sinner by turning away from him the divine displeasure incurred by sin, restoring him to the divine favour, reconciling him to God, and securing his final and complete redemption from all evil. It has thus a twofold object—a *personal* object in the human race, and a *material* object in the sin which man has committed. It aims to benefit the race by the taking away of sin—to save man by cleansing him from all his iniquity.

i. As the Priestly Office of Christ was typified by the priestly office as sustained by men under the previous dispensations, and as the apostle Paul continually illustrates it by a reference to these, it may be of advantage, in the first instance, to cast a brief glance at these.

(i.) Among the Jews the priestly office was sustained by the family of Aaron in the tribe of Levi. Whilst the members of that tribe generally were entrusted with the care of what may be called the more private religious interests of the people, such as the preservation of the sacred books and the exposition of them to the people, to the house of Aaron belonged of right the office of the priesthood and the discharge of the more public or conspicuous duties therewith connected. To this tribe no portion of the land of Canaan was assigned, because the Lord was to be their “inheritance,” an arrangement manifestly designed to keep up the impression on the minds of all of the religious and heavenly and privileged character of their position and functions. At their head stood the high priest—a designation which we do not find in the Pentateuch, nor indeed sooner than the reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Kings xii. 10), but which describes an office that was in existence from the time of Aaron downwards. In this office the functions of the priesthood culminated; and hence Aaron is called *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, “The Priest.” To this, therefore, we confine ourselves at present, the more especially that it is this that the apostle presents to us as containing the type of Christ as the High Priest over the house of God.

(ii.) Of the candidate for this high office it was required that he should be free from every bodily defect or blemish, and that he should succeed to office by hereditary right, as the lineal descendant, in the line of primogeniture, of Aaron,

who was called of God, and whose vocation was held to descend to his heirs. He was inaugurated in his office by a solemn process of purification, investment, and anointing. Having been cleansed with water, as a symbolical token of spiritual purification, he was invested with his robes of office, and thereby inducted to its functions; and he was anointed with fine oil prepared for the purpose, by which was symbolically set forth his consecration to his office and the effusion on him of God's Spirit, whereby he was fitted to discharge its duties.

(iii.) This service is not to be looked upon as if it were a mere ceremonial; it was adapted and designed to teach important spiritual truths to the beholders and to the nation generally. By it the Israelites were "taught that without the entire absence of sin and the positive possession of holiness, as well as the solemn investiture with office by the divine sanction, that would be wanting which was essential to the proper discharge of the office of Mediator between God and man. As they could not, however, imagine for a moment that the high priest, as an individual, was by this washing and anointing made personally holy and sinless,—of which, alas! they had innumerable and glaring instances to the contrary,—they would be naturally led to inquire, 'What meaneth this service?' and the only answer that could be given is that, just as these services made the high priest among them ceremonially holy, so would the great High Priest in His human nature—though taken from among men, 'bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh'—be, by the outpouring upon Him of the Holy Spirit, rendered perfectly holy, and therefore qualified to appear in the presence of God for His people. They would thus be directed to the true High Priest, and have their faith and their hope in Him confirmed."<sup>1</sup>

(iv.) With the same design of teaching spiritual truths by means of outward objects, the official dress of the high priest was carefully prescribed by the law. His ordinary costume consisted of eight different articles, of which four, the כִּתְיֹנֶת or coat, the מִצְנַעֶה or mitre, the מְכַסִּים or covering of the loins, and the אֲבֵנֶט or girdle, were common to him with the other priests. These were made partly of fine linen, partly of the

<sup>1</sup> *Connection and Harmony*, etc., p. 357, 2nd ed.



most costly materials ; and this was designed to symbolize the combined sanctity and dignity of their office. Besides these, the high priest had, as peculiar to himself, the *מִעֵי*, or robe of the ephod, made entirely of blue, woven throughout, in the making of which neither knife nor needle had been used, and which had on the hem or lower border a row of pomegranates alternating with golden balls; the *חֹשֶׁן* itself, which was to be of gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine-twined linen, and seems to have consisted of two separate pieces, each somewhat resembling a scarf, the one falling down before and the other behind, and joined at the shoulder by the onyx-stone clasps on which were engraven the names of the children of Israel; the *פָּתִיחַ*, or breastplate, a large square of the same material as the ephod, and having on it twelve precious stones inscribed with the names and signets of the tribes of Israel; and the *קָדָשׁ*, or crown, on which was a plate of pure gold, bearing the inscription, "Holiness to the Lord."

The Law was thus particular in determining the dress of the high priest, not because the Lord takes any pleasure in the mere outward appearance, but because the whole conspired to present a symbolical representation of the nature and functions of his office. This priest occupied a double official relation; on the one hand a relation to God, on the other to the people. As respects the latter, he appeared as their representative, and as such presented himself on their behalf to God. Now, as they sustained a threefold character, as the people of the covenant, as a royal people, and as a priestly nation, their representative had to appear for them in all these characters. This was symbolized by the threefold division of his costume. By the dress which he had in common with the priests in general the priestly character was denoted; by the ephod and breastplate the kingly character was denoted; and by the Meil, or robe, was indicated the covenant character. The ordinary priestly garments were symbolical of purity and integrity; the *blue* colour of the Meil, or robe, symbolized God's presence with His people and His covenant relation to them,—blue being the Jehovah-colour, so to speak, in the Mosaic symbology, the colour used to remind the Israelites of God's presence among them and relation to them (comp. Num. xv. 37-41).

The perfect integrity of the Meil, which was to be of woven work, and in one piece throughout, was an emblem of the unbroken perfection of that covenant relation of which it was the symbol. The alternate bells and pomegranates on the hem of the Meil were the symbols of the fulness and completeness of the Divine Law on the one hand, and on the other the clearness with which it was announced to the people, the former being betokened by the pomegranates, which were a symbol of God's commandments in their fulness, and the latter by the bells. As the priest stood or moved before the people these bells sounded clear and sweet from amongst the pomegranates, and so reminded the assembled multitude that the priest not only had to keep God's law in its fulness and integrity, but also to announce it—that "the priest's lips were to keep knowledge;" and the people were "to seek the law at his mouth, for he was the messenger of the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. ii. 7). In the ephod and breastplate, again, we have the symbols of ruling and judging; the former being laid on the shoulder to indicate the imposition of rule, whence the Messiah is said to have the "government upon His shoulder;" and the latter being put upon the breast to indicate that from the heart, the seat, according to the Jews, of the reflecting faculties, he must discriminate the good from the evil; and hence it is called the Breastplate of Judgment.

In the head-dress of the high priest the same symbolical representations appear to have been repeated. This part of the high priest's costume consisted of the *mitre*, which was common to all the priests, with this difference, that that of the high priest was larger than that of the others; of the *crown*, with its inscription, "Holiness to the Lord;" and of the *fillet* of *blue*, with which the crown was bound to the mitre. All these pointed out the high priest as the head of the priestly kingdom,—the representative of the chosen and consecrated people. The inscription on the crown indicated the entire consecration of the people to God, as well as the grand design of the whole priestly institute, viz. to produce holiness mediatorially throughout the nation. In connection with this, it is worthy of notice that the law expressly enjoins this to be "on Aaron's head, that he may bear the iniquity of

the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord" (Ex. xxviii. 38). There was thus evidently taught to the Israelites, on the one hand, that without holiness no man could see the Lord; and, on the other, that without a holy and consecrating mediator neither they nor their offerings could be hallowed before God.

Arrayed in these significant garments,—glorious in his apparel, and sparkling with jewels and gold,—the high priest presented to the Israelites a vivid symbolical representation of the great truths which, in more direct because real exhibition, are set before us in the office of our great High Priest, Christ Jesus. *He* appeared as the representative of the chosen people, with their names upon His shoulder and His breast, and invested with all the honours, and discharging all the duties, of the priestly office. Perfect in holiness, unerring in wisdom, unlimited in power and authority,—the angel of the covenant,—the head of His people,—the King in 'Sion,—He appeared to redeem unto Himself a peculiar people, purified from their iniquities, and made kings and priests unto God, even the Father. Of Him, in this capacity, the dignity of the high priest, presented in symbolical representation by the threefold arrangement of his dress, was prefigurative. Hence the Jews expected the Messiah to unite in Himself the three dignities with which the high priest, as the representative of the people, was invested. Thus, on Ps. cxviii. 22, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner," the Rabbinical book, *Tikkune Sohar* says, referring this to the Messiah, "He is the Crown of the Law, the Crown of the Priesthood, the Crown of the Kingdom." The phraseology here will be best explained by a sentence in the *Pirke Aboth*: "Israel is crowned with three crowns—the Crown of the Law, the Crown of the Priesthood, and the Crown of the Kingdom." These three dignities the high priest's dress set forth, and these three the Jews expect to find in the Messiah.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The classical work on the Symbolism of the Mosaic Institute is the *Symbolik des Mosaischen Cultus* of Bahr, 2 vols. Fairbairn has drawn from this in his *Typology*.

ii. Turning now to consider more particularly the priesthood of Christ, the first thing that requires to be noticed is the *reality of His priesthood*.

(i.) That in some sense our Lord sustained the priestly office cannot admit of doubt in the minds of those who receive the N. T. as the rule of faith. He is not only expressly and repeatedly called a Priest (*ἱερεὺς* = *ο ἱερα ρεζων*, the transactor of sacred things, answering in the N. T. to the *קֹהֵן* of the Old, a word which means primarily a minister, or one who serves, from *קָנָה*, to serve, but is used always in a technical sense, to denote one who ministers before God on behalf of men); He is not only said to be a "Priest for ever" (Heb. v. 6, etc.), "a great Priest over the house of God" (Heb. x. 21), "a merciful and faithful High Priest" (*αρχιερεὺς*, Heb. ii. 17), "the High Priest of our profession" (Heb. iii. 1), "a High Priest of good things to come" (Heb. ix. 11), "a minister of the sanctuary" (*λειτουργὸς τῶν ἁγίων* = officiating priest of the sanctuary), and the true (*i.e.* the heavenly) tabernacle" (see Meyer on Heb. viii. 2), and many other expressions of similar or equivalent import; but a large part of one of the N. T. books, the Epistle to the Hebrews, is set apart expressly to the end of asserting and illustrating the priesthood of the Redeemer.<sup>1</sup> In such a case it ceases to be a question whether Christ is to be viewed as a Priest. The only question that can be discussed is: In *what sense* was He a Priest? Was He such really or only figuratively?

Now, it is clear that our Lord was not a Priest in the same sense as the priests under the law; nor were His functions the same as theirs. He did not belong to the house of Aaron, to which the ancient priesthood exclusively appertained; He was never invested with sacerdotal insignia and honours; He never officiated at the altar in the temple; He never offered up any animal as a sacrifice; He never, so far as we know, discharged any proper priestly function during the whole of His public ministry on earth. In this literal outward sense, then, He was not a priest. Was, then, the priesthood which the N. T. writers so emphatically ascribe to Him a purely figurative one? in other words, Are we to understand the language they employ when they refer to the priestly office and

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Pye Smith's *Four Discourses*, Diss. ii., and Owen on *Hebrews*.

work of Christ as not intended to express any actual fact in His official relation to us, but as a mere rhetorical embellishment, or an accommodation to Jewish modes of thought and usage, for the purpose of disarming prejudice and securing a more favourable reception for the doctrines they had to teach and the cause they were sent forth to advance? There are those who adopt the affirmative here; but such a position cannot be maintained with any show of reason. Not only is such a mode of dealing with the language of the sacred writers incompatible with respect for their moral integrity (for it goes on the presumption that they resorted to a dishonest artifice to secure an advantage to their cause), but it is in itself manifestly absurd. Had the N. T. writers sought to win favour to their system by a disingenuous wrapping up of what they taught in Jewish forms of speech, it is utterly unaccountable that the chief use they make of these borrowed forms is to announce the fact that the time-honoured rites of Judaism had become obsolete and profitless, and that the time had come when they were to be superseded by a new and better system. Was this, we may ask, the way to conciliate prejudice and secure favour? Had the apostles made use of Jewish phraseology, that under it they might covertly introduce their own views whilst they seemed to exalt and magnify the ancient economy, there might be some shadow of plausibility in such a representation as that which we are considering. But when we find them using this phraseology for the purpose of boldly proclaiming that the reign of Judaism was past, that the law as a ceremonial institute had served its purpose and must now be abrogated, that the ancient economy had become as a worn-out garment which must now be laid aside, and its venerable institutions must give place to those of Christianity as the real and permanent system of religious truth and worship; it is simply absurd to say that this method was resorted to merely to disarm Jewish prejudice and induce the Jews to think favourably of Jesus and His religion. Would any one in his senses have written the Epistle to the Hebrews, the great doctrine of which is that the Levitical priesthood and the Levitical sacrifices were no longer of any avail, but must now give place to a better priesthood and better sacrifice, if his reason for resorting to such phraseology was simply to

disarm Jewish prejudice? Such a method was more likely to infuriate than to conciliate, and no one, we may be sure, in possession of his senses would resort to it.

(ii.) When, then, the apostles speak of Jesus as a Priest, common sense and common equity require us to believe that their words have a real significance,—that they are meant to convey the truth that in some real sense He actually sustained the office and discharged the functions of a Priest. And in *what* sense they would have this to be taken we are left in no doubt, especially if we follow the teaching of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The whole drift and tendency of his reasoning goes to show that Jesus Christ sustained really that office which the high priest under the law sustained only typically, and that He really fulfilled those functions which the high priest performed only symbolically and typically. He contrasts the shadowy evanescent character of the ancient priesthood with the substantiality and the perpetuity of the priesthood of Christ; and whilst he asserts, from the reason of the case, the utter inadequacy of the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin, he argues that the sacrifice of Christ was fore shadowed by the shedding of His blood under the ancient economy, gave the ancient sacrifices all their religious worth, and secured that which they only in figure predicted. The view, therefore, which the inspired writer would have us to take of the priesthood of Christ is, that it was the substance and reality of which the Levitical priesthood was only the shadow and type. Accepting this, then, as a guiding truth, it follows that if we would obtain just views of the nature and functions of Christ's priesthood, our proper course is to ascertain the nature and functions of the Jewish priesthood as determined by the Mosaic institute, and to transfer these in their reality and their spiritual import to Jesus Christ. We shall thus see how and in what sense He is a Priest.

Now, the great office of the Jewish priest, especially the high priest, in whom the priesthood culminated and the entire priestly institute had its highest meaning and manifestation, was that of a mediator between God as the Head of the Theocracy, and the nation of Israel as His special people; and the duties he had to discharge consisted principally in his taking upon him the offences of the nation committed against

their Theocratic King, confessing these over the head of a sacrificial victim, offering the blood of that victim before God as present symbolically in the most holy place, thereby procuring the pardon of these offences from the Sovereign, and having obtained this, coming forth as the bearer of God's favour to pronounce a benediction on the people. Outwardly and in relation to Israel as a nation, and as touching their national interests, all this had a real significance and a real effect; the priest really made atonement for theocratic offences, averted the divine wrath incurred by these, and secured the continuance of the divine blessing to the nation. But in a religious point of view all this was but a symbol and a shadow. It was not thus that men then obtained the pardon of sin as a transgression of the law of God as moral Governor of the world. So far as sin was an act of rebellion against the Head of the Theocracy it was obliterated by this ritual, but the moral guilt remained so far as this was concerned. These ceremonies were of avail to set men right with the law of the Theocracy as pertaining to civil status and outward privilege; but as pertaining to the conscience, as respects man's interests and privileges as a subject of God's moral government, they "could not," as the apostle expresses it, "make the comer thereunto perfect," *i.e.* do for him what he needed to have done to set him right with the law and rule of the great Moral Governor. For this something else was needed; and the religious value of these ceremonies consisted in their adumbrating what this something was. As the high priest was the mediator between God the King of Israel and His people, so is Jesus Christ the Mediator between God the great Moral Governor of the universe and His guilty subjects of the human race; as the high priest took on himself the sins of the people as a people, and transferred them to the sacrificial victim, so Christ—at once the Victim and the Priest—has taken upon Him the sins of men as amenable to God's spiritual law, and has offered up Himself as a sacrifice for them; as the high priest went into the apparent presence of God and offered the blood of the victim before the mercy-seat or propitiatory, thereby making atonement and intercession for the people, so Christ has entered into the real presence of God, and there presented His own blood for us; and as the high priest obtained for the people

the divine favour and blessing in respect of their temporal interests, so has Christ obtained for us God's favour and blessing in respect of our spiritual interests, securing for us eternal redemption, the remission of all our sins, and restoration to an honourable place in the kingdom and family of God. What under the law was set forth in type and symbol is under the gospel to be enjoyed in spirit and in truth.

When the N. T. writers, therefore, speak of Jesus Christ as our Priest, they intimate that the people of God have in Him a Mediator who has taken on Him the guilt of men, has made atonement by sacrifice for that guilt, has gone into the Presence of God as their representative to present there the sacrifice He has offered on their behalf, and has thereby obtained for them blessings, real and spiritual, such as they need.

(iii.) The Priesthood of Christ was thus real; He as a Priest acted for His people, and secured to them the benefits which it is according to the ideal of a priesthood that a priest should secure for his clients. Let us now glance at some of the characteristics of our Lord's priesthood as these are set forth in Scripture.

1. The Priesthood of Christ is of divine authority and appointment. It stands to reason that no being is free to take it upon himself to act as mediator between God and any of His offending creatures. It is only as God is pleased to appoint any one so to act that he can without presumption appear in such a capacity. A self-appointed mediator, or one appointed only by the offending party, instead of meeting and alleviating the evil arising from man's alienation from God, would only increase it by adding fresh guilt to that already accumulated. Hence our Lord's priesthood would have been of no avail had He not received it from God. The apostle accordingly is careful to certify us on this point: "No man," says he, "taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So Christ," he goes on to say, "glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He [did this] who said unto Him, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee; and again, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. v. 4-6). "In these words the author," says Delitzsch, "affirms that He who made not Himself a king, but was anointed King by God, also assumed



not to Himself the dignity (*δοξα*) of High Priest, but solemnly received it from God." He, then, whose prerogative it is to speak in such a case has spoken ; He has declared that Jesus is worthy to assume the High-priestly dignity, and is competent to discharge the functions of that office ; Him hath He authorized to act as Mediator between God and man ; and Him hath He solemnly invested with this lofty and awful office. Jesus Christ then appears as a God-appointed Priest over the house of God.

2. The Priesthood of Christ is peculiar, untransferable, and unchanging. Under the Law there was a succession of priests, and each in his turn was the equal of his predecessor, and no more than his equal. But Christ, as a Priest, stands alone without predecessor, without successor, without equal. In this respect His great type in the old time was Melchizedek, who in his official character—and it is only in that that any one can be a type of Christ—was without father, without mother, who had no beginning of days or end of life (Heb. vii. 1–3). The Levitical priesthood was essentially different. Succession was the characteristic of the office and the security of the order. Subject to mortality, the priest had in due time to give place to another ; and that other succeeded by right of birth. "They were indeed," says the apostle, "many priests, because they were not suffered to remain by reason of death. But this [*i.e.* Jesus Christ], because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (Heb. vii. 23, 24). And again he says, "The law maketh men high priests who have infirmity ; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore" (Heb. vii. 28). Christ was thus constituted sole and perpetual Priest. As in virtue of His being "Father of Eternity" the government is laid for ever on "His shoulders," so in virtue of His immortality He has a perpetual Priesthood. He thus, as Priest, occupies a place of solitary majesty, of unrivalled authority, of unchanging efficiency, of untransferable right.

3. As Christ's Priesthood is perpetual, so the work which as a Priest He performs for men has been done once for all, and needs not to be repeated. Under the ancient dispensation the high priest had to repeat his great propitiatory act

once every year ; so that even had there been no change in the priesthood, there must of necessity have been a continual repetition of the priestly act—a constant renewal of the victim and the sacrifice. But Christ, in fulfilling His sacerdotal functions, has made an offering for sins once for all. When, having died upon the cross as a sacrifice, He revived and entered into the heavenly sanctuary with His own blood, there to appear in the presence of God for us, He did what never can be, what never needs to be, repeated. “Nor yet,” says the apostle, “that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others [rather blood not his own, *ἀλλοτρίῳ αἵματι*] ; for then must He have suffered often since the foundation of the world.” He was “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” “But now once in the end of the world [rather the conjunction of the ages or dispensations, *συντελεία των αἰώνων*] hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. ix. 25, 26). And again, “And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sin ; but this, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb. x. 12). By that one sacrifice His work was finished. It possesses an exhaustless efficacy, an imperishable worth. Its power can never pass. Its fragrance can never decay.’ It remains eternally the same, the one perfect, all-accomplishing act of the great High Priest who is set over the house of God.

4. The Priesthood of Christ is ever operative and efficient. Among the Jews the high priest acted only at intervals and on special occasions ; and had he failed to act at the proper appointed time there was no possibility of repairing the omission. But the great High Priest of the Church is ever, so to speak, at the altar ; not, indeed, repeating His sacrifice, for that cannot be, and needs not to be, but presenting it on our behalf, and so making intercession for us. Hence we can avail ourselves of His aid at all times and under all circumstances. Whenever we approach Him, He stands ready to accept and bless us. No alteration in our case can affect Him or the sufficiency of His intercession. He is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through Him,

seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. "His intercession," as Owen remarks, "is the end of His mediatory life; not absolutely or only, but principally. He lives to rule His Church; He lives to subdue His enemies, for He must reign until they are all made His footstool; He lives to give the Holy Spirit in all His blessed effects to believers. But because all these things proceed originally by an emanation of power and grace from God, and are given out into the hand of Christ upon His intercession, that may well be esteemed the principal end of His mediatory life."<sup>1</sup>

Such is the doctrine of Scripture concerning the Priesthood of Christ; such its reality and its characteristic features. We are thus assured of His perfect sufficiency as our Mediator, through whom we may draw nigh unto God. "He," says St. Ambrose, "is our mouth by which we speak to the Father, our eye by which we see the Father, our hand by which we offer to the Father. But for His intercession neither we nor any of the saints could have any dealings with God."<sup>2</sup>

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### (II.) PRIESTLY FUNCTIONS.

The functions of the priestly office consisted in the OFFERING OF SACRIFICE and the MAKING OF INTERCESSION for the people. In both these respects Scripture represents Jesus Christ as discharging priestly functions. Eph. v. 2: "He hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice (*προσφοραν και θυσίαν*) to God for a sweet-smelling savour." Heb. ix. 26: "Now, once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice (*θυσίας*) of Himself." 1 Cor. v. 7: "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us." Col. i. 20: "Having made peace by the blood of the

<sup>1</sup> *Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Works*, vol. xxii., p. 542.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. viii., *De Isaac et anima*.

cross." Heb. ix. 11, 12: "Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Isa. liii. 12: "He bare the sin of many, and made [will make] intercession for the transgressors." Heb. vii. 25: "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him (*δι' αὐτου*, through His medium), seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

### i. SACRIFICE.

These passages (to which others might be added) place it beyond doubt that in some sense Jesus Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for us, and that in some sense He still pursues the sacerdotal function of interceding for us before God. It concerns us to inquire in *what* sense these propositions are to be understood; that so we may have a just apprehension of what Scripture teaches concerning the sacrifice and intercession of Christ; as the acts by which He discharges the functions of a Priest.

The term sacrifice (*θυσια*) has reference to the slaying and offering of animals as a religious rite. This rite has prevailed among all nations, and from the remotest times. There is no period to which history reaches in which we find the rite unknown; and there is no people, except some small and extremely degraded tribes, among whom it has not been found. We are safe to affirm that wherever a people have gods, there, in some form, the sacrificial rite obtains; and even in modern times there are hardly any tribes amongst which it does not subsist except where Christianity or Muhammedanism prevails.<sup>1</sup> A rite so universally prevalent must have had an origin almost commensurate with that of the race, and must possess a significancy which merits some universal spiritual conviction and want in the human breast.

<sup>1</sup> "Man findet eben so wenig ein Volk, das den Gottern nicht Opfer und Gaben dargeboten, als man jemals eins entdeckt hat das gar keine Gotter erkannt hatte." Meiners, *Krit. Gesch. der Religionen*, ii. s. 1.

(i.) *The Origin of Sacrifice.*

Respecting the *origin of sacrifice*, it has been made a point by some to contend strenuously for its being of human device. Various interests have induced different writers to advocate this opinion. Writers of the Deistic and Unitarian school have found it favourable to their peculiar views of the work of Christ; the advocates of Popery have laid hold of it as justifying the principle that God may be lawfully worshipped by ceremonies and institutions of human device; while others have found the theory of the human origin of sacrifice agreeable to certain doctrines peculiar to themselves [such, *e.g.*, as Warburton]. The argument on which reliance is chiefly placed by those who advocate this view is that no mention is made in Scripture of the divine institution of sacrifice—an omission which, it is contended, would not have occurred had such been the case. To this it may be replied, That the whole of this argument rests on an unsound assumption, *viz.* that nothing can be held to be of divine institution which is not expressly announced as being so in Scripture. Now to this assumed premiss we can by no means assent. God has in *various* ways conveyed to us the intimation of His will in His word; and whilst in some cases He has explicitly *enacted* what He would have us to believe and to practise, He has in other cases left us to gather His will by induction and inference from various statements of His word. But shall we say that in cases of the latter sort we have *less* His will than in cases of the former sort? And if induction and inference be of equal value with express statement in enabling us to ascertain the *will* of God, shall we say that they are of no value in a question relating to the origin of institutions approved of by God? May not the very fact that an institution is of such a kind that, if God had not appointed it, it never would have existed at all, be reason sufficient for omitting all formal announcement of its divine origin? At any rate, seeing we know not all the reasons that may have led to the omission of any express announcement of the divine origin of sacrifice (supposing the origin of it to have been divine), we cannot attach much weight to this purely negative argument against its divine origin. It may be

remarked, further, that if Scripture nowhere expressly asserts the divine origin of sacrifice, it as little asserts the human origin of it. So far as express assertion, then, is concerned, there is as much for the one view as for the other, that is to say, there is nothing for either; so that we are left to gather by an inductive process, from such sources as are open to us, the conclusion in which we will rest.

The question, then, fairly rises before us, Have we any good grounds for the inference that animal sacrifice is of divine origin? In reply to this the following things deserve to be carefully pondered:—

1. *Reason* constrains us to exclude all other possible sources of such a practice. Let it be kept in mind that what we have to account for is not the occasional or limited practice of sacrifice, its prevalence in certain tribes, in certain parts of the world, or at certain periods, but its *universal* prevalence from the remotest antiquity and among all varieties of the human race. Keeping this in view, it will occur to you as a safe and guiding principle that no such universally prevalent usage can be accounted for except on one of two suppositions: either that it has been dictated by some conviction or necessity common to all mankind, or that it has been presented by some authority to which all mankind in common have felt themselves bound to defer. Besides these two suppositions in such a case, there is no other possible; and what we have now to do is to determine which of them will satisfactorily account for the universal presence of the practice now under consideration.

(1.) Now, with regard to the former hypothesis, it is to be observed that a universal conviction must be founded in the reason of things, and a universal necessity must arise from some of the original appetites or desires of the human mind. We inquire then, first, whether there is anything in the *reason* of the thing to induce a universal conviction among mankind that sacrifice is a proper method of approaching and worshipping the Deity. Here we are asked by the advocates of the human origin of sacrifice to bear in mind the anthropomorphic tendencies of mankind in their notions of God and the service due to Him, and to admit the fact that the earliest tribes of mankind were deeply influenced by the feelings to which such

tendencies give rise. The tendency is admitted—the alleged fact is not admitted; for it has never yet been shown on even the feeblest evidence that the earliest tribes of the race *were* deeply influenced by gross anthropomorphism; whilst, on the contrary, there exists the strongest probability that in proportion as the race approximated its fountainhead, the religious conceptions of mankind were correct and spiritual. But, supposing the fact admitted, what use will our opponents make of it? Suppose the earliest tribes of men believed God to be altogether such an one as themselves, does this furnish any ground for supposing that they would naturally think of seeking His favour by the offering of sacrifice? Would men naturally think of acting so to their fellow-men? Would a son seek the favour of his father, a subject the protection of his sovereign, by taking an innocent creature and killing it and burning it before the party he sought to make propitious to him? Would not men rather naturally recoil from the suggestion of such a thing as more likely to prove offensive to the object of their homage than agreeable? And if so, does not the very supposition that mankind, in the early ages of the world, were under the influence of anthropomorphic notions render improbable the position that they were led by the reason and propriety of the thing to offer sacrifices to the Deity? If they thought God altogether such an one as themselves, how comes it to pass that they were led to seek His favour by methods which they would have recoiled from using in regard to one of themselves?

In reply to this question various suggestions have been offered as hypotheses by way of rationally accounting for the human origin of sacrifices.

*a.* It has been suggested that sacrifice might have originally been presented as a gift or present to the Deity, and it has been asked whether it might not very naturally occur to man to present of his flocks and herds to God, as a token of acknowledgment of His bounty? To this it may be replied, in the first place, that this is altogether irrelevant, inasmuch as the question relates, not to the offering of gifts, but to the slaying of sacrifices, between which there is no sort of analogy, nor any affinity that might lead to the one growing out of the other; and then, secondly, this is an attempt to remove one

difficulty by suggesting another equally great; for it is just as far from probability that a man should, from the reason of the thing, conclude that the great Being to whom he acknowledged he owed everything would be pleased by his destroying part of what he had received, by laying it on the altar as a present, as it is that He would be pleased by its being destroyed as a sacrifice.

It may also be observed that there is reason to doubt whether the idea of sacrifice is not historically anterior to that of a gift. Gifts can come into existence, and the idea of them into men's minds, only when *property* is possessed. Where there is anything of the nature of a community of goods, there can be no such thing as a giving and receiving, seeing none has a right of property, and consequently a right of gift, in anything more than another. Now in the very earliest ages such a community of goods must have been possessed. In the Adamic family there might be differences of occupation, and each might contribute his share to the common fund; but there is no probability that anything of the nature of property was claimed by any of them in what he produced. We cannot conceive of Abel appropriating his sheep, and Cain his fruits, and the one bartering with the other, or bestowing a portion on the other as a gift. At this early period, then, men could have no experience of gifts or of their effects on men, and hence could not have the idea suggested to them from such experience of procuring the divine favour by a gift. But as sacrifice already was known and practised, the idea of it must have preceded the idea of a gift.<sup>1</sup>

b. Not less valueless is a second suggestion, viz. that

<sup>1</sup> Magee mentions a suggestion of a Dr. Rutherford which seems worthy of notice as to the origin of property. It is that in Gen. iv. 20 we have the account of the introduction of that usage when it is said of Jabal that he was the father of those that dwell in tents, and of מִקְנֵה, which our version renders "such as have cattle," supplying a number of words to make a meaning. But מִקְנֵה means neither cattle simply, nor persons who have cattle; it signifies properly property, and cattle only viewed as property (see Rosenmuller, *in loc.*, and Gesenius, *in verb.*). The statement of Moses, then, is that Jabal was the father of property, *i.e.* the inventor or originator of property; just as his brother Jubal in the next verse is called the father of all that handle the harp and organ.



sacrifice arose out of the idea of a friendly meal shared by the Deity with His worshippers. For not only is there nothing in the reason of things to suggest such an idea to the mind, but it seems excluded by the very form in which sacrifice, in its most ancient as well as most solemn and highest form, was presented, viz. in that of a holocaust or whole burnt-offering. Where the *whole* animal was consumed on the altar, it is obvious that the idea of a partition of it between the offerer and his God is excluded.

Apart from this, however, this idea seems so little natural that it would be absurd to trace to it the spontaneous origin of this universal usage. The idea is undoubtedly a *true* one, and we find it to a certain extent recognised in the Mosaic offerings, where the priest, in certain cases, as the mediator between God and the offerer, and who had appeared for the latter, partook of the sacrifice in token of the reconciliation having been effected between God and the worshipper; but the idea, though true, is wholly artificial; it is learned by education and from the sacrificial institute, and can never be regarded as a natural conviction of reason giving spontaneously birth to that act. It may be added, that it leaves wholly unexplained the practice of human sacrifices,—a practice which prevailed most in the earliest periods, and extended through nations the most widely separated from each other; as well as the fact that among some nations the highest of all sacrifices were of animals which either are or were never used as food, such as the horse, which among the Brahmanical worshippers is called the King of Sacrifice, and that some of the most important sacrifices were of the same kind, as that of the wolf to Mars, the ass to Priapus, and the dog to Hecate.<sup>1</sup> These considerations are conclusive against the hypothesis that sacrifice arose out of the idea of a friendly feast between God and the worshipper. When the oldest, the most sacred, and the most solemn sacrifices were such as were either wholly consumed or were of animals which never were eaten, it is absurd to say that the practice could have originated in the idea of a feast.

c. The only other suggestion worth noticing, which has been offered as accounting on grounds of natural reason for the practice of sacrifice, is that of Abraham Sykes,

<sup>1</sup> See Bahr, *Mos. Cult.*, ii. pp. 218, 225.

who in an *Essay on Sacrifice* explains sacrifices as “federal rites,” “implying the entering into friendship with God, or the renewal of that friendship when broken by the violation of former stipulations” (p. 59). In accordance with this he suggests that sacrifices had their origin in the fact that eating and drinking together were common and accredited modes of contracting covenants or cementing alliances among the ancients (p. 73). This theory of the origin of sacrifice rests on the assumption of the theory last considered, viz. that the sacrifice was of the nature of a friendly meal shared between God and the worshippers, and is consequently liable to all the objections which may be urged against that. In addition to these, it may be observed that this theory involves a self-contradiction. That persons who had formed a treaty or entered into a covenant were wont to confirm that by eating and drinking together cannot be doubted; but on what ground did they do this? Was it on the ground that the alliance having been already struck they could thus meet as friends? Or was it on the ground that meeting thus as friends they thereby struck the alliance? The former surely is the just view of the case. Previously they were at variance, and could not eat together; now they are at one, and therefore may participate in a friendly meal. This usage, then, did not proceed on the assumption that by it the former variance was healed; but on the assumption that the variance having been healed by some other instrumentality, the parties might unite in acts of friendship. Now, if sacrifice was a federal rite, if it implied the entering into friendship with God on the part of man, then *it* was the instrumentality by which harmony and reconciliation were effected between God and man. But if this was its character it could not *also* be the meal by which that reunion was celebrated; it could not both occasion the meal and be the meal itself. Sykes’s theory is thus inconsistent with itself. It makes sacrifice at once the procuring cause of the feast of reconciliation; and it makes the feast of reconciliation the source and origin of the sacrifice. If there had been no reconciliation there would have been no feast; and there would have been no reconciliation had there been no sacrifice. How was it possible in such circumstances for the feast to originate the sacrifice—the effect to give birth to the cause?

The futility of these hypotheses shows how untenable is the attempt to find the origin of sacrifice in the reason of the thing itself. As little can it be sought for in any natural and universal conviction or felt necessity of the human mind; for there is nothing in the common natural workings or passions of the mind which would of itself suggest such a mode of serving and worshipping God. On the contrary, to the natural reason and heart of man it is rather repugnant than otherwise. This is exemplified in the case of the more intelligent among the ancient heathens, respecting whom Spencer, the ablest opponent perhaps of the divine origin of sacrifice, uses the following striking language: "In truth, so far were the more cultured of the heathen from believing that the sacrifices were in accordance with the nature of their gods, that it not infrequently occurred to them to wonder whence a rite so melancholy and so alien to the nature of the gods came into the minds of men, was so long propagated, and so tenaciously held its place among their customs." *De Leg. Heb.* l. iii. Diss. ii. c. 4, § 2.

(2.) Having thus disposed of the one side of the alternative formerly proposed, we now come to the other. If sacrifices have not their origin in their inherent reasonableness or in any common affection of the human mind, they must have had their origin in some authoritative appointment to which all men in common felt constrained to yield. *a.* We cannot assume such an authority to have resided in any priestly body so as to resolve sacrifices into an invention of priestcraft because (*a*) sacrifices were known and practised long before the priesthood became a separate profession; they were practised when each individual acted as his own priest, or when at the utmost each father acted as the priest of his own household; so that there was no room for the operation of any priestcraft in the case. (*b*) Any benefit accruing to the priest from the sacrifices brought by the worshippers is so small that we cannot suppose a sufficient inducement to have been found in that to lead to their inventing and inculcating such a usage. And (*c*) supposing some one priest or body of priests had fallen on this invention, that will not account for the *universality* of the practice; it is as difficult to account for all the priests in the world adopting it as it is to account for all the people in the world following it. *b.* But if we

exclude the supposition of priestcraft, we are shut up to the supposition of some common father of the race, such as Adam or Noah, by whom the rite was practised, and from whom it was handed down to all mankind. Historically it is from the latter of these that the rite must be supposed to have had its universal diffusion ; for the descendants of Noah being the heads of all the various tribes and varieties of the human race, any rite solemnly observed by that patriarch, and inculcated by him on his posterity, would be carried by the different portions of mankind in their respective migrations, and become one of the fixed usages of the community. But as the rite was practised in the family of Adam, and as Noah himself derived it from him, we must go back to the very cradle of the human race for the commencement of this practice. From whom, then, did Adam derive it? Only from Him from whom Adam derived everything—from God Himself.<sup>1</sup>

2. In support of the conclusion at which we have arrived we may appeal to the authority of Scripture. It is true that nowhere there is the origin of sacrifice ascribed to God, but there are certain principles laid down and certain facts recorded which lead to the conclusion that this rite was not of human invention, but was one enjoined on man by God. Of these the following may be mentioned:—

(1.) There can be no doubt that God *approved* of this mode of worshipping Him. In reference to the very first sacrifice of which we read, it is stated that God had respect unto it (Gen. iv. 4, 5)—וַיַּשֶׁעַ יְהוָה אֶל-הַבֵּל וְאֶל-מִנְחָתוֹ, where the verb וַיַּשֶׁעַ, “to regard or look on,” followed by the prep. אֶל, has the force of regarding with approval; “Deus munus Abelis gratum habuit” (Rosenmüller). The next sacrifice of which we read was that of Noah after he came out of the ark; and of this it is said, “And Jehovah smelled a sweet savour” (Gen. viii. 21), literally, a “savour of acquiescence or approval”—רִיחַ הַנִּיחָח, from נִיחַ, acquiescere in aliqua re, delectari: “Innuit accepta et grata fuisse Noachi sacrificium Deo” (Rosenmüller). It is needless to multiply instances; nothing can be more certain than that the sacrifices offered

<sup>1</sup> The reasoning by which this conclusion is reached has been presented very forcibly in a condensed form by Dr. Patrick Delaney in his *Revelation examined with Candour*, vol. i. pp. 127-132.

by pious men of old were acceptable to God. Instances also occur at a very early period in the sacred history in which God gives the most direct and indisputable proof of His approval of this mode of worshipping Him by commanding it to be followed, as when He prescribed to Abraham the offering of his son Isaac and provided a substitute for that in the ram which Abraham actually offered, and as when He commanded the friends of Job to offer up for themselves a burnt-offering. Now, the question arises, Is such full approval on the part of God compatible with the supposition that sacrifice was a mere invention of man? Is it not a principle of true religion distinctly recognised in the Bible that it is God who alone has the right to prescribe how He is to be worshipped, and that, consequently, spontaneous contrivances on the part of man to do Him honour are rather presumptuous invasions of His prerogative than grateful acts of homage to Him? The inference from this is, that had sacrifice been a mere human contrivance it would not have been acceptable to God. "It would not," says Hallett, "have been acceptable if it had not been of divine institution; according to that plain, obvious, and eternal maxim of all true religion, Christian, Mosaic, and natural: 'In vain do they worship God, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men' (Mark vii. 7). If there be any truth in this maxim, Abel would have worshipped God in vain; and God would have had no respect to his offering if his sacrificing had been merely a command of his father Adam, or an invention of his own. The divine *acceptance*, therefore, is a demonstration of a divine *institution*."

(2.) It has been suggested, and there is great probability in the suggestion, that sacrifice was instituted by God on the occasion when, after His first interview with man after he had sinned, He took of the skins of animals and converted them into clothing for Adam and his wife. Assuming the propitiatory and typical character of sacrifice, it cannot be denied that the occasion was a *fit* one for inculcating the practice of it on man, inasmuch as God had just given to him the promise of that great Deliverer of whose work on behalf of man animal sacrifices were designed to be the memorial, symbol, and foreshadow. It must also be admitted that, even without assuming the typical nature of sacrifice, the occasion was a

fitting one for appointing it, inasmuch as the sight of an innocent victim bleeding to death on their account was well fitted to awaken in the bosoms of our first parents the liveliest sense of the evil of that disobedience of which they had been convicted by God. Have we any reason, then, to believe that the animals in whose skins Adam and Eve were clothed had been slain in sacrifice by divine appointment? The answer to this is furnished by the impossibility of accounting for their being slain at all on any other hypothesis. For what purpose but this can we conceive that a thing so new and so revolting to the feelings of our first parents could have been done? It was not done to give them food, for as yet animal food was unknown to man. It could not have been done merely to afford clothing to Adam and Eve, for this would have been an unnecessary and cruel waste of animal life, seeing God could have as easily clothed them from the produce of the vegetable world. What supposition, then, more probable than that these animals were slain in sacrifice, that God then and there appointed for man the appropriate memorial and foreshadow of that great sacrifice by which the seed of the woman was in due time to cancel the malignant works of the devil, and that our first parents were wrapped in these skins, not merely for the sake of clothing, but also as in some sort symbolically setting forth that covering which it is the design of sacrifice to afford?

(3.) It is worthy of notice that in the Mosaic institute, whilst there are many injunctions concerning sacrifices, all these relate to the *mode* and *occasion* of the sacrifice, not one to the ordinance itself as something then newly appointed. In every case the law proceeds on the assumption that sacrifice was already known and practised among the Hebrews; and that all that was needed was discretion as to the proper occasions for the offering of sacrifices, the sacrifices proper for each occasion, and the fitting manner in which the rite was to be observed. "When God," says Kimchi, "in the law first treats concerning sacrifices, He does not command the people to offer them. On the contrary, His language is, If a man shall offer at any time a sacrifice, then he shall do this and that." To this particular exordium of the book of Leviticus God has respect when by the mouth of Jeremiah

He says: "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices." All the enactments proceed on the assumption that sacrifice as a usage was familiar to the Israelites. It must therefore have come down to them from earlier times. We find in point of fact that it was known and practised by the patriarchs, and that it remounts to the very earliest times in the history of our race. How an institution not suggested by any natural adaptations, not in itself such as human reason would approve, should have come into use at so early a period other wise than by divine appointment, we may safely defy those who deny this to point out.

(4.) If we assume the divine origin of the sacrificial rite, and suppose that it was made known to Adam by God as soon as that great event which it was designed to commemorate and prefigure was announced, we can at once see how it would become a rite the observance of which should be co-extensive with the race. Adam would enjoin it upon his posterity, and all who did not assume the position of actual apostasy and infidelity, of which Cain set the example, would religiously observe it. The rite would thus be handed down to Noah, from whom again, as the second father of the race, it would be propagated through the world. To this latter statement a distinguished Bampton Lecturer, whose work is devoted to a scientific investigation of the doctrine of the Atonement, has objected on the ground that the supposition of a derivation of sacrificial observances by tradition from Noah is incompatible with the startling diversity of the modes of sacrifice among various nations, and especially with the early prevalence of human sacrifices. "That this tradition," says he, "should reappear in the laborious formality of Brahminical worship, and the sanguinary cruelties of the Aztec system, and the strange atonement which the Athenian provided in the Thargelia, does seem to prove that if the human mind had no power to invent the principle of reconciliation by sacrifice, it exercised an almost boundless privilege of altering and developing the tradition it received."<sup>1</sup> To this it seems sufficient

<sup>1</sup> *The Atoning Work of Christ viewed in Relation to some Current Theories.* By William Thomson, M.A. (now Archbishop of York), Oxford 1853, p. 49.

to reply that the fact that different nations have used the privilege of greatly and variously modifying the original tradition can on no reasonable grounds be held as a proof that they never received that tradition at all, and the fact that they have shown themselves able to do this is no evidence whatever that they possessed the ability to invent, each for itself, a usage that has no ground in natural reason, but which yet, under every modification, is found to be substantially the same among all nations. On the contrary, it seems much more just to say that they must have received the tradition before they could have modified it; and that in suffering such modifications, it only experienced the fate of all traditional lore, to which it is incident, whilst preserving the fundamental conception, to encounter all sorts of alterations in respect of outward form in passing from country to country or from generation to generation. In fact, there is no usage and no doctrine which has been preserved pure and unaltered when left to the custody of tradition alone; so that, if the objection had any force in it, it might be extended to *all* religious and moral usages, opinions, and ceremonies, and the position be maintained that no common source of traditional teaching in these respects ever existed. With reference to human sacrifices the same author writes: "Nor can it be maintained that this revolting custom was a late abuse which grew up as the tradition died out among Noah's descendants; for I believe all writers are agreed that human sacrifice is of high antiquity, and was slowly replaced by more merciful rites. But what were the very terms of the covenant with Noah, of that covenant which would be handed down with the supposed tradition of sacrifice even if it did not outlast it? 'At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man.' To account, then, for the ancient practice of slaying human victims, we are asked to suppose that the nations remembered from Noah the precept to offer sacrifice, whilst in the very liturgical acts by which they hoped to please and satisfy the divine power they totally forgot His own most solemn denunciation of the shedding of human blood." These sentences are full of misstatements and fallacies. In the first place, it is



not correct to state that the prohibition to shed human blood formed part, still less an important part, of the covenant made by God with Noah ; it was simply a moral injunction rendered peculiarly necessary in consequence of the permission now granted to man to slay animals for food, and formed no condition or part of the covenant at all. What makes this certain is, that it is not until after the injunction had been given that we find mention made of God's entering into a covenant with Noah ; this forms a distinct part of the narrative, and the language employed in it is such as to show that it was with reference to totally different matters that that transaction took place. Now, it is quite conceivable that the nations might remember the covenant and the rites connected with it, whilst they forgot or did not choose to observe the moral prohibitions given by God to their ancestor. Secondly, it is fallacious to argue that because God forbade the shedding of man's blood, it is impossible to conceive that the nations should come to think they might please and satisfy Him by offering human victims, because the prohibition was not a special prohibition in the case of sacrifices, but a prohibition in general of the taking of human life—a prohibition therefore which, as it admitted of exceptions in the case of war and judicial executions, might be reasonably held to admit of exception in the case of sacrifice. Certain it is that we find the two beliefs harmoniously coexisting in the minds of men ; for among those nations which practised human sacrifices there were none who did not at the same time believe that the gods had forbidden the shedding of man's blood ; a fact which could not have occurred had the position assumed by the Bampton Lecturer been sound. Nay, we may go farther, and say that this very prohibition, instead of deterring men from human sacrifices, was probably the reason which mainly suggested it to them, inasmuch as it was the fence thus placed around human life which made it so precious, and hereby rendered it so valuable as an offering to the gods. Thirdly, it may be admitted that human sacrifices were “of high antiquity,” and yet it may also be maintained that this was “a late abuse” of the primitive tradition ; for “high” and “late” are relative terms, and as it is quite possible for the same object to be in space high relatively to one standard

and low relatively to another, so in time the same event may be both early and late according as we measure it from one point or another. So it is in the case before us. Relatively to us the practice of human sacrifice is of high antiquity; but relatively to the age of Noah it may have been of late date. So far as history serves us in this matter, we do not know that it existed till several centuries had elapsed from the age of Noah; and even if its existence be placed at an earlier date than this, it will still remain incompetent to draw any conclusion from the fact until it has been determined at what rate traditional usages of this sort travel towards abuse. So long as we are in uncertainty on this point, so long is it unsafe to say that any given time is too short for any given abuse to have arisen. In fine, it is competent to ask, if human sacrifices were not an abuse of the rite of sacrifice as practised by Noah, to what is their early existence to be attributed? There can be no doubt that Noah would hand down to his posterity the tradition of what he himself religiously practised. Now, of this traditional usage human sacrifice is either an abuse or it is a rite totally distinct in its nature from ordinary animal sacrifice, and having another meaning. But it is not a rite differing in nature and in signification from ordinary animal sacrifice; all history and testimony assure us that it was intended to express in the highest degree the ideas embodied in and adumbrated by that usage. It follows that it must be regarded as a corruption of this usage; for we cannot believe that it is both in nature and signification identical with the usage of animal sacrifice handed down to the descendants of Noah by tradition, and an original independent invention of the nation by whom it was practised. If we suppose the tradition to have existed, we render unnecessary the hypothesis of an independent and simultaneous invention of the rite; if we suppose such an invention, we have to account for the non-preservation by the family of Noah of the most solemn rite of their ancestral worship. It seems impossible to doubt which of these two hypotheses should be adopted as the most probable.

Holding, then, by the conviction that the sacrificial rite was originally of divine origin, we have next to inquire into—

(ii.) *The Meaning and Import of Sacrifice.*

This inquiry is not only of importance in relation to subsequent investigations, but it is imperatively suggested by the conclusions at which we have already arrived ; for if sacrifice was originally instituted by God, it must possess a significance worthy of Him who does nothing in vain.

Now, there are two fields from which we may gather materials to form our induction on this point. Assuming the divine origin of sacrifice, it is easy to conclude that where that rite was practised by men enjoying continual or repeated communications on religious matters from God, the original institution would be preserved in a very different condition as regards conformity to its true idea, than where it was left only to the custody of tradition among those who enjoyed no such divine revelations. Taking this into consideration, we shall best attain the end we have now in view by investigating, as separate topics of inquiry, the import of sacrifice as it was practised among heathens, and the import of sacrifice as it was practised among those who enjoyed divine instruction by revelation—the patriarchs and the Jews. If on prosecuting these as independent inquiries we shall find that there are certain fundamental conceptions common to both parties as to the meaning and import of this rite, we shall thereby have good ground for concluding that in these the true theory of the rite mainly consists.

We shall take first—

1. *The Sacrifices of the Heathen.*

It would lead us into too wide a field, and might perplex rather than instruct, were I to attempt any analysis of the manifold usages of the different heathen nations in respect of sacrifice. It will be sufficient for our present object that I should place briefly before you the principal conclusions to which such an analysis leads, supporting and illustrating each by such instances as may appear best calculated to carry legitimate conviction to the mind.

(1.) In all the heathen sacrifices the idea of *propitiation* is conspicuously and prominently presented. They assume that

man has in some way, either by doing what is wrong or neglecting what is required, offended the gods, and that it is with a view of removing the displeasure thus created that the sacrifice is offered. It would be easy to crowd pages with testimonies from the classical writers in support of this. A few may suffice.

Homer, *Iliad*, ii. 550,—

ἐνθάδε μιν ταύροισι καὶ ἀρνείοις ἱλάσσονται.

[“There do they propitiate her (Athena) with bulls and lambs.”]

Homer, *Iliad*, ix. 496–501, where Phœnix, addressing Achilles, exhorts him to lay aside his implacability by reminding him that

“The gods,  
Altho’ more honourable and in power  
And virtue thy superiors, are themselves  
Yet placable ; and if a mortal man  
Offend them by transgression of their laws,  
Libation, incense, sacrifice, and prayer,  
In meekness offered, turn their wrath away.”

COWPER’S TRANSLATION.

Sophocles, in *Antigone*, 1019, 1020,—

καὶ τ’ οὐδέχονται θυσιῶν λιτὰς ἔτι  
Ἀεὶ οἱ παρ’ ἡμῶν οὐδὲ μηρίων φλόγα.

[“And hence the gods no longer receive prayers offered along with sacrifice by us, nor the flame of burnt-offerings.”]

Horace, *Carm.*, Lib. i. *Od.* 36,—

“Et thure et fidibus juvat  
Placare, et vituli sanguine debito  
Custodes Numidæ Deos,” etc.

*Ibid.* *Serm.*, Lib. ii. *Sat.* 3, 206,—

“Prudens placavi sanguine divos.”

Plautus, *Pœnulus*, ii. 41, introduces one saying,—

“Si hercle istuc unquam factum est, tum me Jupiter  
Faciât, ut semper sacrificem, nunquam litem.”

Macrobius (l. iii. c. 5) explains *li'tare* by *facto sacrificio placare unum*”

Porphyrus, *De Abstinencia*, l. ii. § 24,—

“ We honour the gods, seeking from them either the averting of evils, or the supply of benefits, because we have been benefited by them, or that we may hap on some advantage, or from an appreciation merely of their excellence of nature ; so that if any of the animals is to be sacrificed to them, it is for some of these reasons that we sacrifice it ; for what we sacrifice, we sacrifice on account of some one of these.”

It is unnecessary to multiply these testimonies further ; the fact is beyond doubt that among the ancient Greeks and Romans the main worth of sacrifice was held to consist in its being the means of averting the divine displeasure, or securing the divine favour and help. They thus brought prominently forward the propitiatory character of sacrifice. We find this also retained even in the Pantheistic systems of the East, Brahmanism, and Parseeism, though, from the Pantheistic character of these systems, the reconciliation effected by sacrifice is necessarily represented as rather of a cosmical than of an ethical character, *i.e.* as consisting rather of the identification of the individual with the Great All of the universe than of the moral harmony of the personal creature with the personal Governor of all. It is also to be observed that even in the case of the Greek and Roman sacrifices it was not the pure idea of a reconciliation between the Deity and man, by the removal of man's sin as such, that was recognised. Idolaters and polytheists as they were, it could not be expected that the religion of these peoples would present so purely spiritual a representation as this. It was in keeping with their system that sin should be looked upon rather as an offence, an insult to the god, than as a moral evil,—as a mischievous and intrusive thing which came between man and God, and the presence of which destroyed that harmony which it was for man's interest to maintain between earth and heaven. Hence their great aim in offering sacrifice was to placate the angry god, to induce him to withdraw some token of his wrath, or to grant some token of his favour. To the conception of a cancelling of guilt as a legal obstacle, or the removal of sin as a moral obstacle, between God and man, they seem never to have attained ; nor did they in presenting their sacrifices aim at restoration to legal righteousness or to moral conformity to God. Their sole idea was that the gods were angry and must be appeased,

for which reason they offered them sacrifices as the proper method of propitiation.

(2.) The heathens held that sacrifices served this purpose through their *vicarious* character. In some instances this is expressly stated. Thus among the Athenians it was customary under visitations of the plague to select a human victim,—a youth,—and in order to assuage the calamity to cast him into the sea as a sacrifice to Neptune, saying, “Be our *περίφημα*,” a word which Suidas explains as equivalent to *σωτηρία και απολυτρωσις*, and Hesychius as equivalent to *αντιλυτρον αντιψυχον*;<sup>1</sup> it is derived from the verb *περιψάω*, which signifies to wipe a thing round so as to cleanse it, as, *e.g.*, in this passage of Aristophanes, Pluto

επειτα καθαρὸν ἡμιτυβιον λαβὼν  
τὰ βλέφαρα περίψησεν.<sup>2</sup>

In this case the sacrificed youth was held to have delivered the State from the divine wrath by being offered instead or in the place of the rest. Cæsar, in giving an account of the Druids of Gaul, says, “Those who are afflicted with severe diseases, or who are much exposed to danger and conflict, either immolate or vow that they will immolate men in place of victims (*pro victimis homines immolant*), because, unless the life of man be given for the life of man, they imagine that the majesty of the immortal gods cannot be propitiated.”<sup>3</sup> In this passage the ground on which such sacrifices were offered is explicitly mentioned, and it is affirmed to be that of vicarious substitution. Indeed, we can hardly account for human sacrifices on any other supposition.

Passing from human to animal sacrifices, we may adduce the following express affirmations of their vicarious character. Ovid, in his *Fasti* (l. vi. l. 155 ff.), speaking of a sacrifice which was performed for the recovery of a child, introduces the sacrificer as thus praying,—

“Noctis aves, extis puerilibus, inquit,  
Parcite : pro parvo victima parva cadit,  
Cor pro corde, precor, pro fibris sumite fibras ;  
Hanc animam vobis pro meliore damus.”

<sup>1</sup> *αντίψυχον*, substitute or ransom for life. Lucian, *Lexiph.* § 10, *χρηματα αντιψυχα διδοναι ἥθ. λεν.*

<sup>2</sup> Plutus, 728.

<sup>3</sup> *De Bello Gall.* l. vi. c. 16.

In the 5th book of the *Æneid* (l. 483), Virgil, speaking of a sacrifice offered by Entellus after he had nearly killed Dares in a pugilistic encounter, makes him address the goddess Eryx thus,—

“ Hanc tibi, Eryx, meliorem animam pro morte Daretis,  
Persolvo,”

where the phrase “*melior anima*” refers to the life of the victim as substituted for that of Dares. Herodotus has a curious and striking legend concerning Phryxus, son of Athamas, king of Orchomenos in Bœotia. A curse lying on that royal race, in consequence of which the first-born son of each generation must die as a piacular sacrifice, Phryxus was rescued from the doom to which his birth adjudged him just as his father was leading him to the altar by his mother sending a golden-fleeced lamb, given her by Hermes, as his substitute. The ram carried Phryxus and his sister Helle over land and sea, till she at last fell into a part of the sea called, from that event thenceforward, Hellespont, whilst Phryxus reached the distant land of *Æa*, where he sacrificed the ram to Zeus Laphystius. The golden fleece he gave to King *Æetes*, who fastened it to an oak and set a sleepless dragon to watch it. It was afterwards recovered by Jason, one of the race of Athamas, and by him brought back to Greece. In this legend one can hardly refrain from tracing a strong resemblance to the account given in Genesis of the offering of Isaac by his father Abraham; and it is probable that some traditionary reminiscence of this may have originated it. When we take into account that Jason means Healer or Saviour (from *ἰάομαι*), there is nothing very extravagant in the hypothesis enunciated by Lasaulx, that Jason and his heroic expedition after the golden fleece may have a higher significancy, and appear like a wondrous foreshadowing of the coming of Him who brought to men the true redemption.

Besides these express assertions of the vicarious efficiency of sacrifices, we may adduce two facts of a general nature which tend to show how this idea pervaded the whole system of ancient heathen sacrifice. *a.* The one of these is the fact that it was the *blood* of the victim in which the expiatory virtue of the rite was supposed to consist. Of this the evidence is ample. Among the ancient Hindus, when an

animal was offered to Shiva, its blood was solemnly borne before the image of the god, and, as it were, given over to him. Among the Persians only the blood was presented to the god, and all the rest of the animal carried away, on the ground, says Strabo, that the god desired the soul of the sacrifice, but nothing more (lib. xv. c. 732). Among the Greeks and Romans the blood of the victim was in part poured upon the altar, in part sprinkled on those standing by; and the expressions, αἷμα τῷ βωμῷ περιχεῖν (Luc. *De Sacr.* i. 3), and αἷμασσειν βωμούς, were equivalent to ἱεροποιεῖν, to sacrifice, which, as Bahr remarks, "could not have been the case had it not been that the blood was the proper sacrifice, *i.e.* its most essential part, its central point." Among the Romans we find such expressions as "placavi sanguina Divos" (Horace, *Sat.* ii. 3), "sanguine placasti ventos," "sanguine quærendi reditus" (Virg. *Æneid*, ii. 115, 118), etc., continually; and we find also the general phrase "litare sanguinem" as equivalent to sacrificing under propitious omens. Even the word *sancire* is said by Servius (in *Æneid*, xii. 200) to be derived from *sanguis*, as "proprie sanctum aliquid, *i.e.* consecratum facere fuso sanguine hostiæ, et dictum sanctum quasi sanguine consecratum." Now, why was this? On what principle was the blood selected as that which constituted the essence of the sacrifice? The answer is that it was identified with the ψυχή, the soul or life of the animal, and this was deemed of primary importance, because the sacrifice was an ἀντίψυχον, a soul-ransom, secured by giving soul for soul, life for life. Hence Virgil says,—

"Sanguine quærendi reditus, animaque litandum,"

where the *sanguis* and the *anima* are represented as identical. It may be added that in the words "piare," "piaculum," and "expiare," the idea of vicarious substitution is involved,—

"Men' piacularem oportet fieri ob stultitiam tuam,  
Ut meum tergum stultitiæ tuæ subdas succedaneum."<sup>1</sup>

In like manner (*Æneid*, ix. 349), at least according to the reading found by Servius in his copy, Virgil says,—

"Purpuream vomit ille animam,"

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<sup>1</sup> Plautus, *Epidic.* i. 2. 36.



On which Servius remarks: "Secundum eos qui animam sanguinem dicunt." So Philo expressly says (*De Victimis*, p. 839), *ψυχῆς ὡς εἰπεῖν ἐστὶ σπονδὴ το αἷμα*; and in the extract already given from Strabo concerning the Persian sacrifices, it is said that it is the *soul* of the victim which alone the gods desire. By the Greek philosophers it was commonly taught that the blood was the life: and the opinion pervaded all antiquity. Here, then, we have clearly the idea of *substitution* involved; the sacrifice was valid because it was an offering of life for life.

b. The other fact to which we may appeal is that in all sacrifices it was held of good omen when the victim went, or seemed to go, *willingly* to the altar; whilst, on the contrary, if it appeared reluctant, or sought to break away from its leaders, the occurrence was looked upon as unpropitious to the worshipper. In proof of the fact the following citations may suffice: "Observatum est a sacrificantibus ut, si hostia, quæ ad aras duceretur, fuisset vehementius reluctata, ostendissetque se invitam altaribus admoveri, amoveretur: quia invito Deo offerri eam putabant. Quæ autem stetisset oblata, hanc volenti numini dari existimabant hinc noster [Virgilius],—

"Et ductus cornu stabit sacer hircus ad aras" <sup>1</sup>

(Macrob. *Saturn.* iii. 5). This passage is adduced simply to attest the fact; with the reason assigned by Macrobius we have at present nothing to do. Lucan, *Phars.* vii. 165,—

"Admotus Superis discussa fugit ab ara  
Taurus, et Emathios præceps se jecit in agros;  
Nullaque funestis inventa est victima sacris."

Servius quotes these lines in his note on *Æneid*, ix. 11, and adds: "Quoties victima reluctabatur ostendebat se improbari." Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* viii. 45) says of calves: "Ad aras humeris hominis adlatos non fere litare, sicut nec claudicante nec aliena hostia Deos placari, nec trahente se ab aris." It may suffice

<sup>1</sup> "It has been observed by those offering sacrifice, that if the victim which is led to the altar should prove vehemently reluctant, and should show itself unwilling to be moved to the altar, it should be removed, because they thought it would be offered to an unwilling deity. But when it stood still when presented, they thought that this was given to a willing god, whence Virgil,—

'And the consecrated goat drawn by the horn shall stand at the altar.'

to add that some of the Fathers attest that in the sacrificing of children in some parts of Africa their cries were restrained by kisses and endearments, “*Ne flebilis hostia immoletur*” (see Minuc. Fel., *Oct.* xxx.; Tertullian, *Apol.* c. ix.). Of these passages, some not only attest the fact, but assign as a reason for it that it was supposed reluctance on the part of the victim indicated that it was not acceptable to the gods. But this reason is found only in very late writers, and seems rather to be one invented for the purpose than a just and natural exposition of the *rationale* of the opinion so commonly entertained. That opinion seems rather to point to the *substitutionary* character of the sacrifice, and to have arisen from some conviction, more or less clear, that to *force* one living thing to die for another was an act of cruelty which could not but vitiate the whole service. The sentiment of the more ancient period was that put by Sophocles in the mouth of Œdipus when about to triumph,—

ἀρκεῖν γὰρ οἶμαι πάντι μύριων μίαν  
ψυχὴν πᾶδ' ἐκτίνουσσαν, ἣν εὖνους περὶ.

“For I am of opinion that one soul is sufficient to satisfy in place of multitudes, if it be well affected or willing.” With this conviction it is easy to see how the belief would grow up that a reluctant victim was of evil omen. Whether the conviction itself is to be traced to some primeval revelation which made known to man the Great Sacrifice who in due time was voluntarily to give Himself for the sins of the world is a question which will be answered differently according to the views of the inquirer regarding the propitiatory character of Christ’s work, and the degree of knowledge possessed by the fathers of the human race on that head.

A different origin has been suggested by Archbishop Thomson in his Bampton Lectures. Following Lasaulx, he thinks that sacrifice originated in the voluntary devotion of individuals for the good of the community, such as Codrus of Athens, Menœceus of Thebes, Publius Decius among the Romans, etc., and that thence the idea arose of the necessary voluntariness of all true sacrifice. But this theory is open to fatal objections: *a.* It proposes to account for a practice

<sup>1</sup> *Œdipus at Colonus*, 498–9.

and opinion universally prevalent among men by reference to facts of casual occurrence and local importance. Such instances are far too rare to give rise to a general conviction, and far too limited in their bearing to create an interest beyond the nations among whom they occurred. *b.* This theory proposes to account by such instances for a practice which was in general and solemn use long before any of these took place. It, in fact, involves the gross fallacy of putting the effect for the cause; for it is much more natural to conclude that these instances of self-devotion for the safety of others arose from the minds of these performers having been habituated to the idea of vicarious suffering by the practice of sacrifice than *vice versa*. At any rate, a fact historically later than a custom can never have originated that custom.

(3.) There is but one more remark to be made respecting the sacrifices of the heathen, and that is, that to a great extent the offering was looked upon as a gift to the gods with which they were gratified, and by which in some sense they were nourished. With this every reader of the classics must be familiar. At the beginning of the *Iliad*, Homer introduces Achilles as exhorting the Greeks on the occasion of the plague to see by what offence they had incensed Apollo,—

εἴτ' ἄρ' ὅγ' εὐχολῆς ἐπιμέμφεται εἴθ' ἐκατόμβης,

and to see whether they could not appease him by sacrifices,—

αἶ κ' ἐν πῶς ἀρνῶν κνίσσης αἶγῶν τε τελειῶν  
βούλειται ἀντιάσας, ἥμιν ἀπολοιγὸν ἄμυναι.

“What broken vow, what hecatomb unpaid,  
He charges on us, and if soothed with steam  
Of lambs or goats unblemished, he may yet  
Be won to spare us and avert the plague.”

[COWPER'S TRANSLATION.]

Many passages of a similar sort will occur to every one who has read the ancient classics, and the aspect under which they present the act of the sacrificer receives further illustration from the care which was taken to offer to each god such animals as were for any reason believed to be most pleasing to him as sacrifices. Under all this there lies the idea of a gift by which the favour of the god was propitiated.

On comparing these three aspects of sacrifice among the ancient heathens, it is evident that the last two are incompatible with each other. If sacrifice secured the favour of the gods by being a vicarious satisfaction for the transgressor, it could not be efficacious on the ground of being a gift to the gods; and if it was the latter, it could not be the former. As these two views, then, are mutually exclusive of each other, we must presume that they were entertained by different parties or classes; the one by the more rude and ignorant, the other by the more enlightened and refined. This is confirmed by the fact that many of the ancient writers have recorded their disbelief of the notion that the gods received any gratification of a personal or sensual nature from the sacrifices of their worshippers. To what extent, however, the one or the other of these notions prevailed so as to give a predominating character to the heathen doctrine of sacrifices, it is impossible to say. All that we can pronounce on with certainty is that the heathen offered sacrifices with a view of appeasing or propitiating the gods, and that they imagined this to be effected either by their being a vicarious satisfaction for the sinner, or by their being acceptable donations to the gods. Perhaps we may add, that while among the light-hearted Greeks the latter notion prevailed, among the graver and more earnest Romans the former was the more common. In this, as in other things, the Romans showed themselves more conservative of the primitive tradition than the Greeks.

## 2. *Patriarchal Sacrifices.*

From the consideration of sacrifice as a rite of heathen worship we pass on to the consideration of the same rite as practised amongst the patriarchs and amongst the Jews, following in both cases the information supplied by the books of Scripture.

In the notices which are given of the sacrifices of the patriarchs little is furnished beyond the mere record of the fact that such and such sacrifices were offered, with the circumstances under which the worshipper offered them. This record, however, is usually sufficiently precise and full to

enable us to gather some idea as to the design with which the sacrifice was offered and the result it was expected to realize.

(1.) Of these patriarchal sacrifices by much the most important is that which was offered by Abel as recorded in Gen. iv. 1-7. Not only is this the first sacrifice on record, but it is the one patriarchal sacrifice of which we know the most as respects its nature and efficacy from the sacred records. On it, therefore, we may with advantage bestow more than a passing notice.

*a.* The author of Genesis informs us that the two first born sons of Adam, brought up in habits of useful toil, the one as a husbandman, the other as a keeper of cattle, and accustomed also apparently to religious observances, came on a particular occasion to offer each his מִנְחָה, or oblation, to Jehovah. The occasion is described as מִנְיַן יָמִים, literally, from the end of days, an expression which some regard as intended to describe vaguely the mere consecutiveness of the event to be recorded on the events previously recorded; while others, with less probability, regard it as intimating the end of the year. The LXX. renders by μεθ' ἡμερας, "after days," and the phrase seems merely to intimate that some time elapsed between the event about to be recorded and the one last recorded. According to the usage of the language, when יָמִים, "days," is used of a definite period, some adjunct expressing this is added; but when no such adjunct is added, the term simply expresses vaguely a lapse of time. On this occasion Cain and Abel, following a usage probably instituted by Adam, brought each the offering which he thought most worthy of being presented to God, the former of the produce of his fields, the latter of the choicest of his flocks. At first sight the difference in these offerings seems only appropriate to the different occupations of the parties, and yet the result showed that they were not equally approved of the Lord, or rather that whilst the one was approved the other was rejected. "Jehovah," we read, "looked upon," *i.e.* approved and accepted, "Abel and his offering; but on Cain and his offering He did not look." Whether this difference was indicated, as many suppose, by fire coming down and consuming Abel's offering, or, as is more probable, by some

*θεοφάνεια*, or manifestation of Jehovah's presence and approval, matters not to our present object; the important point is that the animal sacrifice was accepted by God and the vegetable offering rejected in some very distinct and unmistakable way. Now, this naturally excites the inquiry, *Why* was this? What was there in Abel's offering that was wanting in Cain's, so as to cause the one to be accepted and the other rejected? Some essential defect there must have been somewhere in Cain's service to lead to such a result, for He who is no respecter of persons would never have made so marked a difference between the two except for some sufficient reason. Now, without indulging in any merely conjectural answer to this inquiry, let us carefully attend to what may be gathered from the narrative itself, and from other parts of Scripture in which this transaction is referred to. And here it is important to keep in mind at the outset that Abel's offering must have been a *sacrificial* offering. Not only is it expressly called by the apostle by the term *θυσία* (Heb. xi. 4), but at this early period, when animal food was not in use, we cannot conceive any reason for the shedding of the blood of an innocent lamb and offering that creature to God except as a propitiatory victim. Here, then, was a very marked and momentous difference between Cain's offering and that of Abel; the one was a mere thank-offering, the other was a propitiatory sacrifice; the one was only an act of homage from an inferior and dependant to his superior and benefactor, the other was a solemn acknowledgment of transgression and method of reconciliation; the one was a virtual assertion of blamelessness, the other was a direct recognition of guilt. It may be that on this essential difference in the character of the offerings and the professions of the offerers depended the opposite reception given to them by God. Abel, as a conscious sinner, came with a sacrifice to plead for pardon; Cain, having no sense of sin, came confident and proud with a thank-offering merely to offer homage. And hence He who has respect unto the humble while He knoweth the proud afar off, and into whose presence no sinner can come with acceptance save under the shelter of propitiatory blood, had respect unto Abel and his offering, while to Cain and his offering He had not respect.

b. This view of the case is strikingly confirmed by two statements of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The one of these is in xi. 4, where the writer says, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice (*πλεΐονα θυσίαν*) than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." Here the writer expressly says that God gave manifest testimony of His acceptance of Abel's offering; that by so doing He attested Abel's righteousness, *i.e.* his acceptance with God; that Abel's offering was a more full sacrifice, more what such a thing should be, than that of Cain; and that it was through faith that he came to offer such an oblation. Here the whole case is presented to us very clearly. Abel was a believer, and worshipped in faith. Conscious of sin, he sought acceptance through sacrifice; whereas Cain seems to have been an unbeliever, and to have taken his stand solely on the ground of natural religion. But here the further inquiry arises, What was that faith through which Abel was led to offer his better sacrifice? Faith has respect to some declaration or testimony or assurance on which it fixes as its object, and when it is the faith of man toward God that is referred to, it can only mean that confidential credit and trust which man gives to something God has promised or declared to him. In all the cases adduced by the apostle in this 11th chapter of the Hebrews this is exemplified as the characteristic of the faith of which he speaks. Noah believed God's declaration that He was about to bring a flood upon the earth, and he showed this by obeying the divine warning and building an ark for the safety of himself and his house. Abraham believed God's assurance that he should become a father of nations, and that his seed should possess the land of Canaan, and so he went out from the settlement of his fathers and journeyed, not knowing whither he went, but assured that God would lead him in a right way. And so of all the rest; their faith was their holding God's word for true, so that they were led to live and act as God had enjoined. We may presume, therefore, that the faith of Abel was of the same sort; and as we know what Abel did in obedience to the divine command, the only question requiring to be answered here is one respecting the declaration or word of God which

Abel believed so as to be led to act as he did. Now, what could this be but that great announcement which God had made to our first parents that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent? This, as we have before seen, was a prediction of the Messiah, and a promise of salvation through Him; and as immediately consequent on the giving of this assurance animals were slain, in the skins of which Adam and Eve were clothed, a fact which, as we have also seen, is best accounted for by the supposition that they were slain in sacrifice which God instructed Adam then first to offer; it hardly admits of a doubt that the faith of Abel, which led him to offer of the firstlings of his flock in sacrifice, was substantially a faith in God's great promise of deliverance through the merits of a suffering and propitiatory Redeemer. In this it would appear Cain had no faith. He did not feel that he needed a mediator or a sacrifice in order to acceptance with God. He held himself a righteous subject of the Most High, to whom, as his superior and ruler, he would offer homage, but from whom he had not to seek pardon or mercy. He took his stand on the ground of his own merits, and offered his oblation in his own name. The consequence was that he was rejected, whilst Abel, who came in the faith of God's promise, and in the recognition of all which that promise implied, both as respected his own state as a sinner and as to the way in which acceptance with God was to be obtained, was accepted, and received from God an attestation that he was righteous.

The other passage in the N. T. to which I have referred as throwing light on the case before us is Heb. xii. 24, "Ye are come to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel." Here, I take it, the apostle contrasts the sacrifice of Christ with the sacrifice of Abel, and says that the former was better, more effectual, than the latter. To understand, as is often done, the blood of Abel here as the blood of Abel's person shed by Cain, appears to me simply absurd. In no sense whatever could it be said that the blood of Christ speaks better things than that of Abel when murdered by his brother. The blood of Abel thus shed spoke nothing good; the cry it uttered was a cry for vengeance. But the blood to which the apostle refers did speak good, else when he says



that the blood of Christ spoke *better* things his words are inappropriate. When we say one thing is better than another, we mean that both are good, but that the one is not so good as the other. The proper contrast of better is not *bad*, but an inferior degree of good. When the apostle, therefore, says that the blood of Christ speaks better things than that of Abel, he means that the blood of Abel to which he refers did speak good things, but not so good as the blood of Christ does. The contrast here is manifestly between the two sacrifices—Abel's sacrifice on the one hand and Christ's sacrifice on the other. Both these spoke good things. Abel's was the shadow of good things to come, but Christ's was the reality and substance of these things. The one spoke such tidings as the dawn utters when announcing the approaching day, the other spoke such tidings as the sun utters amidst his meridian splendour when all nature is illuminated by his beams, and nothing is hid from the heat thereof.

A glance at the context will suffice to show that the meaning thus given to the writer's words is in full accordance with the train of his reasoning here. The drift of his reasoning is to show that the Christian dispensation is far superior to those which have preceded it. Now, of such an argument it can form no link to assert that the death of Christ upon the cross speaks better things, is a more precious and beneficial act, than the murder of Abel by his brother. What has this to do with the argument? Blood shed in murder formed no part of the ancient economy any more than of the Christian. But blood shed in sacrifice forms an essential element of both; and it lay altogether in the writer's way to assert that the sacrifices of the former economies, of which Abel's was at the head as the first on record, were inferior to that of Christ. Understood thus all is clear and harmonious; on the other supposition all becomes confused and meaningless.

I regard the apostle here, then, as comparing Abel's *offering* with that of Christ. Now, in order to this, these two offerings must have been viewed by him as of the same kind, however different in degree; else the comparison between them would not hold, things of diverse kinds not being comparable. But if Abel's offering was of the same kind as the offering of Christ, it must have been like that in being pro-

pitiatory, and must have been offered with some knowledge of and some faith in that great propitiation of which it was the shadow and type. This conclusion manifestly confirms the result at which we have previously arrived as to the real cause of the different reception which Abel's oblation met with from that which Cain's met with.

The result thus arrived at is further confirmed by what follows in the narrative of Moses. When Cain saw that his oblation was rejected, instead of being humbled and seeking acceptance in the right way, he became "very wroth, and his countenance fell," *i.e.* he assumed a sullen, lowering, downlook expression of mortified pride, disappointed expectation, and concealed passion. It is evident from this that he expected that his offering would have procured for him the divine favour; for why else should he have been so offended and enraged when it was rejected? Whilst he thus stood, God condescended to reason with him, for the purpose of explaining to him the reason of the different treatment of the two offerings. "The Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him" (Gen. iv. 6). These words have been differently understood by interpreters. By some they are paraphrased thus: "Be assured that no partiality has been showed by me in this matter. If you do well, you shall be accepted as well as your brother; but if you do not well, if in your very act of worship you do wrong, then sin lies, couching like a wild beast (רֶבֶץ) ready to spring on you, at your door; it desires to have you, but do you master it and rule over it." This gives a very good sense, but it may be doubted if the sense thus given is really that which the words were intended to convey; especially is the meaning put on the last part of the passage forced and improbable; for if Cain had already sinned, there would be no need to warn him against sin as ready to attack him; and no one would translate the words of the last clause in the way proposed, except with the view of bringing them into accordance with a preconceived theory. Rejecting this view of the meaning of the passage, it has been proposed by many

eminent expositors and theologians to take the word rendered "sin" in the A. V. (חַטָּאת) in the sense it commonly bears in the writings of Moses, viz. "sin-offering," and to render the passage thus: "If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted; but if thou doest not well, a sin-offering coucheth at the door," *i.e.* you have within your reach, waiting your use, an animal which you may offer as a sacrifice in expiation of your sin. According to this view God is here setting before Cain two great principles of His moral government as respects the acceptance of His intelligent creatures here, viz. sinless obedience on the one hand, or a propitiatory sacrifice on the other. This is God's alternative for man: Do well and thou shalt be accepted; do not well, then the sin thou hast committed must be expiated, and for that purpose a sin-offering must be presented; and such an offering is at hand, for animals appointed for sacrifice are couching at the door. If this view of the passage be adopted, there can remain no doubt as to the reason of the acceptance of Abel's offering while that of Cain was rejected. The offering of the former was a sacrifice, an offering for sin; the offering of the other was a mere act of homage which implied no acknowledgment of sin, and was accompanied with no cry for pardon.

There is still a third way in which these words may be taken. The word נָסַח, rendered in the A. V. "accepted," means primarily a lifting up, an elevation, and in Gen. xlix. 3 it is used in reference to primogeniture and the pre-eminence in dignity associated therewith. This meaning seems very suitable here, and hence we may translate the passage, "If thou doest well, the pre-eminence [of thy birthright] is with thee; but if thou doest not well, a sin-offering coucheth at the door." The advantage of this is that it gives a simple and clear meaning to the last part of the verse, which has always presented a difficulty to interpreters. But the difficulty vanishes if we adopt the rendering of the first part just given. In that case what God says to Cain is, "Offer a propitiatory sacrifice for sin and all shall be well; thy sin shall be forgiven thee, and thou shalt retain thy pre-eminence over thy brother; his desire shall be to thee, *i.e.* he shall be subject to thee (comp. Gen. iii. 16), and thou shalt rule over him." This seems on the whole the preferable

rendering; and it equally with the preceding indicates that it was the absence of any sacrificial or expiatory quality in the offering of Cain that caused it to be rejected.

(2.) After this remarkable instance at the very commencement of the history of the race we do not meet with any mention of sacrifice till we come down to the time when Noah came out of the ark. After his deliverance the patriarch, we read, "builded an altar unto Jehovah; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And Jehovah smelled a sweet savour: and Jehovah said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake," etc. (Gen. viii. 20). Here the only things demanding notice at present are the following:—

a. The oblation offered was exclusively an animal sacrifice. It would not therefore be designed simply as a thank-offering for preservation from the Flood, but must have had some other design.

b. The animals offered were only such as were ritually clean,—a distinction with which Noah was perfectly familiar, for he was ordered to observe it in respect of the animals he took into the ark, and one which is so mentioned as to lead to the conclusion that it was well understood by men from the beginning. Whatever meaning, then, was involved in this, we have to ascribe to the sacrifice as presented by Noah. As to the expression, "*every* clean beast," and "*every* clean fowl," used by the historian, there is no reason why it should not be taken literally, for the number of clean animals was not so great but that one of each might be offered on so important an occasion.

c. The offering was a burnt-offering, as were all the offerings of which we read in patriarchal times. The central idea of this sacrifice was its completeness; it was a whole sacrifice, a holocaust, every part of which was consumed directly in the sacrificial act. Whatever idea, then, is involved in sacrifice may be expected to be symbolized here in its completeness—in its fullest perfection. But the idea of the burnt-offering was that of atonement or expiation, as we read in Lev. xiv. 20, "And the priest shall offer the burnt-offering and the meat-offering upon the altar: and the

priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean." We may presume, therefore, that this great holocaust offered by Noah on his egress from the ark was designed as an offering of atonement for himself and his family, to cover all their sins during their abode in the ark.

d. The offering was acceptable to God. This is figuratively explained by saying that He "smelled a sweet savour," רִיחַ הַנִּיחָח. This is rendered by the LXX. *οσμη, ευωδίας*, the expression which Paul uses, Eph. v. 2, of the sacrifice of Christ. According to this view of the meaning of the original phrase, הַנִּיחָח is derived from נִיחַ, "acquiescere in aliquare, delectari," "to be pleased with." There seems no ground for the opinion of those who would attach to this the meaning of *placamen, victima piacularis*. The meaning simply is that Jehovah was satisfied with the offering, and graciously accepted it; in consequence of which He resolved to visit the earth with no such curse again as that from which it had just escaped. That the *ground* on which He thus accepted it was its *piacular* character may be very true; but let us beware lest in our over-anxiety to secure this point we actually endanger it by seeming to force it out of words which do not contain it.

(3.) Passing on to the sacrifices of Abraham and his sons, the only one that need detain us is the memorable offering of his son Isaac. In obedience to the command of God, though doubtless with a grieved and wondering spirit, Abraham consented to offer up as a holocaust his only son, the son of his old age and the heir of his house; and with no less obedience and much submission Isaac, no longer a child, but a grown youth, who might have resisted had he chosen, consented to be sacrificed. Just at the moment when the frightful rite was about to be consummated, the angel of Jehovah arrested the hand of the patriarch, and directed him to a ram caught in the thicket, which he was to take and offer instead of his son. In this very remarkable transaction there was afforded to the patriarch and his seed a striking illustration of the meaning and effect of sacrifice. Isaac was devoted to God,—yielded up to Him, bound and stretched on the altar as a holocaust to Him. But instead of Isaac, God accepts the sacrifice of a ram which He Himself provides, and on the

ground of that remits His claim to Isaac's life. Here, then, was clearly set forth the vicarious efficacy of sacrifice. As the apostle says, the whole was a parable or figure, the design of which was to show how man's forfeited life was to be redeemed by sacrifice. We can hardly doubt that Abraham and his son returned home with a clearer idea than ever of the vicarious and propitiatory meaning of sacrifice. But the question presses itself on us, Was this all they were taught by that remarkable occurrence? Was there not something typical as well as something symbolical here?—something that spoke prophetically of the great sacrifice for the redemption of lost man, doomed to death for sin, as well as something that spoke didactically as to the meaning and use of the sacrificial rite?

a. Bishop Warburton has a long dissertation on this passage in his *Divine Legation of Moses*, lib. vi. § 5, in which he maintains that the whole was a scenic representation vouchsafed to Abraham in compliance with his earnest desire that he might see the salvation of the Lord, and that it is to this our Lord refers when He said to the Jews "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it afar off, and was glad" (John viii. 56). This view the learned and ingenious writer confirms by a reference to the scene of the alleged transaction, called by Moses the land of Moriah, *i.e.* "the land of vision;" to the name given by Abraham to the spot where the sacrifice was arrested, *Jehovah-Jirch*, יְהוָה יֵרָא, which he proposes to translate as if it were pointed *Jerach*, יֵרָא (3 fut. Niphil), "Jehovah shall be seen;" and to the proverbial saying which thence took its rise, "in the mount of the Lord shall it be seen," or as he proposes to render it, "in the mount Jehovah shall be seen." In the main this view appears highly probable, though it is not necessary to adopt all the notions which the Bishop has mixed up with it. Especially must we reject his notion that we have here merely the record of a scenic vision presented to the mind of the patriarch, and not the record of an actual transaction; for nothing seems more indisputably plain than that Moses introduces this as part of the actual historical life of Abraham. It may be doubted also whether the words of our Lord have any reference to this transaction. It is sufficient to believe that Abraham did

enjoy revelations concerning the way of salvation through Christ to justify us in endeavouring to trace some typical connection between this very remarkable transaction and the propitiatory work of our Lord. In proceeding, however, to point out the elements of this connection, the Bishop appears to me to have struck into an entirely erroneous course ; in which, however, he is so far from being alone that it may be said to be the common track of expositors on this record. According to this view Isaac was the type of Christ, his being laid on the altar by his father the type of Christ's being given up by God as a sacrifice for sins, whilst by the ram was represented the intermediate sacrifice in the Mosaic economy. It is marvellous that a view so confused and so contradictory could ever have been deliberately embraced, not only by Warburton, but by so many other eminent and acute writers. The objections to it are several and serious.

(a) How could the ram be a type of the Mosaic sacrifices ? These were themselves types, and it is absurd to speak of the type of a type, even supposing it at all concerned Abraham to receive an adumbrated representation of the economy that was to intervene between his and that of Christ.

(b) If Isaac was a type of Christ in this representation, Abraham must represent God the Father. But not only is such a representation unauthorized, but see what confusion it introduces ! God *freely* gives His Son as a sacrifice ; but Abraham yields his only in obedience to the command of a superior. God gave up His Son, but He did not offer Him as a sacrifice ; on the contrary, He *received* the offering of Him ; whereas Abraham was to have offered his son unto God. It is God who here gives this type to Abraham ; but if Abraham be supposed to represent God, in the type the giver and the receiver are confounded. From these particulars it is most manifest that in this supposed typical representation the symbol, instead of representing, actually contradicts the thing to be shadowed forth.

(c) How can what is here recorded of Isaac represent what is true concerning Christ ? Christ was actually sacrificed ; but Isaac was exempted from being sacrificed. Christ died as a victim substituted for others ; Isaac lived because a victim was substituted for him. Can any thing be more monstrous than to say that the one of these was

intended to be a type of the other? In this case the proper definition of a type would be, not a representation by resemblance, but a representation by opposites.

*b.* It is by such modes of parodying the ancient types that the whole subject of typical theology has been brought into disrepute. A very little consideration might, we think, have guided to a much more scriptural, coherent, and instructive explanation of the transaction before us. The following may be offered as the analysis of this viewed as a typical adumbration of Christian truth:—

(*a*) Isaac is to be viewed as representing the Church of God, the spiritual seed of Abraham. For this we may cite the authority of the apostle's declaration in Rom. ix. 7, 8, where, after quoting the promise to Abraham, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," he goes on thus, "That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." By the children of the promise here Paul means the spiritual people of God, as is evident from his own explanation in Gal. iv. 28, where he says, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." What he asserts there as the meaning of the promise to Abraham is that in that promise Isaac stood as the representative of all true believers, the spiritual seed of Abraham: the promise respected not the natural descendants of that patriarch, but those who, like Isaac, were children of promise, heirs through grace—those who, though naturally they could not call Abraham father, were spiritually counted or reckoned to him for a seed. We have thus scriptural authority for calling Isaac the type of the Church of God.

(*b*) As the life of Isaac was forfeited by divine command, so the life of the Church was forfeited by the divine sentence; and as Abraham was about to slay his son thus doomed, so God was legally, as it were, about to inflict death on the sinful mass of humanity, the Church included.

(*c*) The life of Isaac was saved by a substitute of God's own providing, and in like manner the Church is saved by that great Substitute which God has provided for it.

(*d*) As the ram caught in the thicket saved Isaac by becoming his substitute and being offered in his stead, so



Christ saves us by being our substitute and suffering for us. It is the ram, then, and not Isaac, that is in this transaction the type of Christ, "the lamb of God," *i.e.* provided by God, "who taketh away the sins of the world."

Viewed in this way the parallelism between the type and the antitype is direct and continuous. How much of this was seen by Abraham and his son it is impossible for us to say ; but we may venture to believe that enough was vouchsafed to make the type a really didactic representation to both of them whereby their faith was strengthened and their hopes confirmed.

(4.) Before passing from the subject of patriarchal sacrifices, it will be proper to advert for a little to those mentioned in the book of Job. The scenery and characters of this book belong to patriarchal times, and there is good reason to believe that it was composed at a period not very much posterior to the times it depicts. We may therefore confidently cite it for the illustration of the opinions, usages, and religious observances of those early times.

*a.* From the statements in the first chapter it appears that Job regularly observed the rites of lustration and sacrifice for the deliverance of his family from the guilt of ungodliness and sin (Job i. 5). With the questions that have arisen as to the proper rendering of some parts of this verse we have at present nothing to do ; the only point it concerns us to notice is one on which there is no diversity of judgment, *viz.* that Job presented these sacrifices of whole burnt-offering with a propitiatory intent. He was afraid lest his sons had sinned and had disregarded God in their hearts ; and in order to purge them from the guilt of this he regularly offered, as the priest of his house, sacrifices on their behalf.

*b.* At the close of the book we find that Job was also required to act the part of a priest with God on behalf of his three friends. Their conduct and speeches had been displeasing to God, and consequently His wrath was kindled against them, *i.e.* they were held guilty and exposed to divine punishment. Mercifully, however, God Himself comes forward to instruct them how this penalty may be escaped (see Job xlii. 8). It is evident that these sacrifices were to have a propitiatory effect. Job was to act as a priest, and to inter-

cede for them with God; but his intercession was to be preceded by and based on the offering of sacrifice. Here, as in the former case, the effect of the sacrifice was to remove guilt and avert deserved punishment.

From this survey it clearly appears that among the patriarchs sacrifice was recognised as a mode of propitiating God towards man as a sinner. The piacular character of the rite is prominently recognised throughout, and the offerings are of such a kind as to forbid our supposing that any character incompatible with this was at any time acknowledged by the true worshippers of God as belonging to the rite. In the majority of cases this is all that we can gather from the record itself; we have no information either as to the ground on which it was supposed that this propitiatory effect of sacrifice rested, or as to the degree of information possessed by the patriarchs concerning the great transaction to which this rite typically pointed. The only exception is in the case of the sacrifice on the mount in Moriah; here we have the *substitutionary* efficiency of sacrifice clearly brought before the minds of the parties concerned, and probably also the typical significancy of the whole indicated. We may presume that what was thus clearly made known to Abraham would not be concealed from Abel, Noah, Job, and other pious men of these early times; and that they at least knew that in presenting sacrifice as a propitiation for sin, it was on the principle of *substitution* that their act rested for its efficiency. What confirms this conclusion is, that unless we admit this we must regard these eminently pious men as possessing less knowledge as to the meaning of their religious services than, as we have seen, was very extensively possessed by the heathen. As to their knowledge of the great sacrifice to which the animal sacrifices they offered typically pointed, we cannot suppose that it was very full or precise; still, that some such knowledge was conveyed to them we cannot deny without denying the typical reference of sacrifice altogether. Nothing can be more absurd than to maintain that sacrifice was typical of Christ's propitiatory work, and yet deny that it conveyed to those who practised it any correct (however inadequate) knowledge concerning this work; for what is a

type but an acted prophecy — a present object which fore shadows one to come? and is it not a contradiction in terms to call anything a prophecy and yet deny that it foretells; a foreshadow, and yet deny that it shadows forth before? Besides, of what use is a type save to the men who live before the event it predicts? To those who live after that event it is of little value—of no value, indeed, at all, save as the comparison of the shadow with the substance may sometimes help to a fuller apprehension of the nature and worth of the latter: it is by those who did not possess the substance that the benefit of the shadow as a scenic representation of good things to come was to be reaped. But if they did not understand this representation, what better were they for it? If the oracle addressed them in a language they could not comprehend, it might as well have been dumb; and if it was dumb, it was a mere idle superfluity which had better never been there. This seems to justify the conclusion that, assuming the typical character of patriarchal sacrifices, they could not fail to convey to pious and intelligent minds some information of a very precious kind concerning Him who, in the fulness of time, was to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

We shall have occasion to revert to these topics in relation to the sacrifices of the Mosaic Dispensation. This was the immediate successor of the Patriarchal Dispensation, and the legitimate heir of all its religious beliefs and usages. Under both the same God was worshipped, the same blessings sought and obtained, and the same medium of acceptable worship recognised. In studying them, however, we have the advantage in reference to the latter not only of fuller information, but also of a more perfectly developed system of belief and ritual; so that we may arrive at conclusions at once more extensive and more sure than was possible in reference to the former.

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